

## The Hollywood Career of Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody*

JAMES WIERZBICKI

Upon the completion of his *Second Rhapsody* for Piano and Orchestra in the spring of 1931, George Gershwin considered the work to be “in many respects, such as orchestration and form, . . . the best thing I’ve written.”<sup>1</sup> Coming in the wake of the *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris*, and the Piano Concerto in F, this is a strong statement from a phenomenally successful Broadway tunesmith who in the last decade of his life with increasing urgency sought identity as a “serious” composer. At least a few Gershwin specialists concur that the *Second Rhapsody*, in comparison with the concert music that preceded it, indeed represents a forward leap.<sup>2</sup> Yet the *Second Rhapsody* remains largely neglected not just by scholars but also by

For their assistance in making available the materials that made the researching of this essay possible, the author expresses heartfelt thanks to Adam Gershwin; Todd Gershwin; the late Mark Trent Goldberg of the Ira and Leonore Trust; Warner Bros. Music Corporation; Kevin LaVine and Denise Gallo of the Music Division of the Library of Congress; Ned Comstock, archivist at the Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California; and Rob Olveri and Jim Hoffman, librarians at JoAnn Kane Music Service. For their insightful suggestions and criticisms, I am grateful to William H. Rosar and this journal’s anonymous referees.

1. George Gershwin, letter to Isaac Goldberg, 30 June 1931, quoted in Edward Jablonski and Lawrence D. Stewart, *The Gershwin Years* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 176.

2. In his biography of the composer, for example, Jablonski writes: “The Second Rhapsody is a fascinating composition; it is Gershwin around the corner. He had left the twenties; the self-styled ‘modern romantic’ created a work that is more modern than romantic” (Edward Jablonski, *Gershwin* [New York: Doubleday, 1987], 222). In his monograph on Gershwin’s more famous rhapsody, David Schiff, although for the most part critical of the *Second Rhapsody*, observes that the piece “shows signs of Gershwin’s growing musical sophistication” and “illustrates [his] ever-expanding harmonic vocabulary” (*Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 80–81). Ruth Leon, in her recent biography, describes the *Second Rhapsody* as “the hardest-edged and most jagged Gershwin concert piece. It is, in hindsight, a piece essentially of the 1930s rather than the 1920s” (Ruth Leon, *Gershwin* [London: Haus, 2004], 112).

performers.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, it suffers from a tangle of misinformation regarding its origins in Hollywood.

Worthy as the *Second Rhapsody* may be, the goal of this article is not to celebrate the work but simply to clarify its relationship with a 1931 film entitled *Delicious*. Gershwin put the finishing touches on the *Second Rhapsody* months before *Delicious* went into production, and his sketch for what in essence is the complete work was made when the screenplay was still in its embryonic stage. The orchestral music heard in the film is, in fact, a truncated version of the concert work, made not by Gershwin but—most probably—by Fox Studios employee Hugo Friedhofer. Nevertheless, the literature is filled with statements to the effect that the fifteen-minute *Second Rhapsody* is an expansion of a much shorter bit of music that had been written specifically for the film. (For a condensed chronology of events pertaining to *Delicious* and the *Second Rhapsody*, see Table 1, p. 147.)

## Genesis Myth

The idea that the *Second Rhapsody* is a derivative work likely owes to a misleading statement that appeared in Isaac Goldberg's 1931 *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music*<sup>4</sup> and subsequently was echoed in press reports surrounding the *Second Rhapsody*'s premiere.

In advance of the world premiere in Boston, an item in the *New York Times* apprised readers that “the new work began as incidental music to a motion picture but broadened in scope as the composer developed his ideas.”<sup>5</sup> Referring to the first of two performances in Boston, another item in the same newspaper noted: “Written originally for a motion picture, the composition as it was played today was a greatly expanded work.”<sup>6</sup> Doubtless far more influential than these brief and unsigned notices, however, was the extended review by *New York Times* music critic Olin Downes that followed the *Rhapsody*'s first presentation in Carnegie Hall. Downes wrote:

3. The search engine for the recordings section of Amazon.com yields 370 hits for Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, 355 hits for the Concerto in F, and 189 hits for *An American in Paris*. The *Second Rhapsody*, in marked contrast, yields only forty-one hits, <http://www.amazon.com/gp/homepage.html/002-7754860-8103264> (accessed 4 April 2006).

Rental of performance materials for the just-named Gershwin compositions is now controlled by European American Music Distributors. According to European American's hire library manager, between 2000 and 2005 the *Rhapsody in Blue* generated 376 rentals, the Concerto in F 106 rentals, and *An American in Paris* 129 rentals; in contrast, during that period the *Second Rhapsody* generated only twenty-six rentals (Communication between the author and European American hire library manager Amy Dickinson, 12 April 2006).

4. Isaac Goldberg, *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931).

5. “Orchestra to Offer New Gershwin Work,” *New York Times*, 21 January 1932, 17.

6. “Gershwin Wins Triumph,” *New York Times*, 30 January 1932, 13.

The score performed last night is the expansion of a five-minute sequence inserted into the picture "Delicious," a screen comedy drama, based on a story by Guy Bolton, with lyrics by Ira Gershwin and music by George, produced in 1931. The rhapsody was written in California in the Spring of the same year and later somewhat revised. Some of the comedy scenes showed the streets of New York, and for the five-minute orchestral sequence Gershwin conceived a "rivet theme" to echo the tattoo of the skyscrapers. The second rhapsody had originally the title of "Rhapsody in Rivets."<sup>7</sup>

A romantic comedy starring the popular Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell,<sup>8</sup> *Delicious* had its first New York public screenings on Christmas Day of 1931,<sup>9</sup> almost a month before Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with Gershwin as piano soloist, introduced the composition first in Boston (29 and 30 January 1932) and then in New York (5 and 6 February).<sup>10</sup> The journalists' mistakes are to an extent understandable: reporters as well as critics had access to the Boston program note in which Philip Hale directly quotes the problematic passage from the Goldberg biography,<sup>11</sup> and anyone who paid attention not just to concert activity but also to the movies might easily have observed that the *Second Rhapsody* was more than twice the length of the comparable music in the film.<sup>12</sup> Among the general public, however, only Hollywood insiders would have known that the *Second Rhapsody* was not an outgrowth of the film music but, rather, the film music's source material.

7. Olin Downes, "Music in Review," *New York Times*, 6 February 1932, 14.

8. Gaynor and Farrell were first teamed, by the Fox studio, in *Seventh Heaven* (1927). After costarring in *Street Angel* (1928), they successfully made the transition to sound films with *Lucky Star* (1929), *Sunny Side Up* (1929), *High Society Blues* (1930), *The Man Who Came Back* (1931), and *Merely Mary Ann* (1932). Following *Delicious*, they costarred in *The First Year* (1932), *Tess of the Storm Country* (1932), and *Change of Heart* (1934).

9. Mordaunt Hall's review in the *New York Times* notes that "the first showing of *Delicious*" occurred, at the Roxy, the day before ("The Screen: Janet Gaynor in a Sentimental Romance with Musical Compositions by George Gershwin," 26 December 1931, 15). In the chronology appended to Robert Wyatt and John Andrew Johnson, eds., *The George Gershwin Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), the date of the film's release is incorrectly given as 3 December (318).

10. In Boston the Gershwin work shared a program with Scriabin's 1908 *Poem of Ecstasy* and Deems Taylor's 1919 *Through the Looking Glass*. Along with the Gershwin composition, the first New York concert featured d'Indy's 1895 *Istar Variations* and Prokofiev's 1917 Symphony No. 1 in D Major ("Classical"); the second New York concert featured, along with the Gershwin composition, Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony, Nikolai Tcherepnin's *Eight Miniatures*, and a suite by Corelli (Olin Downes, "Koussevitzky Experiments," *New York Times*, 7 February 1932, 29).

11. Philip Hale, "Rhapsody, No. 2, for Orchestra—George Gershwin," Program note for Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, 29 and 30 January 1932, 838–54. I thank one of this journal's anonymous referees for bringing this source to my attention.

12. Downes seems not to have been among the film's patrons, for the scenes featuring the "rivet theme" are not comedic but nightmarish.

Although hardly a Hollywood insider, Gershwin of course knew perfectly well how both the *Second Rhapsody* and the subsequent film music came into being. He had little to say about the “Rhapsody in Rivets,”<sup>13</sup> which at various times also bore the titles “Manhattan Rhapsody” and “New York Rhapsody.”<sup>14</sup> Regarding the *Second Rhapsody*, however, he was forthright not just in his casual statements to the media but also in his careful correspondence with Goldberg. After Goldberg queried him for the sake of the soon-to-be-published biography, the composer supplied the author not only with musical notation for the *Second Rhapsody*’s principal themes but also with an explanation of the composition’s origin:

I wrote [the *Second Rhapsody*] mainly because I wanted to write a serious composition and found the opportunity in California to do it. Nearly everybody comes back from California with a western tan and a pocketful of moving-picture money. I decided to come back with both those things, and a serious composition—if the climate would let me. I was under no obligation to the Fox Company to do this. But, you know, the old artistic soul must every so often be appeased.<sup>15</sup>

Writing in advance of both the first public performances of the *Second Rhapsody* and the release of *Delicious*,<sup>16</sup> Goldberg was on the mark when he observed: “The picture . . . asks but a few minutes of what, originally, was christened *Rhapsody in Rivets*.”<sup>17</sup> He was on the mark, too, when he colorfully offered that whereas the *Rhapsody in Blue* “had been born in the upper

13. Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Rivets” should not be confused with a similarly titled animated cartoon issued by Warner Bros. in 1941. Cartoon producer Chuck Jones recalled: “[Isidore] Friz Freleng, who made the picture, seemed to have a complete disregard—perhaps contempt—for the pomp, ceremony, and sacred concept of music. Rhapsody in Rivets took the second Hungarian Rhapsody of Franz Liszt and performed a nice job of first-degree premeditated murder. The visual theme was the construction of a building. The job foreman served as orchestra conductor, using the blueprints as a score. The riveting machines served as instruments. As I describe it, this may sound like the usual cornily gagged cartoon; I assure you that it was not. The music was not used as a background, but as the dictating factor in the actions of the characters” (“Music and the Animated Cartoon,” *Hollywood Quarterly* 1 [July 1946]: 367). For more on Warner Bros.’s “Rhapsody in Rivets,” see Daniel Goldmark, *Tunes for Toons: Music and the Hollywood Cartoon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 111 and 119.

14. In the finished film a fictional composer mentions his “New York Rhapsody,” and for that reason the title is used in this essay. Various versions of the screenplay refer to the “Manhattan Rhapsody,” and the official cue sheet—dated 9 November 1931—identifies the music as “Rhapsody in Rivets.”

15. Quoted in Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 273. Goldberg does not give the date of the letter, but the same letter is quoted in Hale, “*Rhapsody*,” 842, and (with slightly different wording) in Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 176–79; in both places it is identified as being written on 30 June 1931.

16. Goldberg’s *Gershwin* was published in November 1931. Under the headline “A Group of Recent Books,” a brief, unsigned review of the book appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on 22 November 1931 (B15).

17. Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 272.



reaches of Gotham,” the *Second Rhapsody* “originated in the aphrodisiac atmosphere of Beverly Hills, California, redolent of oranges and Greta Garbo.”<sup>18</sup> But Goldberg, still playing on the natal theme, got it wrong when he claimed that the *Second Rhapsody* “was born of an orchestral sequence inserted into the picture.”<sup>19</sup>

Filled as it is with comments from the composer himself, *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music* for the most part remains unimpeachable. Goldberg’s statement that the *Second Rhapsody* “was born of” music used in the film, however, suggests an incorrect parentage.

Unfortunately, the statement proved influential. As noted, it was quoted, along with other material from Goldberg’s biography, in the program note that Philip Hale penned for the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s performances.<sup>20</sup> It was paraphrased by various journalists who, probably cribbing from Hale, wrote in advance about the Boston and New York performances, and certainly its gist was repeated by Olin Downes in his authoritative review for the *New York Times*. Thus nourished by erroneous documentation, and doubtless complicated by the fact that for a long while the film *Delicious* was unavailable for inspection,<sup>21</sup> the seed planted by Goldberg over the years grew into a sometimes richly detailed genesis myth.

The work-list appended to the article on George Gershwin in *Grove Music Online*, which advertises itself as “the world’s premiere authority on all aspects of music,” states simply—but incorrectly—that the *Second Rhapsody* was “orig[inally] composed as Manhattan Rhapsody for *Delicious*.”<sup>22</sup> This bit of misinformation is unique in its suggestion that the *Second Rhapsody* and the

18. *Ibid.*, 271.

19. *Ibid.* Goldberg died in 1938, and his misstatement was amplified by Edith Garson in her supplement to the 2nd ed. of Goldberg’s book (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1958). Commenting on Gershwin’s contribution to *Delicious*, Garson writes: “The only redeeming consequence was the *Second Rhapsody*, which had been expanded by Gershwin from some background music used briefly in the film” (341–42).

20. Hale, “*Rhapsody*,” 840.

21. *Delicious* was relatively successful at the box office, yet it paled before other Fox films starring Gaynor and Farrell. By the mid-1930s it had dropped out of circulation, and for more than a half century the only surviving print was archived at the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY. Not until 1999 did preservationists at the Eastman House restore *Delicious* to viewable form. See Brian Taves, “Archival News,” *Cinema Journal* 39, no. 4 (Summer 2000): 113. The restoration was sponsored by 20th Century-Fox. Since 2002 *Delicious* has been shown occasionally on the Fox Movie Network, but as of this writing the film is still not commercially available.

22. Wayne J. Schneider, “Orchestral” section in Work-list for “Gershwin, George” in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.grovemusic.com/shared/views/article.html?section=music.47026.6.5> (accessed 10 October 2006). The reference to the *Second Rhapsody* in Schneider’s work-list for the online article is identical to what appears in his work-list for the Gershwin article in the 2001 second edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. The work-lists for the Gershwin article in the 1986 *New Grove Dictionary of American Music* (also by Schneider) and the 1980 *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (by Charles Schwartz) make no statement about the *Second Rhapsody*’s origins.

music heard in the film are identical. Most of the other faulty sources claim that the *Second Rhapsody* was an expanded version of the music used in the film, and they tend to be seriously in error when they mention the length of the film sequence.

We have it from a 1996 biography, for example, that “as [Gershwin] originally wrote it for the film, the piece was six minutes long and he felt pleased with it,” but that before the film was released Fox “cut [the *Rhapsody*] from six minutes down to one.”<sup>23</sup> The authors of a 1993 study of Hollywood musicals note that *Delicious* is historic at least in part because “it features in the background about one minute of the six-minute orchestral work George wrote for it” and then “expanded . . . and published . . . under the title *Second Rhapsody*.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the compilers of a 1973 anthology of Gershwiniana write that *Delicious* is notable for its “one-minute use of a six-minute orchestral piece George had written for the film, later to be expanded into the *Second Rhapsody*.”<sup>25</sup> Perhaps reading between lines that do not really exist, the author of a 1997 monograph puts a sarcastic spin on the connection between the concert work and the film music: “Only one minute was used in the movie; the *Second Rhapsody* was, appropriately for the time, a salvage operation.”<sup>26</sup>

Some of the sources fueling the myth get the timing of the film sequence almost right (the film music lasts six minutes and fifty-six seconds) but nonetheless reiterate the incorrect chronology. The editor of a 1998 anthology of Gershwin material, for example, writes that “the *Second Rhapsody* is an expanded version of an eight-minute orchestral passage in the 1931 film *Delicious*.”<sup>27</sup> Likewise, a 1998 program note for the American Composers Orchestra informs listeners: “[The film music] was 8 minutes long and accompanied an urban sequence with ‘noise,’ as the accompanying dialogue put it, and ‘riveters drumming your ear from every side.’ To make an independent orchestral composition, Gershwin doubled the length of ‘New York Rhapsody’ and reshaped it.”<sup>28</sup>

Remarkably, some of the sources not only misstate the facts of chronology and the length of the film sequence but also embellish the story with motivations for the music’s alleged expansion. According to the anonymous author of a liner note for a 1962 recording of the *Second Rhapsody*, “in addition to the songs [for *Delicious*], George wrote . . . a six-minute orchestral piece to

23. Ean Wood, *George Gershwin: His Life & Music* (London: Sanctuary Publishing, 1996), 164–65, 172.

24. Richard Fehr and Frederick G. Vogel, *Lullabies of Hollywood: Movie Music and the Movie Musical, 1915–1992* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1993), 86.

25. Robert Kimball and Alfred Simon, *The Gershwins* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 132.

26. Schiff, *Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue*, 79.

27. Gregory R. Suriano, ed., *Gershwin in His Time: A Biographical Scrapbook, 1919–1937* (New York: Gramercy, 1998), xvi.

28. Carol Oja, “The Gershwin Circle.” Program note for American Composers Orchestra, 1998 season. Available at <http://www.americancomposers.org/gershwin.htm> (accessed 4 October 2005).

underscore the New York City sequences. In the final editing, only one minute of the New York City music was used. With Fox's permission, Gershwin extended his composition into a longer concert work for piano and symphony orchestra. Retaining the orchestral simulations of rivets which symbolized the galvanic growth of the big city, he added an expansive blues melody which became the core of the work."<sup>29</sup> According to a 1970 biography, "of the six-minute orchestral sequence Gershwin had written as background music for *Delicious*, only one minute was used when the motion-picture was finally released. But the entire sequence seemed so good to Gershwin that he decided to use it as the core of a major work for symphony orchestra."<sup>30</sup> And in a more recent study of Gershwin's music we read that composition of the *Second Rhapsody* was a time-filling exercise that did not begin until after Gershwin had finished his business in Hollywood and returned to New York, in late February 1931, to await the script from George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind for a projected Broadway musical:

Back in Manhattan, George used the time to expand *Manhattan Rhapsody in Rivets* from the *Delicious* score into what would become the *Second Rhapsody*. He didn't have a commission for it but, while he waited for the script for *Of Thee I Sing*, he did have the time. There was the additional advantage that, with no commission, there was no deadline so he could work at his own speed, knowing that it wasn't to be immediately premiered like his other concert works and that there was no conductor waiting to programme it for his orchestra.

He worked diligently through the spring, first expanding the movie theme into a full-blown composition, then [working] on a two-piano reduction, finally on the full orchestration.<sup>31</sup>

There was indeed a two-piano reduction, and apparently it was the playing of this (with Oscar Levant) for Koussevitzky during the Boston tryout of *Of Thee I Sing* that won the placement of the *Second Rhapsody* in the Boston Symphony Orchestra's concerts.<sup>32</sup> The "full-blown composition" from which

29. Liner note for "Gershwin by Starlight," Capitol Records SP-8581, 1962. The recording features pianist Leonard Pennario and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Alfred Newman. Along with the *Second Rhapsody*, the repertoire includes Gershwin's *Cuban Overture*, the *Variations on "I Got Rhythm,"* and a medley from the opera *Porgy and Bess*.

30. David Ewen, *George Gershwin: His Journey to Greatness* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 179.

31. Leon, *Gershwin*, 108.

32. The Boston run of *Of Thee I Sing* began on 8 December 1931; the Broadway run, at the Music Box Theatre, began eighteen days later. An unsigned item, "Activities of Musicians Here and Abroad," in the *New York Times* of 3 January 1932 notes: "George Gershwin's new composition, 'The Second Rhapsody,' which was announced for performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in that city on Jan. 29 and 30 will not be performed on those dates. It has been postponed to an unannounced date later in the season" (X8). The performances did, in fact, take place as originally scheduled.

the two-piano version derives, however, was hardly an expansion of a mere "movie theme." Work on it did not begin, as the author of an otherwise credible 1987 biography puts it, in "the second week after [Gershwin's] return from the Coast" in February 1931, nor did it primarily involve "working from the *Delicious* version" and "developing the existing themes."<sup>33</sup>

To judge from the notations on its first and last pages, the holograph full score<sup>34</sup> of the *Second Rhapsody* was begun on 14 March 1931 and finished on 23 May 1931. But the *Second Rhapsody* had been completed in sketch form almost a month before the composer departed Hollywood. Steven E. Gilbert has rightly observed that the sketch is "a working manuscript, as evidenced by the abundant changes that occurred between it and the final product."<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, the "abundant changes" for the most part concern details; in terms of structure and basic content, the sketch in essence represents the *Second Rhapsody* as it is known today.

Preserved at the Library of Congress,<sup>36</sup> the sketch consists of forty-three pages of short score plus an initial page (with crossed-out musical notation) that bears the title "George Gershwin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Rhapsody, Original manuscript." The title is in Gershwin's hand; below it, faintly written in a different hand, is the marking "California, Jan. 1931." These informative inscriptions are duly noted by Gilbert and by Charles Schwartz, both of whom have examined the sketch and closely compared it not just with the holograph full score and its 1932 published version for two pianos<sup>37</sup> but also with a rehearsal recording of the work that Gershwin made on 26 June 1931.<sup>38</sup> Neither Gilbert nor Schwartz, however, observes that at the top of the sketch's final page, clearly written in Gershwin's hand, is the name "Friedhofer."<sup>39</sup>

33. Jablonski, *Gershwin*, 212. Jablonski writes that "by the second week after the return from the Coast [Gershwin] began expanding the rhapsody" (212). In the 1973 *The Gershwin Years*, however, Jablonski (with coauthor Lawrence D. Stewart) writes: "When the Gershwins left for New York on Washington's birthday in 1931, they took back . . . the first draft of George's rhapsody" (162).

34. *Second Rhapsody*, holograph full score, Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, bound manuscript 25 (microfilm Music 1353).

35. Steven E. Gilbert, *The Music of Gershwin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 151.

36. *Second Rhapsody*, Sketch, Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, bound manuscript 27 (microfilm Music 1354).

37. *Second Rhapsody*, two-piano arrangement (New York: New World Music, 1932). The two-piano score was deposited at the Library of Congress for copyright purposes on 20 February 1932.

38. Gilbert, *Music of Gershwin*, 150–63; Charles Schwartz, *Gershwin: His Life and Music* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973), 200–204. The rehearsal recording has been preserved and is available on *Gershwin Plays Gershwin (Original Recordings, 1919–1931)*, Naxos 8.120510, and *Gershwin Performs Gershwin: Rare Recordings, 1931–1935*, Music Masters Jazz 5062.

39. Below the name "Friedhofer," also in Gershwin's hand, is the telephone number "Morn[ingside] 13186." For confirmation that this telephone number is indeed that of the residence that Hugo Friedhofer maintained in the Silver Lake district of Los Angeles, I am indebted to longtime Friedhofer associate William H. Rosar.

## Hugo Friedhofer's Involvement

Perhaps best known for his Oscar-winning score for the 1946 *The Best Years of Our Lives*, Hugo Friedhofer (1901–1981) between 1938 and 1970 composed music for more than seventy feature films. For almost as many other films, especially early in his career, he served as arranger or orchestrator.<sup>40</sup> A staff musician at Fox from 1929 to 1935, Friedhofer is surely a crucial link between Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* and the music for *Delicious*, but hitherto his involvement seems to have gone unnoticed by Gershwin scholars. Film-music historian Irene Kahn Atkins, however, briefly discussed the connection in her 1983 *Source Music in Motion Pictures*, and Friedhofer himself offered an account in the 1974 interviews that Atkins conducted as part of the American Film Institute's oral history project.<sup>41</sup>

"Friedhofer consulted with Gershwin almost daily, and laid out the first orchestral sketch from the composer's two-line sketch," Atkins writes. "The piece was scored by the studio orchestra from Gershwin's final orchestration, which he sent to California after he had returned to New York. According to Friedhofer, some cuts were made in the film to accommodate the music, which was pre-scored, but some music cuts were also necessary."<sup>42</sup>

In his own version of the story, Friedhofer was quite expansive about his contributions:

I had met George in 1931 on the *Delicious* picture. And we became quite close, because George loved to have somebody around when he was writing. I used to take his original—what were really piano parts, or two-line sketches, and blow them up. In the case of the *Second Rhapsody*, originally called *Rhapsody in Rivets*, I laid out the first orchestral sketch on it, from sitting alongside him and discussing orchestration as we went along. I think it was about three months that he was out here. I was with him practically every day, let's say from eleven o'clock in the morning until three or four in the afternoon.<sup>43</sup>

40. In 1931 alone Friedhofer contributed as orchestrator/arranger to film music not just by Gershwin but also by Reginald Bassett (*Goldie*, *The Spider*, *Transatlantic*, *The Yellow Ticket*), Peter Brunelli (*Skyline*), Arthur Kaye (*The Man Who Came Back*), and Arthur Lange (*Daddy Longlegs*); in addition, in 1931 he composed the main title music for *Always Goodbye* and wrote original music for *Heartbreak* and the Spanish-language *La Ley del Harlem*. Perhaps significantly in terms of his assignment to *Delicious*, he was the arranger for Fox's 1929 Gaynor-Farrell film *Sunny Side Up*. For a full list of Friedhofer's credits, see Clifford McCarty, *Film Composers in America: A Filmography, 1911–1970*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 105–8.

41. See Irene Kahn Atkins, *Source Music in Motion Pictures* (East Brunswick, NJ: Associated University Press, 1983), 101–3; and idem, "Oral History with Hugo Friedhofer," American Film Institute, Louis B. Mayer Library, Los Angeles, 84–90. Some portions of the 1974 oral history that pertain to Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* are reproduced in Linda Danly, ed., *Hugo Friedhofer: The Best Years of His Life; A Hollywood Master of Music for the Movies* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 48–51.

42. Atkins, *Source Music in Motion Pictures*, 101.

43. Atkins, "Oral History with Hugo Friedhofer," 83, quoted in Danly, *Hugo Friedhofer*, 48–49.

Responding to a question from Atkins about whether or not Gershwin worked on the *Second Rhapsody* *per se* while in Hollywood, Friedhofer said:

The Rhapsody was part of the score. There was a long scene in *Delicious*, where this little stowaway girl runs away because the immigration department is after her. She wanders through the streets of New York. George thought it would be a good idea to write another extended piece, because it had been some time since the Rhapsody in Blue and the Concerto and An American in Paris. This was the next one. He took my sketches and went back to New York and orchestrated the whole thing back there, but he wanted to hear parts of it to see how it worked out, and also parts of certain sequences in the picture. There was a long dream sequence that [the girl] has before she gets off the boat that's bringing her over to the United States. He wanted to hear that, which I had arranged and orchestrated, and some of the songs in the thing. So we called an orchestra session, and George, who liked to conduct, did so. And he was very pleased with the results.<sup>44</sup>

As for his involvement with the orchestration of the *Second Rhapsody*, Friedhofer said:

George followed the indications in the sketches I made, my blown-up orchestral sketches, pretty closely, except that being a pianist, he strangely enough did not have a complete understanding, at that time, of the sustaining powers of the instruments. So there were a lot of fills, which are derived from keyboard manipulation that actually are superfluous in the orchestra. . . .

So, because of his extreme pianist [*sic*] feeling, there were a lot of superfluities, which really don't matter. They don't interfere with the musical quality of the work. But they are a purely pianistic concept, which you can take or leave alone, actually. That's the trouble with being that kind of a facile pianist—to translate your pianism into terms of the orchestra is a thing that is given only to very few men, like Maurice Ravel, for instance, who could translate from one idiom into the other without any trouble.<sup>45</sup>

This is a fascinating report. Like Edward Kilenyi's account of how he assisted Gershwin in the composition of the *Second Rhapsody*, however, it perhaps should be taken with a grain of salt.<sup>46</sup> It is certain that Friedhofer, along

44. Atkins, "Oral History," 84, quoted in Danly, *Hugo Friedhofer*, 49.

45. Atkins, "Oral History," 90.

46. Edward Kilenyi (1884–1968) was Gershwin's teacher of harmony, counterpoint, and musical form from 1917 to 1921, and for more than thirty years he worked as a musical director and composer/arranger for the film industry. Kilenyi's account of his involvement with the *Second Rhapsody* appears on pp. 59–62 of his 1963 unpublished "Gershwiniana: Recollections and Reminiscences of Times Spent with My Student George Gershwin," Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection.

Kilenyi writes that he visited Gershwin while the piece still had the working title "Rhapsody in Rivets." According to Kilenyi, Gershwin expressed concern over the composition's possible formal weaknesses, whereupon Kilenyi asked him to play the entire piece and make note of its treatment of themes. After making an outline chart of the composition's structure, Kilenyi writes, he

with Fox employees Reginald Bassett and Jack Virgil, orchestrated the songs and incidental cues in *Delicious*.<sup>47</sup> But it seems unlikely that Gershwin, in New York, would have needed to base his orchestration of the *Second Rhapsody* on Friedhofer's sketches: Gershwin's manuscript sketch includes only a few indications for orchestration, but some of these are quite detailed (see, for example, Fig. 1<sup>48</sup>), and all of them are in Gershwin's hand.

Moreover, virtually all of Gershwin's work on the *Second Rhapsody* in Hollywood took place subsequent to his and his brother Ira's work on the film's songs. Six weeks after the Gershwins arrived in Hollywood in November 1930 the composer informed Goldberg: "Our picture is practically written, with the exception of a Manhattan Rhapsody—or Fantasy—which I

---

observed, "At the finishing climactic end the piano solo part has nothing to play! You would just sit there doing nothing while the audience might be even waiting for you to continue to play! They might forget to applaud!" Gershwin asked for specific details on how the finale might be improved, to which Kilenyi allegedly responded, "Before the final finishing bars the use of the main theme would be effective and would make the listener remember the main melodic theme of the whole composition." Gershwin played "a new finish according to the suggested idea," Kilenyi writes, and then immediately committed the new finale to paper. A few minutes later, Kilenyi writes, the conductor William Daly dropped by. According to Kilenyi, Gershwin exclaimed, "Look, Bill, what changes Edward suggested for the finish of the Rhapsody." After Gershwin and Daly played through the revision, Kilenyi writes, "Both of them were pleased, indeed."

After this incident, Kilenyi writes, he and Gershwin continued to discuss the new work and its possible titles. Kilenyi claims that he suggested the piece be called simply *Second Rhapsody*, whereupon "they liked the idea at once and decided on it as the definite title." The title having been determined, Kilenyi writes, Gershwin said that he wanted to arrange a rehearsal recording. "About a month later or so," Kilenyi writes, Gershwin "phoned and invited me for a private recording at the National Broadcasting Company."

There is no corroborating evidence that Kilenyi actually made the contributions to the *Second Rhapsody* that he says he did. As has been noted, the final date on the holograph full score is 23 May 1931, and the private recording was made on 26 June 1931. As has also been noted, the sketch from January 1931 not only bears the title "2nd Rhapsody" but represents, in essence, the complete work. In the sketch as in the full score, the finale calls for both a recapitulation of the "main theme"—that is, the material that Gershwin described as his "Brahms theme"—and the prominent involvement of the solo piano.

47. According to the notes that Clifford McCarty made in preparation for his *Film Composers in America* (archived at the Margaret Herrick Library at the Fairbanks Center for Motion Picture Study in Beverly Hills, CA), Friedhofer and Virgil each orchestrated five cues, and Bassett orchestrated one. The Friedhofer cues amount to fourteen pages of music, the Virgil cues amount to six pages of music, and the single Bassett cue (the main title sequence) amounts to one page of music.

48. The material is equivalent to R22, mm. 1–2, in both the published two-piano version and the holograph full score. The indications for orchestration in the manuscript sketch are realized in the holograph full score, with the following exceptions, all of which concern the material that begins in the example's first measure: the English horn is not assigned the melody but, rather, the ornamental figure indicated in cue-sized notes; the second violins have the harmonizing melodic material indicated, but the material is notated an octave higher; the violas are not assigned the ornamental figure but, rather, the melody one octave below the first violins.

G. Schirmer, Inc., New York

Figure 1 Gershwin, *Second Rhapsody*, manuscript sketch, p. 21. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

am going to write for it.”<sup>49</sup> Following the January 1932 premiere of the *Second Rhapsody* in Boston, Gershwin told a newspaper reporter that “the amount of music which the picture required was small and quickly written” and that upon its completion he had “seven weeks of almost uninterrupted opportunity to write the best music I could possibly think of!”<sup>50</sup> Although Gershwin claimed that “the parties and night life of Hollywood did not interest me in the least,” there is evidence that he did plenty of socializing while the *Rhapsody* was in progress, and, as one biographer puts it, “to judge from [Gershwin’s] activities during this period it is obvious he did not spend all his waking hours on [the *Rhapsody*].”<sup>51</sup>

49. Gershwin, letter to Goldberg, quoted—and dated approximately—in Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 160, and Jablonski, *Gershwin*, 205. In his program note for the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s premiere of the *Second Rhapsody* Philip Hale quotes the passage and gives 22 December 1930 as the letter’s date (“*Rhapsody*,” 840).

50. Quoted in Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 180.

51. Jablonski, *Gershwin*, 207–8. For details on Gershwin’s socializing in Hollywood, see *ibid.*, 207–9; Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 160–67; and Schwartz, *Gershwin*, 199–202.



In other words, Friedhofer could hardly have spent between four and five hours “practically every day” for three months helping Gershwin orchestrate the *Second Rhapsody*. Doubtless Friedhofer did have advice for Gershwin, but in all likelihood the “first orchestral sketch” that Friedhofer claims to have “laid out” on Gershwin’s initial keyboard lines amounted to little more than a set of verbal suggestions. In any case, if Friedhofer’s ideas for orchestration were indeed committed to paper, they are not to be found in the Gershwin Collection at the Library of Congress, in the Friedhofer archives at Brigham Young University, or in the files related to *Delicious* that since 1994 have been housed at JoAnn Kane Music Service in Culver City, California.<sup>52</sup>

At the JoAnn Kane facility, however, there is a document that not only links Friedhofer directly with Gershwin but which also shows that, in terms of musical structure, the rhapsody heard in the film is likely more Friedhofer’s work than Gershwin’s. Discovered in May 2005, this is a full-size photostatic copy of the holograph full score held by the Library of Congress. Whereas the holograph consists of twenty large folio sheets containing a title page and seventy-six pages of music, the photostat consists of single-page copies of the same material, taped back back-to-back, with the resulting double-sided pages arranged in recto-verso format and bound with string.<sup>53</sup> The Culver City document appears to be the conductor’s score that was used when the music was recorded at the Fox studio, probably late in October 1931, shortly before editing of *Delicious* was completed.<sup>54</sup> Except for an insert on Fox Studios manuscript paper (described below), the score contains nothing to suggest that Gershwin’s orchestration, tempo markings, or performance directives were to be in any way altered. In three places, however, groups of pages are joined together with paper clips,<sup>55</sup> and the implied truncations of the score

52. JoAnn Kane Music Service is a music preparation company that proofreads full scores and extracts instrumental parts from them for use in film- and television-related recording sessions. Upon learning in 1994 that 20th Century-Fox planned to discard vintage materials from its music libraries, JoAnn Kane offered to house the material at her own facility (Telephone communication with JoAnn Kane, 27 July 2006).

53. A photograph in the 1980 article by Charles Schwartz, “Gershwin, George,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980), 7:302, shows Gershwin and Serge Koussevitzky sitting together on a couch and perusing a score. According to Wayne Shirley, the score in the photograph is that of the *Second Rhapsody* (“George Gershwin: Yes, the Sounds as Well as the Tunes Are His,” *Schwann Opus* [Fall 1998]: 9a). Presumably another photostatic copy of the holograph, the score is bound and features a cover.

54. *Delicious* was in production from 29 August to 10 November 1931 (Alan Gevinson, ed., *Within Our Gates—Ethnicity in American Feature Films, 1911–1960* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997], 272). In *Source Music in Motion Pictures*, Atkins writes: “It has not been possible to determine who did the conducting for the [*Delicious*] film music, but it was probably Fox musical director Samuel Kaylin” (101). According to McCarty’s notes for *Film Composers in America*, the music director for the film was Max Lipschultz.

55. When the photostatic copy of the holograph full score was examined, these clips, to judge from the extent of their corrosion and the depth of the indentations they made on the paper, seemed to have been there for a very long time, possibly since their original placement.

correspond precisely with what transpires in the actual film music. Moreover, the photostat score is boldly annotated, in Friedhofer's hand,<sup>56</sup> with 'punch marks' that indicate moments when music is to be synchronized with filmic action,<sup>57</sup> and on one page there appears a reference to a specific scene.<sup>58</sup> Whereas anything that Friedhofer might have contributed to the music's orchestration remains a matter for speculation, the Culver City score represents solid evidence of precisely how Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* was trimmed down—probably by Friedhofer, and probably independent of Gershwin's input—into the "New York Rhapsody" sequence in *Delicious*.<sup>59</sup>

### Evolution of the *Delicious* Screenplay

An extended orchestral composition is not prescribed in the earliest treatment of what eventually became the screenplay for *Delicious*, and Gershwin—in his comments to the press upon his arrival in Hollywood—gives no hint that an orchestral composition was in the offing. As reported in the *Los Angeles Times* on 23 November 1930,

He plans to entertain his public, "write a couple of good tunes," if he "can get them" and have a good orchestra. He proposes to write his music on the lot where the picture is being made and take fourteen weeks to do it in. He has never been a picture fan nor has he been eager to try his hand at it. He is glad, however, to have been asked to write music for the pictures at a time when other songwriters are giving it up for two reasons.

One is, of course, that he is naturally flattered to be offered a big sum to come out here when most of the other composers are on their way east. The other is that it leaves him with a free hand. . . . [He] is to be allowed to do it in his own way. He is going to do it with one eye on possible box-office receipts

56. That the markings are Friedhofer's can be confirmed by comparing them with examples of his handwriting as reproduced in, for example, Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1992), 218–19 and 230.

57. A 'punch mark' in a conductor's score for Hollywood film music from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s typically took the form of a relatively large X, or cross, enclosed in a circle. Punch marks were so called because they corresponded with holes punched in the film that during a recording session was projected on a screen at the rear of the orchestra; the punched holes resulted in bright flashes of light and thus provided the conductor with visual cues for the starting points of certain passages.

58. The word "GRAVEYARD" is printed at R10 (p. 17) of the Culver City score.

59. The accuracy of the photostatic copy of the holograph full score is easily verified by comparison of the score to the music as heard in the film. When conductor John Mauceri recreated the "New York Rhapsody" in 1991 for a concert at the Hollywood Bowl, he based his score entirely on an archival sound track (this version of the "New York Rhapsody," featuring the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and pianist Wayne Marshall under Mauceri's direction, was released on *The Gershwins in Hollywood*, Philips 434 2742). The full score in which Mauceri made the appropriate cuts was not the holograph but the 1952 published version, with orchestration by Robert McBride (Personal communication from John Mauceri, 20 April 2006).

**Table 1** Chronology of Events Pertaining to *Delicious* and the *Second Rhapsody*

early September 1930	<i>Sky Line</i> "outline scenario" does not include Rhapsody sequence
17 September 1930	Screenwriter Guy Bolton informs Fox story department that he has not yet had a chance to meet with the Gershwins
mid-November 1930	Gershwin arrives in Hollywood
22 December 1930	Gershwin writes to Isaac Goldberg: "Our picture is practically written, with the exception of a Manhattan Rhapsody—or Fantasy—which I am going to write for it."
3 January 1931	<i>Skyline/Delicious</i> "final shooting script" #1 describes "Manhattan Rhapsody" sequence
16 January 1931	<i>Delicious</i> "final shooting script" #2 includes changes in "Manhattan Rhapsody" sequence
late (?) January 1931	Sketch of <i>Second Rhapsody</i> completed
late February 1931	Gershwin returns to New York
14 March 1931	Gershwin begins work on full score of <i>Second Rhapsody</i>
23 May 1931	Gershwin completes full score of <i>Second Rhapsody</i>
26 June 1931	Gershwin makes rehearsal recording of <i>Second Rhapsody</i>
30 June 1931	Gershwin writes to Goldberg: "I wrote it [the <i>Second Rhapsody</i> ] mainly because I wanted to write a serious composition and found the opportunity in California to do it."
22 August 1931	<i>Delicious</i> "final shooting script" #3 is identical, vis-à-vis the Rhapsody sequence, to the 16 January script
29 August 1931	<i>Delicious</i> principal photography begins
15 October 1931	Bolton's "Routine of 'New York Rhapsody'" makes reference to drawings done by the Fox process department
9 November 1931	<i>Delicious</i> cue sheet mentions "Rhapsody in Rivets"
10 November 1931	<i>Delicious</i> production ends
25 December 1931	<i>Delicious</i> opens in New York
29–30 January 1932	<i>Second Rhapsody</i> performed in Boston
5–6 February 1932	<i>Second Rhapsody</i> performed in New York
20 February 1932	Two-piano version of <i>Second Rhapsody</i> deposited at Library of Congress for copyright purposes

so as to please everyone concerned and so as to make some more pictures. One thing he isn't going to do is to put in too much music. In his opinion the failures have had too much irrelevant music[,] that is, music for its own sake which didn't belong in the story and made the picture unreal.<sup>60</sup>

Even in its formative stages, however, the film's plot resonates with suggestions for music. Based on an original story by Guy Bolton<sup>61</sup> and originally

60. Isabel Morse Jones, "George Gershwin Soft Pedals in New Musical Job," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 November 1930, B13.

61. "According to information in the legal records [of 20th Century-Fox, housed in the Theater Arts Library of the University of California, Los Angeles], the story was based on a play

given the working titles “Sky Line” and “Skyline,”<sup>62</sup> the plot centers on a young immigrant woman who, despite the sincere affections of a fellow immigrant, opts to give her heart to a wealthy New Yorker.<sup>63</sup> An eighteen-page “Sky Line Outline Scenario” begins with a colorful description of shipboard activity:

An Atlantic liner is ploughing westward. . . . The picture is kaleidoscopic. Something in the nature of an impromptu kermis is in progress. An accordion player is playing a German folk song in lusty style. He stops and a snatch of Irish music supervenes. Someone calls for Sascha. Sascha is appealed to, to play his fiddle. He does so. Russian music now. The camera picks out Russian faces smiling or tragic.

This finishes amid applause and Sascha turns to a girl perched on a bulkhead swinging her legs. The music tells us as much as the little “burr” in her speech that she is from Scotland. Her name is Heather Gordon.<sup>64</sup>

Although he is traveling in steerage, Sascha nevertheless meets a nightclub owner, Chick Harker, who offers him a job, and soon afterward he has the opportunity to perform in one of the ship’s official entertainments. Sascha has his papers in order, but Heather does not. Rather than deal with immigration officials, upon arrival in New York she smuggles herself into the city by hiding in the container that houses the polo pony of wealthy socialite Larry Beaumont: “Heather’s impressions of New York are all of sounds—the roar of the elevated, the tooting of motor-horns, the hoarse bursts of newsboys, the staccato clamor of steam-drills and the sharper percussion of the steel-riveters. Gradually these noises die down. A tugboat toots. A sound steamer answers. The van is crossing the Williamsburg bridge.”<sup>65</sup>

Larry discovers Heather, and quickly enough the two of them fall in love. Only after Larry is seriously injured in a polo accident is Heather forced to leave the shelter of Larry’s townhouse. She flees to the nightclub, where

---

by Guy Bolton, which was produced in London, but no other information concerning the play has been located. . . . The legal records also contain information about a \$1,500,000 suit by Corinne Swenson, also known as Marnie Manix, for the alleged unauthorized use of her story ‘Lucky Molly Brown.’ The suit was settled in May 1933 when the studio bought the story for \$3,000” (Gevinson, *Within Our Gates*, 273).

Before moving to Hollywood, Bolton was a writer of Broadway comedies. His career is documented in Lee Davis, *Bolton and Wodehouse and Kern: The Men Who Made Musical Comedy* (New York: James H. Heineman, 1993).

62. Aside from its setting in Manhattan, the screenplay of *Delicious* bears no resemblance to that of *Skyline*, a 1931 Fox film directed by Sam Taylor and based on Felix Riesenberg’s novel *East Side, West Side*.

63. From its inception, *Delicious* was intended to be a vehicle for Gaynor and Farrell. Casting of the other characters was not settled until shortly before the film went into production.

64. “Sky Line Outline Scenario,” n.d., document 703-1, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, 1.

65. *Ibid.*, 9.

Sascha “plays part of a composition he is at work on to Heather. It is based on Heather’s dream of America and its freedom; Mr. Ellis of Ellis Island, the shining towers of New York, etc.”<sup>66</sup> Sascha of course is himself in love with Heather; even though he is aware of Heather’s feelings for Larry, he offers to solve her immigration problems by marrying her. Hopelessly on the lam, and fearing the worst for Larry, Heather reluctantly consents. Just before the wedding, Larry recovers and seeks out Heather. As described in the outline scenario, the story ends poignantly:

Larry arrives while Chick and Sascha are talking.

“You’ll never find any happiness marrying a girl that loves another man,” Chick tells him.

When Larry arrives Chick tells Heather that Sascha realizes his mistake. He will try to be happy in her happiness. As she and Larry are left alone they hear the strains of Sascha’s violin. He has found the last phrase of his concerto.”<sup>67</sup>

This outline scenario bears no date, but clearly it precedes a one-page letter dated 17 September 1930 in which Bolton advises a Fox executive: “I am sending you herewith the revised outline. The Gershwins have had no time to work with me and hence I have not been able to make a layout with a musical framework.”<sup>68</sup> That the musical content of the film was at this point far from decided is evident from the letter’s final paragraph: “By the way, how many musical spots do you think we should have? I am planning on five distinct numbers in addition to which there will be a couple of reprises and—naturally—incidental music such as the snatches of folk songs among the emigrants.”<sup>69</sup>

Nevertheless, the above-cited initial outline suggests that before September 1930 at least some discussion of the film’s music had already taken place. According to the outline, when Sascha first arrives at the nightclub he discovers that the three Russian musicians who are already employed there are named Mischa, Yascha, and Toscha. Although not published until May 1932 as a bonus insert in the limited-edition Random House version of *George Gershwin’s Song-Book*,<sup>70</sup> “Mischa, Yascha, Toscha, Sascha” was a novelty number the Gershwins had performed at private parties since as early as 1920.<sup>71</sup>

66. *Ibid.*, 15.

67. *Ibid.*, 18.

68. Guy Bolton, letter to Al Lewis, 17 September 1930. Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California. At the time, veteran Broadway producer Albert E. Lewis was the head of Fox Studios’ story department.

69. *Ibid.*

70. The Random House edition of *George Gershwin’s Song-Book*, with its three hundred copies signed by both George Gershwin and illustrator Alajálov, came out four months in advance of the general issue edition published by Simon and Schuster. The *Song-Book* contained solo piano versions, supposedly based on the composer’s improvisations, of eighteen Gershwin songs.

71. Deena Rosenberg, *Fascinating Rhythm: The Collaboration of George and Ira Gershwin* (New York: Plume, 1993), 42–44. Ira Gershwin has noted that he and his brother performed the song “circa 1921.” Ira Gershwin, *Lyrics on Several Occasions* (New York: Knopf, 1959), 178. The

The preexisting song, ultimately, was not used in *Delicious*, but it seems clear that screenwriter Bolton (and his collaborator Sonya Levien) at least made an effort to work it into the script. Similarly, there is evidence that even in the early stages of the script's development Bolton sought to accommodate the song that eventually lent the film its title. Pencil'd in on page 10 of the outline, at the point when Larry first realizes he is in love with Heather, is the question: "Number Delicious?"<sup>72</sup>

Bolton's revised "outline scenario" is dated 18 September 1930 and is accompanied by "notes to be read in connection with the second outline of *Skyline*." The four-page set of notes has to do primarily with details of plot, including the development of "a really good part" for actor Victor McLaglen.<sup>73</sup> Bolton suggests casting McLaglen as the nightclub owner who, instead of the Russian immigrant, might serve as the plot's romantic foil. But Bolton observes: "The chief disadvantage of this scheme is that it eliminates Sascha. Not that I care much for this type of character but he does fit in with the musical atmosphere. Of course the 'Yascha, Mischa, Toscha, Sascha' number can be done by four very minor characters and Sascha could be a boy who comes over on the boat but remains a background figure."<sup>74</sup> Bolton also cautions:

Heather's dream of America, the land of freedom and its translation into a symphony, might not work anyway. It is largely an experimental thought.

We certainly gain drama by substituting Chick Harker for Sascha. We will also gain comedy. Musically we may suffer slightly, but this is really impossible to say until I have had a chance to thrash out the matter with George Gershwin.<sup>75</sup>

As things worked out, McLaglen was not cast in the film, and the entire nightclub idea was eventually eliminated. Heather's reverie, however, was retained, although it was translated not into "a symphony" but a comic song-and-dance number featured early in the film and identified in the production materials as "Dream Sequence."<sup>76</sup> There is no mention, either in the 18 Sep-

given names of the title are borrowed from Mischa Elman, Jascha Heifetz, Toscha Seidel, and Sascha Jacobson, each of whom was a prominent Russian-born violinist based in New York in the early 1920s.

72. "Sky Line Outline Scenario" (document 703-1), 10. According to Jablonski and Stewart, the song "Delicious" had been "played in New York for visiting journalists as early as" April 1930, and presumably it was heard by Bolton as well (*Gershwin Years*, 160). Doubtless Bolton quickly realized that "Delicious" could not be assigned to the American-born character of Larry, for the gimmick of its lyric is based on a foreigner's mispronunciation of the title word.

73. "Notes to be read in connection with the second outline of *Skyline*," 17 September 1930, Document 703-1, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, 1.

74. *Ibid.*, 2.

75. *Ibid.*, 2-3.

76. An incomplete holograph piano-vocal score and a copyist's piano-vocal score for the "Dream Sequence" of the *Second Rhapsody* are held at the Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, box 4, folders 10 and 11.

tember revised scenario or in Bolton's notes, of a New York street scene accompanied by an extended orchestral sequence. Appended to the set of notes is a "musical layout" that calls only for

1. The Melting Pot—music of various nationalities
2. Duet for Larry and Heather—Delicious
3. Comedy duet—Blah, Blah, Blah
4. Big production number (at Meadowbrook Club)
- 4a. Reprise
5. Sascha, Mischa, Yascha, Toscha
6. Number—Heather
7. Reprise<sup>77</sup>

The three songs named by title in the "musical layout" had been written before George and Ira Gershwin set out for Hollywood in November 1930. As mentioned above, "Delicious" dates from early in 1930 and "Mischa, Yascha, Toscha, Sascha" dates from around 1920; "Blah, Blah, Blah" is a reworking of "Lady of the Moon," originally written in 1929 for a Flo Ziegfeld production to be titled *East Is West* and then, after that project was abandoned, revised as "I Just Looked at You" for, but dropped from, Ziegfeld's *Show Girl*.<sup>78</sup>

Dated 3 January 1931, a document identified as a "final shooting script" for "(Skyline) Delicious" shows that by this point the plot had evolved considerably from that represented in the outlines and, indeed, had begun to resemble the narrative of the completed film. The script per se is prefaced by lyrics not only for "Mischa, Yascha, Toscha, Sascha" and "Blah, Blah, Blah" but also for three songs—"You Started It," "Somebody from Somewhere," and "Katinkitschka"—that the Gershwins wrote in Hollywood. Significantly, the script calls for "The Manhattan Rhapsody."

According to the 3 January script, the "Manhattan Rhapsody" is to be introduced in a chamber-music version played by Sascha (no longer a violinist but a pianist) and his friends to cover the sound of Heather fleeing from immigration officials. Then, during Heather's flight, it is to be presented in its orchestral form. As scripted, the orchestral music accompanies this scenario: "Heather walking aimlessly along the downtown section of New York—near where she lived with the troupe . . . a barrel organ is playing—a few children are dancing . . . hucksters with side-walk barrows . . . drunken sailors reeling along and stopping to look at Heather. Frightened, she hurries on."<sup>79</sup> The next scene is set in the Wall Street district, where "she is almost solitary

77. "Notes," n.p.

78. Schwartz, *Gershwin*, 162, 200, and 305.

79. "Skyline/Delicious Final Shooting Script," 3 January 1931, document 703-2B, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, 91.

now—only nightwatchmen and policemen—empty canyons—dark, towering skyscrapers reaching the sky, and they seem, to the tiny weary figure trudging the street, like perpendicular accordions swaying dizzily and about to collapse and fall upon her.”<sup>80</sup>

Toward the end of Scene 82 come superimposed images, of Larry and his polo pony, of the immigration officer chasing Heather, and of “Sascha and the troupe playing the MANHATTAN RHAPSODY.”<sup>81</sup> In Scene 83 the orchestral version of the Rhapsody plays as Heather, presumably contemplating suicide, makes her way to the wharf. Scene 84 has Heather changing her mind and walking toward a police station in order to surrender. Superimposed on this is “Sascha playing at the piano . . . the others of the troupe in deep shadow about him—all playing the Rhapsody. Sascha breaks down—as if he, too, cannot go on . . . music stops dead.”<sup>82</sup>

Despite its hopeful label, this script was not the final one. Many changes would be made before *Delicious* went into production, but from this point on a sequence accompanied by orchestral music—perhaps inspired by Heather’s sonic “impressions of New York” as described in the initial outline—was definitely part of the plan. It was an ambitious idea. While extended passages of orchestral music indeed accompanied wordless footage in the earliest days of the sound film,<sup>83</sup> this practice was all but abandoned as soon as the industry availed itself of the new sound-on-film recording technology that allowed sound and image to be recorded simultaneously on the same reel of film stock;<sup>84</sup> largely for practical reasons, underscoring did not begin until early in

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., 92.

83. Uninterrupted musical accompaniments had been the norm for so-called silent films since before World War I, and some of Hollywood’s more ambitious efforts from about 1915 to 1925 were supported by specially composed orchestral scores whose well-rehearsed performers traveled with the films. The first wave of so-called sound films (from 1926 to 1928) were in effect ‘silent’ films more or less synchronized with orchestral music recorded on disc.

84. Hollywood films from 1930 through 1932 are not devoid of orchestral music. Except for the music that typically accompanies the title credits, the music that often is introduced thirty seconds or so before a film’s conclusion, and the music that occasionally accompanies a montage sequence, however, almost all the music in these films—vocal as well as instrumental—is diegetic. Diegetic music is so called because it belongs to the film’s diegesis, or narrative, and thus it is music that presumably is heard by the film’s characters. In Hollywood films from the early 1930s diegetic music—often referred to as ‘source music’ by persons within the film industry—typically takes the form of either mechanical music, presented via radio or phonograph, or live music, performed by on-screen musicians or by musicians whose presence at a scene’s locale is at least implied. For more on the use of music in the early sound film, see Mark Evans, *Soundtrack: The Music of the Movies* (New York: Hopkinson and Blake, 1975), 11–21; Roy Prendergast, *Film Music*, 19–34; and Russell Lack, *Twenty-four Frames Under: A Buried History of Film Music* (London: Quartet Books, 1997), 63–111. For more on sound-on-film technology, see Douglas Gomery, *The Coming of Sound: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 23–54; and Scott Eyman, *The Speed of Sound: Hollywood and the Talkie Revolution, 1926–1930* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 187–219.



1933.<sup>85</sup> To judge from the emphasis placed upon it in the early scenarios, Gershwin's rhapsody was never intended to serve as mere background music, and documentary evidence makes it clear that it was to be given special treatment not just in terms of allotted time but also in terms of performing resources. Dating from a period when the typical orchestra for a Hollywood film emulated the makeup of a theater orchestra and consisted of about thirty musicians, a penciled note at the top of one of the lyric sheets that preface the 3 January script reads: "Rhapsody, 60 men."

The rhapsody takes on a new name in the next "final shooting script," which is dated 16 January 1931. Although in this document the description of Heather's wanderings through the city is largely the same as in the earlier script, the revised script nevertheless features changes regarding the treatment of the music. Scene 83-A (just before Heather enters the police station) depicts "Heather passing a riveter on a steel sculpture—and the noise of his pneumatic riveter blends with music."<sup>86</sup> The music does not end abruptly with an image of Sascha breaking down emotionally; rather, it simply "comes to an end" after Heather enters the police station and approaches the desk sergeant.<sup>87</sup> Significantly, throughout this section (Scenes 82–85) the orchestral composition is identified not as the "Manhattan Rhapsody" but as the "New York Rhapsody."

In addition to words for the songs named above, the lyric sheets that preface the 16 January script for *Delicious* include words for the title song. The sound track notes for the script's final scene, in which Larry and Heather emerge from a shipboard cabin after being married by the ship's captain,

85. The term 'underscore' refers to music that plays under a scene that also includes, typically, dialogue and sound effects. Writers on film who use the term 'diegetic music' to refer to music that is somehow contained within the filmic narrative tend to use the term 'non-diegetic music' to refer to music that exists outside the boundaries of the narrative; in the film industry, underscore is often called 'background music.'

The first successful, and highly influential, underscore is the music that Max Steiner composed for RKO's *King Kong*, which premiered on 2 March 1933. Steiner, however, had experimented with underscore in his music for RKO's 1932 *The Bird of Paradise* and *Symphony of Six Million*.

In an article on the technology that made underscoring feasible, Barry Salt writes: "By 1933 it was possible to mix a separately recorded music track with the synchronous dialogue track recording after the editing stage without audible loss of sound quality at the extra film recording stage, and from this point on 'background music' came to be used more and more extensively. (Up to 1932 there was, roughly speaking, either dialogue or music on the sound track, but never both together unless they had been recorded simultaneously)" ("Film Style and Technology in the Thirties," *Film Quarterly* 30, no. 1 [Autumn 1976], 30).

The rhapsody sequence in *Delicious* indeed features a mix of music, dialogue, and sound effects; presumably the music was recorded under optimal conditions, then rerecorded simultaneously with the "live" performance of dialogue and the playback of recorded sound effects.

86. "Delicious Final Shooting Script," 16 January 1931, document 703-2C, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, 93.

87. *Ibid.*

specify: "From outside on deck we hear the orchestra playing the song of [Heather's] dream come true—perhaps even some of the musicians are singing it—but all out of scene."<sup>88</sup>

A lyric sheet for the indicated "Song of Dream"—presumably a variant of the "Dream Sequence" featured early in the film—is not included in the prefatory material for the 16 January script. In the next "final shooting script," dated 22 August 1931, the "Song of Dream" has been dropped; after Larry and Heather are married, the sound track notes call for simply the title song.<sup>89</sup> Also dropped from the script are the songs "Mischa, Yascha, Toscha, Sascha" and "You Started It."<sup>90</sup> The scenes have been renumbered to accommodate a considerable amount of action inserted early in the film, but in the portions that concern the rhapsody the 22 August script and the 16 January script are identical.

The last document in the Fox script files pertaining to *Delicious* is not a shooting script but, rather, a "Routine of New York Rhapsody" signed by Bolton and dated 15 October 1931. It begins with a one-page note that, in brief, describes "the DISSOLVES that show the wanderings of Heather while the sound track carries the NEW YORK RHAPSODY":

Heather starts from the flat in Varrick Street, crossing through a street with a night market of produce displayed on barrows, to West Broadway. In proceeding down West Broadway with the elevated structure overhead, she passes Subway Station with newsboys, sees the acetylene torch workers working on tracks under the El; starts across street and is saved from being run down by a truck. She arrives at the back of St. Paul's Churchyard where she is accosted by a beggar; she enters the Churchyard, sees the tombstones that appear like ghosts to her; arrives on Broadway and sees the buildings towering around her and the structural steel workers working at night on a building. She then enters City Hall Park, which is substituted for Central Park as is now shown on drawing. She crosses over to the Municipal building with its long row of columns which change in her imagination into policemen; she then speaks to a single policeman who directs her to the river. She passes under Brooklyn Bridge; arrives at dock; contemplates throwing herself in the water but is stopped by old woman. She leaves dock; turns along water front, finds police station and gives herself up.<sup>91</sup>

88. *Ibid.*, 98.

89. "Delicious Final Shooting Script," 22 August 1931, document 703-2D, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, 104.

90. "You Started It" is not included in the script for *Delicious*, but early in the film an instrumental version of the song is played by the ship's salon band.

91. "Routine of New York Rhapsody," 15 October 1931, document 703-3, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, n.p.

After this comes a five-page “detailed routine.” The scene numbers, Bolton notes, correspond with drawings already made by Fox’s process department, and in many cases they are presented out of order. At the end of the document Bolton indicates that his “routine” does not include “the close-ups of Heather, and the double exposures showing Sascha and his brothers playing the Rhapsody, which will overlie the action in several places. The spots at which these are to be inserted can be determined later and would only cause confusion if indicated here.”<sup>92</sup>

Not mentioned in the one-page synopsis is an encounter, just before Heather enters the park, with an old man. “Why don’t you look where you’re going?” the old man asks after Heather accidentally bumps into him. Heather says: “It’s the music. It keeps drumming in my ears.” The old man replies: “Music! You must be crazy!”<sup>93</sup> Like a carefully scripted encounter with a dog and a group of newsboys—indeed, like most of the images limned in detail in the 15 October 1931 scenario—the incident involving the old man is not included in the final version of *Delicious*. The line about “music drumming in [one’s] ears,” however, does figure in the film. It is assigned not to Heather but to Sascha, and in a way that to a certain extent challenges the idea, expressed by Gershwin via Goldberg, that the rhapsody has no program.<sup>94</sup>

### The Program of the “New York Rhapsody”

In the finished film, the nondiegetic orchestral music is preceded by a diegetic summary of its main themes. Warned that the police have arrived at Larry’s townhouse, Heather flees to Sascha’s apartment. She quietly enters the apartment as Sascha,<sup>95</sup> unaware of her arrival, is playing the piano (Ex. 1<sup>96</sup>):

92. *Ibid.*, 5.

93. *Ibid.*, 4.

94. Writing of the *Second Rhapsody*, Goldberg states simply: “It has no program” (*Gershwin*, 273). Jablonski quotes directly from the Gershwin letter on which Goldberg apparently based this assertion. “There is no program to the *Rhapsody*. As the part of the picture where it is to be played takes place in many streets of New York, I used [as] a starting-point what I called ‘a rivet theme,’ but, after that, I just wrote a piece of music without any program” (Gershwin, letter to Goldberg, n.d., quoted in Jablonski, *Gershwin Years*, 212).

95. Sascha is portrayed by Brazilian actor Raul Roulien. The piano playing, for both the diegetic précis and the non-diegetic “New York Rhapsody,” is done by Marvine Maazel, who in the film is assigned the role of Sascha’s cellist brother Toscha. Gershwin had been familiar with Maazel’s playing at least since 10 February 1931, when he attended a recital (at Los Angeles’s *Philharmonic Auditorium*) during which Maazel performed Gershwin’s *Preludes* as an encore (Isabel Morse Jones, “Exacting Program Offered,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11 February 1931, A9).

96. This musical example and the six that follow are based on material in the published two-piano score yet represent—based on aural evidence—what pianist Maazel actually plays on the film sound track during the specified time periods. The material illustrated here is largely the same

Example 1 *Delicious*, 1:26:20–1:26:51. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

**Sostenuto e con moto** (♩ = 76)

*mf espressively*

*molto rit.*

as that assigned to Piano II in the two-piano score at R21. In the two-piano score, the first left-hand chord of m. 6 is not arpeggiated, the left hand has no eighth note at the end of m. 7, a slur connects the last right-hand chord of m. 9 to the first chord of m. 10, the left-hand melody in m. 10 is slurred, and no *ritardando* is indicated in m. 10. The material also closely resembles mm. 209–218 (mm. 1–10 on page 21) of the manuscript sketch and the illustration, in Gershwin's hand, that is included in Goldberg (*Gershwin*, 271); both the Goldberg illustration and the manuscript sketch indicate that the material is to be played by the orchestra, not the piano, and in neither passage are there arpeggio markings. In the holograph full score, the material in this example is assigned to the full orchestra, with the doubled first and second violins carrying the melody, and the entire theme is never given to the piano. In mm. 4–5 after R25, however, the piano—lightly accompanied by horns—has a variant of the cadential figure (in A major, with left-hand eighth notes for the last six beats of the second measure); in mm. 6–10 after R25 and mm. 1–7 after R26 the piano treats the material sequentially; at R28, as the tempo changes to Allegretto (quarter note = 108), the unaccompanied piano plays an F-major variant of the theme.

The music breaks off as Sascha notices Heather. During the ensuing dialogue Sascha learns, and sadly accepts, the truth of Heather's love for Larry. Heather is teary-eyed, but Sascha cheerfully says: "Don't cry. I've got some good news. I've just finished my New York Rhapsody. Would you like to hear it?" Still crying, Heather responds: "I'd love to." Sascha then offers a gloss on the composition's main themes. His verbal descriptions and the corresponding musical examples are as follows:

"It begins like we all see the city first. The great towers, almost in the clouds"  
(Ex. 297).

**Example 2** *Delicious*, 1:29:06–1:29:14. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

**Moderato e rhythmato**

97. The material is similar, but not identical, to mm. 7–11 of the Piano II part in the published two-piano version and mm. 1–5 of the manuscript sketch. The two-piano version begins with the chord  $c''-f''-a''-d'''$  in the right hand and, in the third measure, features a left-hand chromatic descent from  $g_b$  to  $F$ ; the manuscript sketch lacks the right-hand  $f'$  in the first measure and, in the third measure, has the treble chord  $f'-a'-c''-d'''-g''$  (in the holograph score, the initial statement of this theme is taken not by the piano but by the full orchestra). Significantly, at 1:29:08 the film cuts to an image of the pianist's (that is, Maazel's) hands, and the audience member can see as well as hear the performance of the material shown in the example's third and fourth measures.

“Down below, in the long furrows, human seeds trying to grow to the light”  
(Ex. 3<sup>98</sup>).

**Example 3** *Delicious*, 1:29:23–1:29:29. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

**Marcato**

“And noise” (Ex. 4<sup>99</sup>).

**Example 4** *Delicious*, 1:29:31–1:29:35. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

**Allegro** (♩ = 144)

98. The material is similar, but not identical, to R1, mm. 1–4, of the Piano II part in the published two-piano version and mm. 8–11 of the manuscript sketch. In the two-piano version the accompaniment is assigned to Piano II and the melodic line is assigned, albeit in cue-sized notes labeled “Trpt. (play as solo),” to Piano I; in the manuscript sketch and in the Goldberg illustration (*Gershwin*, 269) the material is presented on three staves. In both the two-piano version and the manuscript sketch, and in the holograph full score, the accompaniment for the first three measures of the passage is the same as is shown in mm. 1–2 and m. 4 of Example 2.

99. The material is identical to R3, mm. 1–4, of the Piano I part in the published two-piano version and similar to music assigned to both piano and orchestra in mm. 25–27 (p. 3) of the manuscript sketch. In the two-piano version and in the manuscript sketch, and in the comparable passage of the holograph full score, the piano material alternates with a rhythmic pattern similar to that shown in the first two measures of Example 2.

“Riveters, drumming your ear from every side” (Ex. 5<sup>100</sup>).

**Example 5** *Delicious*, 1:29:39–1:29:48. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

*molto marcato*

The musical score consists of three systems of piano accompaniment. Each system has a treble and bass clef. The first system is marked *molto marcato* and *ff*. The second system continues the rhythmic pattern. The third system shows a correction in the right hand, where a measure is marked with a circled 'h' (likely for 'handwritten' or 'corrected').

100. The material is identical to R7, mm. 3–9, of the Piano I part in the published two-piano version and very similar, but not identical, to the piano part in mm. 74–80 (pp. 8a–9) of the manuscript sketch. Page 8a of the manuscript sketch features a “paste-over” on which nine measures have been replaced by six measures of newer material; the last two measures on the original p. 8 were in all likelihood pasted over by mistake, for in the two-piano version they are restored. As this passage is played in the film, at 1:29:41 the camera once again cuts to an image of the pianist’s hands.

“And this is the ‘night motif.’ The night, silencing the rivets” (Ex. 6<sup>101</sup>).

Example 6 *Delicious*, 1:29:54–1:30:24. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Allegro (♩ = 144)

The program outlined above, of course, is fictional, a thematic breakdown concocted by screenwriters and assigned to an actor who portrays the composer of a piece whose sole existence is within a filmic narrative. Yet the program seems credible, especially when regarded in light of the film’s soon-to-unfold street-scene sequence. Whereas in the *Second Rhapsody* the syncopated passage in B-flat major occurs a dozen measures before the first

101. The material is identical to R4, m. 7, through R5, m. 12, of the Piano I part in the published two-piano version and mm. 46–58 (pp. 5–6) of the manuscript sketch. It is likewise identical to the music reproduced in Goldberg (*Gershwin*, 269).



sounding of the toccata-like material, in the “New York Rhapsody” what the screenplay identifies as the “night motif” follows—and, in effect, silences—this noisy variant of what Gershwin himself called “a rivet theme.”<sup>102</sup>

Discussing the *Second Rhapsody*, David Schiff writes:

The entire work grows from the “rivet” rhythm. Unfortunately this figure consists of eight eighth notes, and it imposes a squarishness on all the themes that no amount of cleverness can hide. Gershwin was in effect tying both hands behind his back by trying to construct a piece almost entirely out of unsyncopated themes using equal note values. Most damagingly, the squarest part of the piece comes first. The rivet theme appears as a rumba that never takes flight—“just another rumba” to quote the title of a much better Gershwin tune. An even-note but off-the-beat lyric theme which Gershwin called “Brahmsian” offers a welcome respite, but the rumba just keeps going.<sup>103</sup>

In fact, what Gershwin described as Brahmsian is not the “off-the-beat lyric theme” but, rather, the material that is introduced at the *Second Rhapsody*'s rehearsal no. 22 (R22) and that Schiff describes as “a bluesy A-major love theme.”<sup>104</sup> Oscar Levant, a close associate of Gershwin in the 1930s, is very clear about the identification:

So far as a partiality in older music was concerned, . . . George leaned particularly toward certain expansive moods of Brahms, whose string quartets we frequently played four-handed at the piano. It was the long line and free development of melodic material in Brahms that particularly attracted him. . . . As a corollary, he identified certain expressions of his own with this composer, referring to the second theme of the “Second Rhapsody”—a swelling legato subject in A major—as a “Brahms theme.”<sup>105</sup>

Gershwin's A-major “Brahms theme” is not included in the on-screen summary offered by the fictional composer of the “New York Rhapsody.” But this is the music the composer plays so wistfully on the piano before he notices that Heather has entered the room, and the theme is heard again, both in advance of and during the orchestral music that accompanies Heather's wanderings.

The theme's second iteration comes in the form of a chamber-music arrangement, transposed to the key of F major in order to allow it to serve as a prelude to the orchestral music. As soon as Sascha finishes playing the “night motif” the camera cuts to the apartment's exterior, where two friends engage in comic banter before discovering that the immigration officers are fast approaching. Warned by his friends, Sascha urges Heather to flee down the fire escape. Seeking to cover the sound of her exit, he says to his brothers: “Quick,

102. Jablonski, *Gershwin*, 212. See note 71.

103. Schiff, *Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue*, 80–81.

104. *Ibid.*, 81.

105. Oscar Levant, *A Smattering of Ignorance* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, & Co., 1940), 191.

play the Rhapsody.” After tuning their violin and cello the brothers start to play, and after Heather leaves they are joined by Sascha at the piano (Ex. 7<sup>106</sup>):

**Example 7** *Delicious*, 1:32:42–1:33:07. © 1932 Warner Bros. Music Corp. (Renewed). All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

**Sostenuto e con moto** (♩ = 76)  
*expressively*

Violin  
Cello  
Piano

106. Nowhere in the *Second Rhapsody* is this material heard in the key of F major or with an arpeggiated accompaniment of the sort shown here. Notwithstanding the considerable differences in key and texture, the melodic and harmonic material are comparable to R21, mm. 1–8, of

The chamber-music treatment of the “Brahms theme” ends just as Heather reaches the bottom of the fire escape; its emphatic cadence coincides with the start of the “New York Rhapsody” per se.<sup>107</sup>

Including a fifteen-second gap during which the orchestral music is supplanted by the sound of church bells, the “New York Rhapsody” lasts six minutes and fifty-six seconds. The filmic episode that it supports consists of ten scenes, some of which involve dialogue and sound effects.

In the first scene Heather, upon reaching the bottom of the fire escape (0:00<sup>108</sup>), runs into a crowded street where she is audibly beset by the cries of vendors and the sounds of automobile horns; her obvious anxiety is furthered when she encounters a man who says: “Where you goin’, baby? Come here. Don’t be afraid. I’m not gonna hurt ya, honey.” The second scene begins (1:05) with an apparently dazed Heather slowly descending a staircase and then being engulfed by a noisy crowd rushing up the stairs. The start of the third scene (1:37) has Heather again on a street, this time staring up at tall buildings; she stumbles and then is helped to her feet by a man who says: “You all right? Better be careful. You’ll get killed. There you are. Okay. . . .”

The fourth scene takes place in the vicinity of a churchyard. It begins (2:07) with a cross-fade to vague lights and the sound of church bells playing the “Westminster Quarters.” As the final note of the melody fades Heather approaches a gate. The bells begin to chime the hour, which is midnight; at the third chime Heather, looking very frightened, walks through the gate and then, after contemplating the gravestones, slowly ascends a small set of stairs.

In the fifth scene (3:18) Heather wanders about a noisy construction site; the camera pans upward to show riveters on a skyscraper, and with the descent of the camera’s gaze the sound of their riveting fades. In the sixth scene (3:56) Heather strolls tentatively on yet another crowded street; she is approached by a police officer who says: “What’s the matter, little girl? Are you lost?” After offering a mournful look, Heather asks: “What’s over there?” The officer responds: “The river.” The seventh scene begins (4:23) with Heather, apparently on her way to the river, in an area filled with busy workmen; clearly exhausted, she sits to rest, whereupon a workman shouts: “C’mon. Get outa here!” Heather drifts toward the wharf.

Shrouded by fog, Heather is barely visible at the start of the eighth scene (4:57). After the camera focuses on shimmering water, a superimposed image

---

both the published two-piano version and the holograph full score, to mm. 200–207 (p. 21) of the manuscript sketch, and to the example reproduced in Goldberg (271).

107. In *Source Music in Motion Pictures*, Atkins—who chastens Ewen, Kimball, and Simon for writing about the “New York Rhapsody” without having seen the film—incorrectly states that Sascha’s explanation of “the various motifs of the Rhapsody in Rivets he is writing” comes “in an early scene” and that “what was at the time of the picture’s production the full-length version of the rhapsody” comes “later in the film” (100–101).

108. The “New York Rhapsody” sequence begins at the film’s 1:33:07 point. The start times given here pertain to timings within the rhapsody sequence per se.

shows the bandaged head of the injured polo player with whom Heather is still very much in love. Heather is approached by an old woman, who gently says: "Don't do that, dear. I tried it, once." The ninth scene is, in essence, a hallucination. It begins (5:40) with a long shot of a ship in the distant harbor. The background light intensifies to put the ship in silhouette, and then the screen is taken over by the animated images of skeletal hands. After the background light grows extremely bright the skeletal hands slowly descend along either side of the screen. The light diminishes and transforms into a blurred cruciform image.

Following a fade to black, the tenth and final scene of the "New York Rhapsody" sequence begins (6:26) with a quick close-up of Heather's face and then a long shot that reveals the cruciform image to have been created by the exterior lights of a police station. The sounds of laughter can be heard as Heather enters the building. Heather hesitates for a moment and then approaches the desk sergeant. The music ends (6:56<sup>109</sup>) just before the sergeant asks: "Well?" "I want to give myself up," Heather says. The sergeant asks: "What have you done?" "I ran away from the immigration officers," Heather says. The sergeant asks Heather her name; after she tells him he says: "Oh, yes. We know all about you." Then he orders one of the officers to "take charge of this federal prisoner."

## The Rhapsodies Compared

Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* takes approximately fifteen minutes to perform.<sup>110</sup> For the sake of the film sequence, the composition was reduced by more than half its length, in the process eliminating most of the music that involved what Gershwin called his "Brahms theme." One suspects that it was not only for its melodic-harmonic content that Gershwin identified the theme with Brahms: in both its tonal relationship (at the mediant) with the composition's basic key and its placement (at approximately the halfway point) within the *Second Rhapsody's* overall structure, the theme indeed resembles the rela-

109. Within the context of the entire film, the "New York Rhapsody" ends at 1:40:03. The dénouement is relatively brief, and the film ends at 1:46:00.

110. Gershwin's own performance, on the 1931 rehearsal recording, lasts 14:35. Michael Tilson Thomas's recording with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (Sony MK39699), which features Gershwin's original orchestration, lasts 14:12. Timings of recordings that use the 1952 orchestration by Robert McBride include: Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, with pianist Jeffrey Siegel (Vox 5007), 14:50; Morton Gould and His Orchestra, with pianist Oscar Levant (Sony MK42514), 13:31; Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, with pianist Stewart Goodyear (Telarc 80112), 15:18; Jonathan Sheffer and the Eos Orchestra of New York, with pianist Michael Boriskin (Conifer 51342 CD), 14:57; and Yan Pascal Tortelier and the New Philharmonia Orchestra of London, with pianist Howard Shelley (Chandos 9092), 14:40.

tively lyric material with which Brahms often counterbalanced a rhythmically forceful primary theme.<sup>111</sup>

In terms of structure, the more famous of Gershwin's two rhapsodies is a loose-knit rondo that quickly lays out most of its diverse thematic materials and then presents them more or less in alternation (see Fig. 2).<sup>112</sup> Its expansive slow theme (*Andante moderato con espressione*) is pitched a tritone away from the initial key and is introduced approximately two-thirds of the way through the piece, after which it is sped up considerably and juxtaposed with truncated versions of the earlier-heard themes. The various themes tend to be cast in 32-bar segments whose AABA design and internal tonal relationships (I–I–IV–I) resemble the patterns of 1920s-era popular songs. Their tonalities cover a wide range yet favor, along with C major, the sharp-based keys of G major, F-sharp minor, A major, and E major. Arguably symptomatic of a structural flaw, only six measures before its conclusion does the 1924 *Rhapsody in Blue* ever return to its starting point of B-flat major.

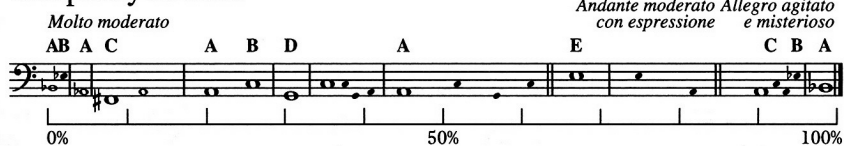
Gershwin's 1931 *Second Rhapsody*, in contrast, exhibits a solid structure that is commonly found in single-movement works not just of Brahms but also of many other Germanically inclined composers of the late nineteenth century (see Fig. 3). It falls neatly into three tonally related segments. The first section—for the most part in F major, with excursions to the fourth-related keys of B-flat major and C major and to the third-related keys of D major and A major—consists of statements and then intermixed developments of the “rivet theme” and, to a lesser extent, the syncopated “night motif.” The second section, articulated by a striking change of texture and tempo, begins just before the midway point, at R21, with sustained strings playing the A-major “Brahms theme” (*Sostenuto e con moto*). After a lengthy development of the “Brahms theme”—mostly in A major, but with excursions into the keys of D-flat major, F major, and D major—the initial “rivet theme” returns. Marked most obviously by its *Allegro* tempo, the recapitulation (R34, a little more than three-fourths of the way through) begins in C major and then works its way—developmentally, with many changes of tempo and meter—back to the home key. The finale mixes the toccata-like variant of the “rivet theme” with the brilliant “*animato*” material that Gershwin allowed Goldberg to publish (along with the “rivet theme,” the syncopated theme, and the “night motif”) in advance of the *Second Rhapsody*'s premiere.<sup>113</sup> Not surprisingly, most of the

111. See, for example, James Webster, “Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity,” *19th-Century Music* 2 (1978): 18–35; Allen Forte, “Motivic Design and Structural Levels in the First Movement of Brahms's String Quartet in C Minor,” *Musical Quarterly* 69 (1983): 471–502; and Lawrence Kramer, “Romantic Meaning in Chopin's Prelude in A Minor,” *19th-Century Music* 9 (1985): 144–55.

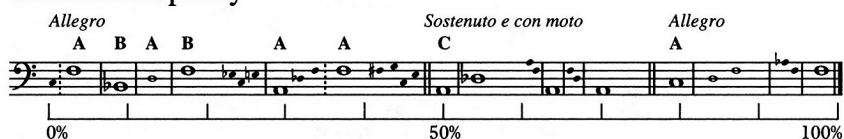
112. For another, albeit brief, comparison of the structures of the *Rhapsody in Blue* and the *Second Rhapsody*, see Gilbert, *Music of Gershwin*, 162–63.

113. Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 272.

## Rhapsody in Blue

Figure 2 *Rhapsody in Blue*, structural outline

## Second Rhapsody

Figure 3 *Second Rhapsody*, structural outline

recapitulation is in F major, but the antepenultimate episode (R41) begins its treatment of the “animato” material in A-flat major. The conclusion is decisive, and all the more so because with this brief digression to the lowered mediant it has been so dramatically heralded.

Compared with the tuneful, rondo-like *Rhapsody in Blue*, the motif-based, tripartite *Second Rhapsody* benefits not just from an economy of thematic material but also from a logical and purposeful array of tonal centers. Apparently having conceived his work along the lines of nineteenth-century masterpieces, Gershwin had good reason to be proud of the *Second Rhapsody*'s structure. This structure, to judge from the apparent quickness with which the manuscript sketch was produced, was born simultaneously with the work's content. Indeed, the *Second Rhapsody* is a well-wrought composition in which form and content are to a large extent integrated.

How does such a piece fare when subjected to severe truncation, by someone other than the composer, for the sake of a movie? A film reviewer for *Variety*, implying that he/she somehow had access to the music “which the composer is booked to play in concert shortly,” wrote that “as spotted in sections of this script” the composition is “mutilated.”<sup>114</sup> The skill with which the cuts and sutures were executed, of course, is a matter of opinion. The fact remains, however, that Gershwin's music, except for the excerpts presented during the précis, was not ‘spotted’ for the film: guided by the screenwriter's

114. Bige, “Delicious,” *Variety*, 29 December 1931, 166.

scenario for the urban-odyssey sequence, the “New York Rhapsody” was extracted from the *Second Rhapsody* in advance of the film’s final editing, and the film was judiciously ‘cut’ to suit the music’s dynamics and structural shifts.<sup>115</sup> The two rhapsodies are different, most obviously in the amount of time they afford Gershwin’s beloved “Brahms theme” and the geographies of tonal centers that precede the finales (see Fig. 4). Yet in terms of affect as well as overall effect they have much in common. It is no wonder that music critics and film reviewers from 1931–32 misconstrued the relationship between the two works; to Friedhofer’s credit, the “New York Rhapsody” comes across not as a patchwork but as a carefully considered composition.

### The “New York Rhapsody” Film Sequence

Gershwin’s manuscript sketch for the *Second Rhapsody* begins immediately with the rhythmic vamp that Gershwin called his “rivet theme” but which the film’s Sascha, in his summary, identifies with “great towers.”<sup>116</sup> In the two-piano version and the holograph full score this forceful idea is effectively set up by a six-measure cadenza-like introduction for solo piano, and the first page of the holograph score also shows an earlier, crossed-out prefatory passage of four measures.<sup>117</sup> There is no piano introduction for the “New York Rhapsody,” but the arrangement of the “Brahms theme” for violin, cello, and piano—presumably by Friedhofer—accomplishes the same purpose.

As noted above, the orchestral treatment of the “New York Rhapsody” begins when Heather reaches the bottom of the fire escape (0:00<sup>118</sup>). Without cuts, the music continues for fifty-six seconds, up to the double bar that, in the published two-piano version, occurs four measures after R4 (R4 + 4). This opening passage is rhythmically straightforward; it consists of the “towers” figure (eight mm.), two statements (eight mm. and six mm.) of the primary theme (the one that Gershwin called the “rivet theme” but which Sascha, in

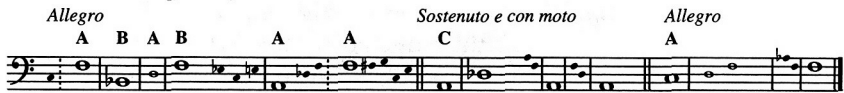
115. In modern parlance, the term ‘spotting’ refers to the stage of production during which a completely edited film is reviewed for the sake of determining where and in what manner music, typically post-scored, and sound effects should be inserted; in 1931 the term retained the meaning it had acquired in about 1909–12 when columnists for trade journals in a general way advised film accompanists on the locations (or spots) within a filmic narrative at which changes of music might be appropriate. The term ‘cutting’ refers to the editing of film in general, but since the early 1930s it has tended to be reserved for the editing of film in response to various events in prescored music. For more on the terminology, see Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7–9 and 33–41.

116. Earlier in the film, this theme is heard at the start of the “Dream Sequence.”

117. The first page of the holograph score is reproduced in Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 178; and Gilbert, *Music of Gershwin*, 153.

118. As in the synopsis of the narrative offered above, the indications for timing refer only to the “New York Rhapsody” sequence.

## Second Rhapsody



## New York Rhapsody

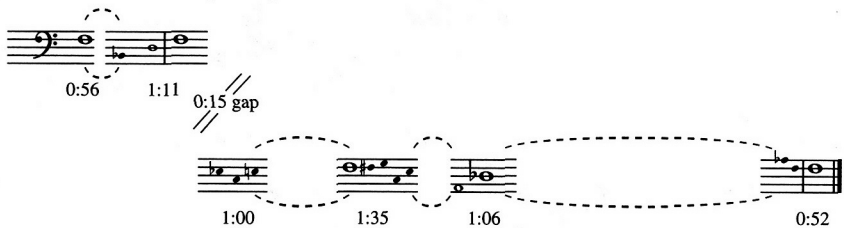


Figure 4 *Second Rhapsody* and “New York Rhapsody,” comparative structural outlines

the film, identifies with “human seeds”), the piano interjections that Sascha identifies with “noise” (five mm.), and a shortened version (four mm.) of the primary theme. In the two-piano version the start of the “noise” motif (R3) is preceded by a pause indicated by a pair of parallel slanted lines; there is no caesura mark in the holograph full score, and no pause is taken in the film performance.<sup>119</sup>

The first cut occurs at the moment in the film when the camera shifts from medium shots of Heather in the crowded street to a medium-close shot of her face, dimly lit against a dark background (0:56). Had the *Second Rhapsody* continued uninterrupted, the medium-close shot would have coincided with a modulation from F major to B-flat major, after which the audience would have heard the rhythmic vamp diminishing in intensity and devolving into a light punctuation for the “night motif.” The film version similarly veers into B-flat major, but the ensuing material has no ebb in dynamics. Leaping to the *Second Rhapsody*’s R8,<sup>120</sup> the “New York Rhapsody” boldly features the vamp in crescendo for five measures, a stentorian D-major presentation of the primary theme by full orchestra (eight mm.), and, still in D major, two loudly accompanied statements of the toccata-like variant of the primary theme that Sascha compares to the sound of “riveters, drumming your ear from every side” (fifteen mm.).

119. At R3 the holograph full score has two crossed-out measures in 6/4 meter (*L’istesso tempo*). In the manuscript sketch these same two measures appear but are not crossed out. The manuscript sketch has an additional measure of the “towers” rhythm before the “noise” interjection enters; otherwise, the manuscript sketch matches exactly the two-piano version and the holograph full score.

120. Pages 7–14 of the Culver City score are paper-clipped together.



Significantly, the orchestral swell that marks the start of the first musical cut coincides with the filmic cut, after the medium-close shot of Heather, to a medium shot of speeding automobiles. Seconds later the music's modulation to D major coincides with the start of the scene that shows Heather at the top of the stairs (1:05). The first articulation of the hammering toccata figure is sounded as Heather is besieged by the uprushing crowd (1:19). This music carries through into the third scene, during which Heather stares at the tall buildings and then stumbles, and it ends only when the camera cuts suddenly to a close-up of Heather's face (1:44).

The musical shift at this point is back to the home key of F major and a quiet statement of the "night motif." In the published two-piano score the modulation (R9) is preceded by both a *ritardando* and a caesura mark (parallel slanted lines). No such relaxation is indicated in the holograph full score, and none is effected in the film music. Clearly, though, the mood of the film music at this point has softened; indeed, so has the mood of the film's narrative, for the "night motif" begins just three seconds before the friendly passerby helps Heather to her feet (1:46). The music continues for twenty-one seconds, during which it is mixed at such a low volume that one notices not the thematic material but only the highest pitches of the piano's eighth-note accompaniment figure.

The second cut coincides with the cross-fade to the vague lights of the churchyard (2:07). With comparable vagueness, the "New York Rhapsody" fades with the quartal chord (b $\flat$ -e'-a'-d $\flat$ )<sup>121</sup> that in the two-piano version occurs, mid-cadenza, at R10 + 4. Although the "New York Rhapsody" indeed pauses at this point, it would be incorrect to say that the film's music stops, for the articulation of the quartal chord coincides with the beginning of the church bells' sounding, in A major, of the "Westminster Quarters."

After a fifteen-second respite, the orchestral music resumes at the conclusion of the bells' melody (2:22). Relative to the *Second Rhapsody*, the point at which the music resumes is R10 + 8, and the material—played by strings with light woodwind doubling—is the three-measure cadential passage of the "night motif." Immediately after this comes a passage for solo piano that is similar, but not identical, to the two-piano score's R10 + 13–16, that is, the four-measure passage for Piano I that is marked "un poco agitato." Pitched in E-flat major, this is a reprise of the passage in contrary motion that opens the *Second Rhapsody*. As Steven E. Gilbert observes in his close comparison of the two-piano version and the holograph full score, this passage "is in neither the manuscript nor the [rehearsal] recording. . . . On the other hand, the latter has a solo cadenza, not in the manuscript, in the place where the reprise occurs in the published score."<sup>122</sup> Significantly, the "New York

121. In the holograph full score, the uppermost pitch of the chord is notated not as d $\flat$  but as c $\sharp$ .

122. Gilbert, *Music of Gershwin*, 152.

Rhapsody” features a passage that approximates the cadenza heard in the rehearsal recording.<sup>123</sup>

In the film music, the three-measure orchestral passage described above emerges from the conclusion of the “Westminster Quarters,” and as the orchestra reaches its cadence the bells’ burden begins to chime the hour. Simultaneously with the start of the chimes (2:30) the solo piano enters with its cadenza. Under the first seven chimes, as Heather enters the churchyard and contemplates the gravestones, the solo piano is barely audible as it plays the cadenza and then the first seven measures of the “cantabile con allegrezza” passage. At the eighth chime (2:59), as the camera shows only the legs of Heather hurrying through the churchyard, the orchestra makes its loud entrance (R11 + 2). By the tenth chime (3:08) Heather has reached the stairs that lead out of the churchyard; she is shown in a medium-close shot, and the orchestra and piano illustrate her obvious anxiety with rhythmically off-kilter dialogue (the six-measure Allegretto section, R11 + 7–12) that, although written in C major, is so chromatic as to be almost atonal. The orchestra/piano dialogue ends as the chime tolls for the twelfth and final time (3:18), and the ensuing offbeat iterations of a low-register E, first by the timpani and then by the piano, have the effect of emerging from the overtones of the decaying bell sound. As the pedal E rings Heather moves off quickly to the right; as she exits, the piano plays a bold upward sweep (R12 + 5) that smoothes over the next cut.

123. The *Delicious* file in Culver City includes a small portion of what seems to be the material heard on the film sound track, but the extant notation is clearly not in Gershwin’s hand. Like the holograph full score at the Library of Congress, the Culver City photostat score features on page 18 (recto) four measures for solo piano followed by the three measures for orchestra that, in the published two-piano score, immediately precede the section marked “calmato” (R10 + 11); in turn, page 19 (verso) contains the four-measure passage for solo piano (with the bar lines drawn freehand rather than, as elsewhere in the score, with the aid of a straightedge) whose equivalent in the two-piano score is marked “cantabile con allegrezza” (R10 + 17). Inserted into the Culver City score after Gershwin’s page 18 is a page marked “18A.” Whereas everything else in the orchestral score is written on Gershwin’s custom-made manuscript paper (twenty-eight staves, with a reproduction of the composer’s signature at the bottom), the insert is written on single-sided 24-staff manuscript paper that bears the heading “Fox Film Corporation Studios—Music Department.” The notation, in bold red pencil, is sparse: it consists of three blank but numbered measures followed by a single measure with notation in the piano part’s lower staff (a down-stemmed half note G, marked with a fermata, then a beamed group of up-stemmed eighth notes on the pitches A $\sharp$ –c $\sharp$ –a–d’). Presumably the inserted page 18A was followed by a page 18B that contained the rest of the cadenza-like passage, but this additional material has yet to surface.

That this moment in the *Second Rhapsody* must have vexed the composer is evident from the manuscript sketch. At the place that compares with R10 + 11–16 of the published two-piano version, the sketch (pp. 10–11) has a four-measure reiteration of the “rivet theme” in F major, a seven-measure passage in A major that is crossed out, and a three-measure variant of the “rivet theme” in F major.

The fifth scene of the sequence takes place at a construction site, and its onset (3:22) is appropriately marked by the recapitulation of the “rivet theme” in its original key of F major (R17). The film music at this point skips forty-seven measures of Gershwin’s composition, but it does so in elegant fashion. In the *Second Rhapsody*, the upward sweep mentioned above leads, via a C-major arpeggio, to an exploration of the “rivet theme” that begins in A major (nineteen mm.) and then moves through D-flat major (ten mm.) and C major (four mm.) before settling into a fourteen-measure C-major piano cadenza. Just as the extended C-major cadenza in the *Second Rhapsody* leads directly into a straightforward recapitulation of the “rivet theme,” so does the brief C-major arpeggio in the “New York Rhapsody.” It could be argued that the effect of the cymbal-splashed recapitulation in the “New York Rhapsody” is much more striking than in the *Second Rhapsody*; whereas in the *Second Rhapsody* the recapitulation consolidates only after a lengthy developmental section, in the “New York Rhapsody” it emerges suddenly from a dark interlude, just as Heather emerges from the churchyard into the busy and brilliantly lit construction site. In any case, the coordination of sound and image at this point is precise. The “rivet theme” returns at the very start of the one scene in the film that actually depicts riveters; when the camera begins to pan upward to show the riveters (3:34), the piano plays the ascending scalar passage in double octaves (R17 + 7–8) that decorates the end of the theme’s first statement; when both the camera’s gaze and the sound-effects track reach their apex (3:42), the filmic gesture is articulated by a reprise of Sascha’s “noise” motif (R18); as Heather begins her slow exit from the construction site (3:54), the orchestra comments, perhaps wryly, with yet another loud iteration of the “rivet theme” (R18 + 5–12).

This last statement of the “rivet theme” covers the transition into the sixth scene, and its decrease in intensity (starting in R18 + 9, marked “less emphatic”) coincides with the medium shot that establishes Heather in a new locale. Heather’s dialogue with the police officer (4:07–4:22) is accompanied softly by the “poco meno” passage (R19) that mixes fragments of the “rivet theme,” the “night” motif, and the rhythmic vamp; at the start of the passage, as the officer asks his helpful questions, the conductor takes a quite exaggerated *ritardando* in the two measures that Gershwin marked “broadly.”

With its texture thinning, the “poco meno” passage continues into the seventh scene. Just before Heather sits down (4:38) the piano sounds the sustained C that signals the beginning of a seven-measure cadenza (R20 + 4–10). Midway through the cadenza the workman delivers his angry shout (4:47). During the cadenza’s final measure (4:53), as the piano switches from arpeggios to a very slow recollection of the “rivet” melody, Heather rises and walks languorously toward the wharf. In the *Second Rhapsody*, the F-major cadenza leads directly into the first statement (R21) of Gershwin’s A-major “Brahms theme”; the transition in the “New York Rhapsody” is in effect the same, but

after the cadenza the film score skips ten measures and leaps to the theme's second statement (R22).

With "espressivo" strings and filigree for clarinets and English horn, the "Brahms theme"—anticipating a change in the film's narrative content—is sounded just before the scene shifts (4:57) from the work area to the fog-wrapped wharf. The modulation to D-flat major (R23) occurs three seconds after the camera focuses on the water and simultaneously with the superimposition (5:16) of the image of Larry's bandaged head. The superimposed image holds the screen for four seconds, during which the music is suddenly brought very much to the fore; the music is mixed down with the fade to Heather (5:21) as she is approached by the old woman.

The hallucinatory ninth scene begins (5:40) as the "Brahms theme," still in D-flat major, thins in texture and quickens in tempo (R23 + 5).<sup>124</sup> Simultaneously with the intensification of the background light, the blare of a foghorn (5:50) momentarily obliterates the music just before the theme reaches its cadence formula (R25). In the *Second Rhapsody* this cadence is followed by extensive exploration of the "Brahms theme," a march-like variation of the "rivet theme, and a virtuosic treatment of the toccata figure; in the "New York Rhapsody" the cadence is cut short, its expected resolution exchanged for a loud and highly chromatic passage (R40) of five measures that ends with a sustained dissonance.<sup>125</sup> The deleted material comprises 135 measures, but here, too, the surgery is not only deft but purposeful. In any context the "subito allegretto" tempo change would have a startling effect; in this case it coincides with the on-screen appearance (5:54) of the skeletal hands.

The intensification of light that forms the transition into the tenth scene occurs (6:03) just as the solo piano begins the "animato" passage in A-flat major (R41), and the skeletal hands begin their descent (6:09) simultaneously with the music's final modulation back to F major (R42). After the background light dims, its transformation into the cruciform image (6:18) is marked by the return of the "Brahms theme" (R43). Although neither the two-piano score nor the holograph full score has a tempo directive at the end of the theme's eight-measure statement, the film music at this point (R43 + 7–8) features a huge *ritardando* that coincides with the screen's fade to black (6:23). The next image—the brief close-up of Heather's face—appears (6:26) just as the music begins a fast *mélange* of the "animato" material (R44) and, in 3/8 meter, the "noise" figure (R45). Immediately after the close-up Heather is shown walking toward the police station, first in a medium-close shot and then in a medium shot from behind; as Heather walks through the door (6:38) the music moves into its concluding "moderato" passage (R48).

124. The two-piano score at this point is marked "poco animato." No such tempo directive appears in the holograph full score or in the comparable spot in the manuscript sketch.

125. The dissonant chord, sustained for six beats, is spelled  $db'-e'-g'-c''-db''-e''-g''-c'''$ . Under the last four beats the timpani and double basses have a fast alternation of *c* and *db*, but this is not audible in the film recording; relative to the sustained chord, the effect is that of a fermata.

Heather's hesitant stance at the edge of the station's lobby is accompanied by a four-measure recapitulation of the "Brahms theme," and her bold approach to the sergeant's desk (6:53) is marked by the four-measure cadence. The sergeant's inquiry as to Heather's business is potently set up by the split-second of silence that follows the music's emphatic final chord (6:56).

### *Delicious in Context*

Notwithstanding the much-publicized fact that its music was written by one of the country's most famous and most commercially successful composers, for Fox Studios *Delicious* was something of a risk. As noted, in the 1930–32 period it was not Hollywood practice to support dramatic scenes with orchestral music, and certainly the featuring of the "New York Rhapsody" at the climax of *Delicious* counts as a bold cinematic experiment. But the *Delicious* gamble had less to do with the rhapsody sequence than with the songs: by the time *Delicious* was released the genre of the tune-filled film had grown decidedly unpopular.

Commenting in 1931 on the relatively arid musical climate in which Fox cultivated *Delicious*, Isaac Goldberg reminded his readers that just a few years earlier the situation had been quite different:

When Lady Screen discovered that she had a voice she went, for the moment, slightly mad. It is not an accident that the first music-film was entitled *The Broadway Melody*. Hollywood, by a natural fallacy, conceived of sound as being essentially music, and it sent to Broadway, the hothouse of our popular song, for word-men and tune-men. It adopted the Broadway method of plugging songs. Instead of developing a method based upon the nature of its special material, it became a reporter of the stage.<sup>126</sup>

MGM's *The Broadway Melody*, an "all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing" film released in February 1929, won not only an Academy Award in the "best film" category but also a net profit of \$1.6 million. Taking its cue from MGM's success, Hollywood in general over the next two years reveled in the production of revues and musicals. Of the 562 feature-length films produced in Hollywood in 1929, seventy-five featured Broadway-style scores; of the 509 productions from 1930, more than a hundred were musicals.<sup>127</sup>

126. Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 267–68.

127. For figures on film production in 1929 and 1930, see Patrick Robertson, *Film Facts* (New York: Billboard Books, 2001): 17; and Kenneth MacGowan, "The Coming of Sound to the Screen," *The Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television* 10, no. 2 (1955): 145. For detailed information on early Hollywood musicals, see Jane Feuer, *The Hollywood Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); and Thomas S. Hischak, *Through the Screen Door: What Happened to the Broadway Musical When It Went to Hollywood* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004).

Surveying the scene in May 1930, shortly after the Gershwins had signed their contract with Fox,<sup>128</sup> an executive for Warner Bros. and First International Pictures boasted:

More than 90 percent of the creative music of America is now being written in Hollywood. The home offices of the [publishing] companies are still in New York for business purposes, but all of the finest American music is now being written in connection with the screen. We have gathered here . . . the men who have been responsible for many of the operetta and musical-comedy hits of the past ten years—Sigmund Romberg, Oscar Hammerstein II, Jerome Kern and Otto Harbach, Oscar Strauss, Herbert Fields, Richard Rogers [*sic*] and Lorenz Hart, and a dozen song-writing teams. Hollywood's studios today encompass all the big names of contemporary music—Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, [Buddy] DeSylva and [Ray] Henderson, Herb Nacio Brown [*sic*] and many others.<sup>129</sup>

Less than a year later, the boom had gone bust. In May 1931, after the Gershwins had departed Hollywood but still months before *Delicious* would go into production, a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times* attempted to explain the abrupt shift in the public's taste and the film industry's response:

Why did Tin Pan Alley, that blazed with sudden, brilliant mazdas, darken into a shadowy side-lane?

Trail along, Ivy, and maybe we'll find out what put out the incandescents—why the song writers went back home to New York.

When the talkies first came they boomed, "It's Bonanza Time in Hollywood!" But their theme song became truly a "blues." It was repeated, with lugubrious emotion, by countless disappointed song-writers returning east. . . .

The nine principal studios presented 1086 songs from the singing screen, M-G-M, Warner Bros. and First National leading. The major companies bought outright, or acquired shares in, music-publishing concerns. In swanky new musical libraries, melody was card-indexed. Scores were classified alphabetically: fight, fire and fury music; cakewalk, college, children, chimes and circus airs. They didn't know that you don't placard music and order it in jobs: animals, birds, seasons, war.

128. The signing of the contract was reported in an unsigned newspaper item headlined "Films Attract Gershwin," *New York Times*, 20 April 1930, 25. Barrios writes that "in August 1928 the studio [Fox] had hinted that it was reaching a deal with George Gershwin to write the score for a Movietone musical comedy" (*A Song in the Dark: The Birth of the Musical Film* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1995], 350). Ewen writes, incorrectly, that "in 1929 [Gershwin] signed an agreement bringing him \$70,000 for writing music for a motion picture for Fox" (*George Gershwin*, 178). In July 1929 the *Los Angeles Times* reported, incorrectly, that Gershwin was slated to provide music for a Pathé film entitled *The Treasure Girl* (Philip K. Scheuer, "Studios Plan Huge Programs," *Los Angeles Times*, 21 July 1929, B11–12). In April 1930, after the contract with Fox had in fact been signed, the same newspaper reported, incorrectly, that "[the Gershwins] are, indeed, even now on their way west, and will arrive in Hollywood next week" (Grace Kingsley, "Gershwins Arriving for Fox," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 April 1930, A16).

129. Robert Crawford, quoted in "Talking Films Bring Music to Masses," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 May 1930, B11.

They found out, though. All that rhythmic din gave us entertainment indigestion.<sup>130</sup>

The columnist reported that in recent months the music departments at MGM, Fox, Paramount, United Artists, and Pathé had shrunk drastically. And she noted that Gershwin, who “received \$50,000 for his ‘Rhapsody in Blue’ number but only recently became personally involved with pictures,” was one of the few Broadway composers still working on a film project.<sup>131</sup>

Hollywood remained hopeful that the musical film could be revived. In November 1931, a month before the release of *Delicious*, a writer for *Motion Picture Magazine* reminded readers: “A year ago Hollywood would have had a violent attack of the shudders if you had so much as mentioned musical pictures. Especially musical comedies or revues. ‘Musical pictures are OUT!’ the movie magnates chorused. ‘The public simply won’t have ’em. They may revive again in ten or fifteen years. But we doubt it.’ Everybody doubted it.”<sup>132</sup> At least according to the publicists, however, the situation seemed to be changing: “Every single studio in Hollywood—except one—either has a musical picture in production or is getting one ready. And Universal admits that it is just waiting ‘to see what happens to the others.’ . . . Musicals, which everybody thought had gone forever, are coming back. In fact, they’re here. THIS is the big comeback news of 1931.”<sup>133</sup>

As things turned out, of almost a thousand feature films produced in Hollywood in 1931 and 1932 only twenty-one—including *Delicious*—were musicals.<sup>134</sup> Goldberg rightly summarized the situation when he wrote: “Song-writers ceased to be the gods from the Broadway machine. There was a sudden slump in ‘musicals.’ The Gershwins, then, came in at the distinct end of a phase in the production of musical films.”<sup>135</sup>

## Critical Response to *Delicious* and the “New York Rhapsody”

Gershwin had been brought to Hollywood and was paid an extraordinary amount of money not to compose an orchestral work for a film but simply to

130. Myrtle Gebhart, “Tin Pan Alley Says Good Bye,” *Los Angeles Times*, 10 May 1931, K9.

131. The fee of \$50,000, confirmed by Schwartz (Gershwin, 89) and Jablonski (*Gershwin*, 140), was paid by Universal Films for use of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* in the 1930 film *The King of Jazz*. A year before Universal’s biographical treatment of bandleader Paul Whiteman went into production, newspaper readers were informed that “the largest offer ever made a song writer took place when Fox, negotiating with George Gershwin, reportedly offered him \$100,000 for his ‘Rhapsody in Blue’ ” (Muriel Babcock, “Tin Pan Alley Invades Town,” *Los Angeles Times*, 9 December 1928, C13).

132. Helen Louise Walker, “Musical Pictures Are Here Again,” *Motion Picture Magazine* (November 1931): 53.

133. *Ibid.*, 52.

134. In 1931 there were 501 films, of which eleven were musicals; of the 489 films released in 1932, only ten were musicals.

135. Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 268.

write, with his brother Ira, a handful of songs.<sup>136</sup> As Gershwin informed Goldberg, he “was under no obligation to the Fox Company” to produce “a serious composition,”<sup>137</sup> and, indeed, evidence that Fox paid Gershwin for his extra work has yet to surface. The earliest scenario for *Delicious*, as has been shown, contains opportunities for music but no hint of a sequence along the lines of Heather’s seven-minute odyssey in the streets of New York; one suspects the idea for such a sequence originated with Gershwin, or at least in conversations that Gershwin had, after he arrived in Hollywood, with screenwriter Guy Bolton, director David Butler, and/or producer Winnie Sheehan. It was often suggested during the early years of the sound film that coming technologies would promote the editing of film to fit the structure and dynamics of preexisting music,<sup>138</sup> but before *Delicious* such a thing seems not to have been attempted in Hollywood.<sup>139</sup> Nor, in the wake of *Delicious*, would Hollywood seek to emulate what Fox had done with the “New York Rhapsody.” Indeed, not until Walt Disney’s 1940 *Fantasia* would there be another major Hollywood attempt to synchronize filmic imagery closely with pre-scored music.

Fox knew that the “New York Rhapsody” made *Delicious* something of a novelty, and at least in Washington, D.C., this figured with some success into the studio’s promotional efforts. Writing shortly after the film’s Christmas Day release, Nelson B. Bell of the *Washington Post* recalled that several weeks earlier

136. Schwartz writes that the “contract with Fox guaranteed George and Ira the combined salary of \$100,000—\$70,000 for George and \$30,000 for Ira—a monumental sum for those post-crash days” (*Gershwin*, 197). An unsigned item in the *New York Times* of 20 April 1930 reported, without attribution, that George Gershwin alone “will receive \$125,000 for his work on the picture” (“Films Attract Gershwin,” 25).

137. Goldberg, *Gershwin*, 273.

138. The suggestions came more from Europe and the Soviet Union than from Hollywood. See, for example, Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Film Technique*, trans. Ivor Montagu, enlarged ed. (London: Newnes, 1933; orig. 1929); Paul Rotha, *Celluloid: The Film To-day* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1931); Stephen Watts, “Alfred Hitchcock on Music in Films,” *Cinema Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1933–34): 80–83; Rudolf Arnheim, *Film as Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933); Ernest J. Borneman, “Sound Rhythm and the Film,” *Sight and Sound* 3, no. 10 (1934): 65–67; and Leonid Sabaneev, *Music for the Films: A Handbook for Composers and Conductors*, trans. S. W. Pring (London: Pitman, 1935).

139. In an interview with Atkins, Butler acknowledged both that the idea to edit the footage to fit the music came from Sheehan and that the procedure was difficult. Asked by Atkins if he shot the rhapsody sequence “in time to the music,” Butler responded: “[Gershwin] had written the ‘Rhapsody,’ and then I had to stage it to different parts of the piece. That was Sheehan’s idea. It turned out to be all right. To tell the truth, I was thinking of all that work with [Janet Gaynor] walking down those streets at night. I wasn’t so pleased about it, but we did it anyway” (David Butler, *David Butler, Interviewed by Irene Kahn Atkins* [Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993], 100).



Roger Ferri, a peregrinating member of the publicity staff of Fox Films, informed me that "Delicious" . . . is the last word in the industry's answer to the charge that music and celluloid won't mix.

George Gershwin, it appears, has composed a score that defies amateur tinkerers to take it apart. As a thematic number he has written a typically New York cacophony that is said to be no less effective than his famous "Rhapsody in Blue." This, furthermore, is a selection that has its genesis in the actual developments of the screened story. It is not dragged in by the heels or by the scruff of the neck. It belongs.<sup>140</sup>

Probably influenced by the publicist but clearly misinformed as to the composition's availability, another columnist for the same newspaper attended a preview screening and wrote:

If it's music you want to lend your ear to, run over to the corner music store and hear George (Rhapsody in Blue) Gershwin's newest "brain child." He calls it "A Rhapsody in Rivets" and I can pass the word down to my friendly aunts and uncles (who would disinherit me if they had four dollars and ninety-nine cents) that here is a musical score that will sit on the king's throne for a long time.<sup>141</sup>

The reviewer for the *Washington Post* echoed the idea that Gershwin's music is integral to the film's plot. "Fox has turned out a masterpiece in this one," he wrote, "a picture where the songs fit in with the story; where a series of incidents in the unfolding of the story lead up to a rather impressive rhapsody at the finish. . . ."<sup>142</sup> Making more of a commitment, a reviewer for the *Motion Picture Herald* commented after an advance screening that "Gershwin's 'New York Rhapsody,' which is presented against a striking background of New York life, is an outstanding feature of the production and probably constitutes one of the finest, if not the finest, musical composition originally conceived for motion pictures."<sup>143</sup> A brief notice in the trade journal *Harrison's Reports* granted that "parts of the picture are artistic, as for instance when Janet Gaynor walks the streets of New York, dejected and weary. This is accompanied by excellent music and photography."<sup>144</sup> And an unsigned review in the March 1932 issue of *Motion Picture Magazine* reminded readers that one the film's high points was the sequence that shows Janet Gaynor's "wanderings through the mad maze of the city to the vibrant strains of the Gershwin *New York Symphony*."<sup>145</sup>

140. Nelson B. Bell, "On the Week That Impends on Stage and Silver Sheet," *Washington Post*, 27 December 1931, A2.

141. Wallace Twinchell, "On Washington's Broadway," *Washington Post*, 9 December 1931, 8.

142. Don B. Reed, "In the Cinema Houses," *Washington Post*, 26 December 1931, A6.

143. Leo Meehan, "Delicious," *Motion Picture Herald*, 12 December 1931, 35-36.

144. " 'Delicious' with Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell," *Harrison's Reports*, 2 January 1932, 2.

145. "Delicious," *Motion Picture Magazine* (March 1932): 65.

But the “New York Rhapsody” seems not to have made much of an impression on most of the American journalists who in 1931–32 covered the film scene. Aside from the opinion that the “Gershwin piano composition . . . is mutilated,” comments on music in the *Variety* review had to do only with the effectiveness of certain songs:

Music by George and Ira Gershwin helps to break up the plot strain. The number from which the title was derived has commercial possibilities, though in the film its chief purpose seems to have been to provide a title. Raul Roulien sings it early, and though reprised instrumentally it isn’t repeated in lyric form. Miss Gaynor does a vocal solo with “Somebody from Somewhere,” seated while singing and with the camera close by. In delivery and appearance it follows her “Aren’t We All?” rendition in “Sunnyside Up.” Third solo is “Blah, Blah, Blah, Blah with You,” comedy lyric, by El Brendel.<sup>146</sup>

In the *New York Times*, Mordaunt Hall declared *Delicious* to be “a conventional piece of sentimentality with dialogue that is scarcely inspired,” a “frail” narrative for whose scenes “Mr. Gershwin’s melodies are a help.” This presumably influential review offered a brief synopsis of the sequence during which Heather wanders through the streets but did not indicate that it was accompanied by music, and the only comment on the “New York Rhapsody” was that it “[is] played on the piano” by Marvine Maazel.<sup>147</sup> An unidentified reviewer for the Boston-based *Christian Science Monitor* observed that “it is [the title song], and other little songs, and the musical score in general, that make the picture,” but the review did not specifically mention the rhapsody.<sup>148</sup> A week after the film’s release, a *Christian Science Monitor* writer dismissed the plot as forming “the accepted pattern of scenes for a popular Gaynor-Farrell picture” and, apropos of the music, noted only that the film contained “a Gershwin tune or two.”<sup>149</sup> Indeed, the critical attention paid to *Delicious* focused primarily on its story line and the performances of its two stars. As a historian of the Hollywood musical writes, “the film’s ranking among the top grossers of 1932 had, unfairly, much more to do with the never-fail pairing of Gaynor and Farrell than with the man whose music gave important distinction to what could have been a mediocre product.”<sup>150</sup>

146. Bige, “Delicious,” 166. The song “(I’m a Dreamer) Aren’t We All?” was written by the team of Ray Henderson, Buddy DeSylva, and Lew Brown. In the 1929 Fox film *Sunny Side Up*, Gaynor sings the song while accompanying herself on autoharp. In *Delicious*, Gaynor’s performance of “Somebody from Somewhere” is accompanied by a music box.

147. Mordaunt Hall, “The Screen: Janet Gaynor in a Sentimental Romance with Musical Compositions by George Gershwin,” *New York Times*, 26 December 1931, 15.

148. “Motion Pictures: Delicious,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 December 1931, 2.

149. E. C. S., “The Passing Scene,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 January 1932, 6.

150. Edwin M. Bradley, *The First Hollywood Musicals: A Critical Filmography of 171 Features, 1927 through 1932* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996), 296.

## Conclusions

Reviews of *Delicious* from 1931 and 1932 that mention the “New York Rhapsody” suggest that film critics believed the music to be entirely the work of Gershwin, with no input from Friedhofer or anyone else. By the same token, contemporaneous reviews of the *Second Rhapsody* suggest that music critics were generally under the impression that the concert work was, as Olin Downes incorrectly wrote in the *New York Times*, an expansion of the film music.

After the Boston premiere Philip Hale in the *Boston Herald* wrote that the *Second Rhapsody* “has not the sweeping irresistible lyric theme that distinguished the preceding rhapsody,” yet “the music has decided individuality,” and “No one should cry out against [its] chief theme, which needs no verbal explanation, for its significance is unmistakable; its character is truly national, as are the dash and recklessness of the better pages.”<sup>151</sup> But H. T. Parker of the *Boston Evening Transcript* felt that although the *Second Rhapsody*’s “rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, and instrumental expansion is more inventive and skillful” than that of the *Rhapsody in Blue*, its motifs nevertheless “lack the arresting and driving qualities of the themes of the First [*Rhapsody*],” and with this work “Mr. Gershwin waxes in craftsmanship but at the cost of earlier and irresistible élan.”<sup>152</sup> And the *Christian Science Monitor*’s L. A. Sloper wrote: “The main musical idea is merely a rhythmic figure of a type easily imagined. The other material of the piece is taken from a grab bag of musical comedy. A great symphony orchestra is not the ideal commentator of Gershwin’s music, which belongs essentially to the dance-hall bands.”<sup>153</sup>

In New York, the most sympathetic reviews came from the *Sun*’s W. J. Henderson and the *Tribune*’s Lawrence Gilman. Echoing Hale’s appreciation of the music’s overall spirit, Henderson wrote: “[Gershwin] recognized jazz as a growth from the soil of this country and tries to shape from it artistic forms of music. What he does is indisputably legitimate. . . . The [*Second Rhapsody*] is spirited, it is full of youth and recklessness, it is America of untrammelled manners and cocktail energy.”<sup>154</sup> On the same idea, Gilman waxed poetic: “Jazzarella, undiminished in gusto and vitality, dances here. . . . The happy few will recognize and value the skill of her evolutions and the subtlety of her guile. . . . Music’s most enlivened daughter is, as usual, bringing down the house.”<sup>155</sup> In contrast, the reviewer for the *New Yorker* declared that the

151. Philip Hale, *Boston Herald*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 182.

152. H. T. Parker, *Boston Evening Transcript*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 181–82, and Wood, *George Gershwin*, 175.

153. L. A. Sloper, *Christian Science Monitor*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 182.

154. W. J. Henderson, *New York Sun*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 182.

155. Lawrence Gilman, *New York Tribune*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 182, and Wood, *George Gershwin*, 176.

*Second Rhapsody* was “disappointing in all respects . . . almost totally devoid of ingratiating melody . . . offering nothing but rhythms now grown trite and a reasonably clever though blatant orchestration.”<sup>156</sup> And an unidentified reviewer cited by several Gershwin biographers wrote bluntly that the work was “humdrum, with emphasis on the last syllable.”<sup>157</sup>

Like most of the reviewers, Olin Downes in the *New York Times* compared the *Second Rhapsody* with its predecessor:

This rhapsody has more orchestration and more development than the “Rhapsody in Blue.” Its main motive is reasonably suggestive of rivets and racket in streets of this metropolis; also, if you like, of the liveliness and bonhomie of inhabitants. There is a second theme, built into a contrasting section. Thus jazz dance rhythm and sentimental song are opposed and juxtaposed in this score. The conception is wholly orchestral. The piano is not so prominent as in the “Rhapsody in Blue”; it is, in fact, merely one of the instruments of the ensemble.

But with all its immaturities, the “Rhapsody in Blue” is more individual and originative than the piece heard last night. In fact, the “Second Rhapsody” is imitative in many ways of the “Rhapsody in Blue.” One of the figures of the first part, and certain harmonic cadences, and the song theme of the middle part, have all quite direct derivations from the earlier work. Furthermore, the “Second Rhapsody” is too long for its material.

The work was superbly performed. Mr. Koussevitzky, who conducts it for the second time this afternoon, led the orchestra as earnestly as if he had been introducing a new symphony by a Roussel or a Miaskovsky, and patiently labored to obtain from the players the last ounce of their energy. It was a virtuoso performance. Mr. Gershwin played a modest piano part simply but with the composer’s authority. There was a royal welcome for the composer, the performers, the music. Nevertheless, we have had better things from Mr. Gershwin, and we expect better in time to come.<sup>158</sup>

Comparison not just with the *Rhapsody in Blue* but also with *An American in Paris* seems to have colored the opinion of Downes’s colleague Howard Taubman, who after an August 1932 performance at Lewisohn Stadium observed that “the Second Rhapsody showed little progress on Mr. Gershwin’s part.”<sup>159</sup> And comparison with the first rhapsody was certainly the theme of Marc Blitzstein’s review in the journal *Modern Music*:

156. The *New Yorker*, quoted in Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 182.

157. Quoted in Jablonski and Stewart, *Gershwin Years*, 181, and Wood, *George Gershwin*, 175. Jablonski and Stewart state that the comment was triggered by one of the New York performances; Wood suggests that the comment followed the Boston premiere. The source of the comment remains elusive.

158. Downes, “Music in Review.”

159. H. T. [Howard Taubman], “Music: 17,000 Hear Gershwin Program,” *New York Times*, 17 August 1932, 13.

The point about George Gershwin's new *Rhapsody* . . . is that it is no better and no worse than his earlier one, but that it is a repetition, in rather more pretentious terms. There are to be found the same "war-horse" pianisms of Liszt; the same evidence of thinking from one four-measure phrase to another, of enough breath from the broad melodies, and too little for the patchwork-padding; the same excessive climaxes; and the same talent for easy, and extremely catchy tunes.<sup>160</sup>

Ruth Leon accurately summarizes the early critical response to the *Second Rhapsody* when she writes that, on the one hand, reviewers generally "agreed . . . that this was his most fully realised concert work" and that, on the other hand, "there was a general perception . . . that it lacked either the originality and brilliance of *Rhapsody in Blue* or the instant accessibility of *An American in Paris*."<sup>161</sup>

To be sure, the *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris* are tough acts to follow. But one is left to wonder whether the *Second Rhapsody's* negative reception, and its subsequent neglect, possibly had something to do with the cloud under which the work has so long existed. Almost unanimously, commentators have subscribed to the idea that the *Second Rhapsody* is "a piece recycled from a Hollywood score."<sup>162</sup> The facts suggest otherwise, but the myth—with its concomitant taint—dies hard.

## Works Cited

### Primary Sources

- Atkins, Irene Kahn. "Oral History with Hugo Friedhofer." American Film Institute, Louis B. Mayer Library, Los Angeles, 1974.
- Bolton, Guy. Letter to Al Lewis, 17 September 1930. Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- "Delicious Cue Sheet." 9 November 1931. Cue Sheet Department, American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, New York.
- "Delicious Final Shooting Script." 16 January 1931. Document 703-2C, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- "Delicious Final Shooting Script." 22 August 1931. Document 703-2D, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- Gershwin, George. Copyist's piano-vocal score for "Dream Sequence" from *Delicious*. Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, box 4, folder 11.

160. Marc Blitzstein, "Premieres and Experiments—1932," *Modern Music* 9, no. 3 (March–April 1932), 122.

161. Leon, *Gershwin*, 112.

162. Joan Peyser, *The Memory of All That: The Life of George Gershwin* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 183.

- . Incomplete holograph piano-vocal score for "Dream Sequence" from *Delicious*. Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, box 4, folder 10.
- . *Second Rhapsody*. Annotated photostatic copy of holograph full score. JoAnn Kane Music Service, Culver City, CA.
- . *Second Rhapsody*. Holograph full score. Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, bound manuscript 25 (microfilm Music 1353).
- . *Second Rhapsody*. Sketch. Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection, bound manuscript 27 (microfilm Music 1354).
- . *Second Rhapsody*. Two-piano arrangement. New York: New World Music, 1932.
- "Notes to be read in connection with the second outline of *Skyline*." 17 September 1930. Document 703-1, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- "Routine of New York Rhapsody." 15 October 1931. Document 703-3, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- "Sky Line Outline Scenario." N.d. Document 703-1, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.
- "Skyline/Delicious Final Shooting Script." 3 January 1931. Document 703-2B, 20th Century-Fox script archives, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California.

### Contemporary Journalistic Accounts

- "Activities of Musicians Here and Afield." *New York Times*, 3 January 1932, X8.
- Babcock, Muriel. "Tin Pan Alley Invades Town." *Los Angeles Times*, 9 December 1928, C13.
- Bell, Nelson B. "On the Week That Impends on Stage and Silver Sheet." *Washington Post*, 27 December 1931, A2.
- Bige. "Delicious." *Variety*, 29 December 1931, 166.
- Blitzstein, March. "Premieres and Experiments—1932." *Modern Music* 9, no. 3 (March–April 1932): 121–27.
- "Delicious." *Motion Picture Magazine* (March 1932): 65.
- "'Delicious' with Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell." *Harrison's Reports*, 2 January 1932, 2.
- Downes, Olin. "Koussevitzky Experiments." *New York Times*, 7 February 1932, 29.
- . "Music in Review." *New York Times*, 6 February 1932, 14.
- E. C. S. "The Passing Scene." *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 January 1932, 6.
- "Films Attract Gershwin." *New York Times*, 20 April 1930, 25.
- Gebhart, Myrtle. "Tin Pan Alley Says Good Bye." *Los Angeles Times*, 10 May 1931, K9–10.
- "Gershwin Wins Triumph." *New York Times*, 30 January 1932, 13.
- "A Group of Recent Books." *Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1931, B15.
- Hall, Mordaunt. "The Screen: Janet Gaynor in a Sentimental Romance with Musical Compositions by George Gershwin." *New York Times*, 26 December 1931, 15.
- Jones, Isabel Morse. "Exacting Program Offered." *Los Angeles Times*, 11 February 1931, A9.

- . “George Gershwin Soft Pedals in New Musical Job.” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 November 1930, B13.
- Kingsley, Grace. “Gershwins Arriving for Fox,” *Los Angeles Times*, 24 April 1930, A16.
- Meehan, Leo. “Delicious.” *Motion Picture Herald*, 12 December 1931, 35–36.
- “Motion Pictures: Delicious.” *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 December 1931, 2.
- “Orchestra to Offer New Gershwin Work.” *New York Times*, 21 January 1931, 17.
- Reed, Don B. “In the Cinema Houses.” *Washington Post*, 26 December 1931, A6.
- Scheuer, Philip K. “Studios Plan Huge Programs.” *Los Angeles Times*, 21 July 1929, B11–12.
- “Talking Films Bring Music to Masses.” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 May 1930, B11.
- Taubman, Howard [as H. T.] “Music: 17,000 Hear Gershwin Program.” *New York Times*, 17 August 1932, 13.
- Twinchell, Wallace. “On Washington’s Broadway.” *Washington Post*, 9 December 1931, 8.
- Walker, Helen Louise. “Musical Pictures Are Here Again.” *Motion Picture Magazine*, November 1931, 52–53.

## Secondary Literature

- Arnheim, Rudolf. *Film as Art*. London: Faber and Faber, 1933.
- Atkins, Irene Kahn. *Source Music in Motion Pictures*. East Brunswick, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1983.
- Barrios, Richard. *A Song in the Dark: The Birth of the Musical Film*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Borneman, Ernest J. “Sound Rhythm and the Film.” *Sight and Sound* 3, no. 10 (1934): 65–67.
- Bradley, Edwin M. *The First Hollywood Musicals: A Critical Filmography of 171 Features, 1927 through 1932*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996.
- Butler, David. *David Butler, Interviewed by Irene Kahn Atkins*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993.
- Crawford, Richard. “Gershwin, George.” In *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 2nd ed., edited by H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie, 2:199–211. London and New York: Macmillan, 1986.
- . “Gershwin, George.” In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 9:747–62. London: Macmillan, 2001.
- Danly, Linda, ed. *Hugo Friedhofer: The Best Years of His Life; A Hollywood Master of Music for the Movies*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002.
- Davis, Lee. *Bolton and Wodehouse and Kern: The Men Who Made Musical Comedy*. New York: James H. Heineman, 1993.
- Evans, Mark. *Soundtrack: The Music of the Movies*. New York: Hopkinson and Blake, 1975.
- Ewen, David. *George Gershwin: His Journey to Greatness*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970.
- Eyman, Scott. *The Speed of Sound: Hollywood and the Talkie Revolution, 1926–1930*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997.
- Fehr, Richard, and Frederick G. Vogel. *Lullabies of Hollywood: Movie Music and the Movie Musical, 1915–1992*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1993.

- Feuer, Jane. *The Hollywood Musical*. 2nd ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Forte, Allen. "Motivic Design and Structural Levels in the First Movement of Brahms's String Quartet in C Minor." *Musical Quarterly* 69 (1983): 471–502.
- Garson, Edith. Supplement (pp. 295–302) and Index to the Supplement (pp. 382–87). In Isaac Goldberg, *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music*. 2nd ed. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1958.
- Gershwin, George. *George Gershwin's Song-Book*. [Limited Edition.] New York: Random House, 1932.
- . *George Gershwin's Song-Book*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1932.
- Gershwin, Ira. *Lyrics on Several Occasions: A Selection of Stage and Screen Lyrics*. New York: Knopf, 1959.
- Gevinson, Alan, ed. *Within Our Gates: Ethnicity in American Feature Films, 1911–1960*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Gilbert, Steven E. *The Music of Gershwin*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Goldberg, Isaac. *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931.
- . *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music*. 2nd ed., with Supplement by Edith Garson. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1958.
- Goldmark, Daniel. *Tunes for 'Toons: Music and the Hollywood Cartoon*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Gomery, Douglas. *The Coming of Sound: A History*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Hale, Philip. "Rhapsody, No. 2, for Orchestra—George Gershwin." Program note for Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, 29 and 30 January 1932, 838–54.
- Hischak, Thomas S. *Through the Screen Door: What Happened to the Broadway Musical When It Went to Hollywood*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004.
- Jablonski, Edward. *Gershwin*. New York: Doubleday, 1987.
- Jablonski, Edward, and Lawrence D. Stewart. *The Gershwin Years*. 2nd ed. New York: Doubleday, 1973. (Orig. published New York: Doubleday, 1958.)
- Jones, Chuck. "Music and the Animated Cartoon." *Hollywood Quarterly* 1 (July 1946): 364–70.
- Karlin, Fred, and Rayburn Wright. *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring*. Revised 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Kilenyi, Edward. "Gershwiniana: Recollections and Reminiscences of Times Spent with My Student George Gershwin." Library of Congress, Gershwin Collection. Unpublished, 1963.
- Kimball, Robert, and Alfred Simon. *The Gershwins*. New York: Atheneum, 1973.
- Kramer, Lawrence. "Romantic Meaning in Chopin's Prelude in A Minor." *19th-Century Music* 9 (1985): 145–55.
- Lack, Russell. *Twenty-four Frames Under: A Buried History of Film Music*. London: Quartet Books, 1997.
- Leon, Ruth. *Gershwin*. London: Haus, 2004.
- Levant, Oscar. *A Smattering of Ignorance*. New York: Doubleday, Doran, & Co., 1940.
- Liner note for "Gershwin by Starlight." Capitol Records SP-8581, 1962.
- MacGowan, Kenneth. "The Coming of Sound to the Screen." *Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television* 10, no. 2 (1955): 136–45.



- McCarty, Clifford. *Film Composers in America: A Filmography, 1911–1970*. 2nd ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- . Notes made in preparation for *Film Composers in America*. N.d. Special Collections, Margaret Herrick Library, Fairbanks Center for Motion Picture Study, Beverly Hills, CA.
- Oja, Carol J. “The Gershwin Circle.” Program note for American Composers Orchestra, 1998 season. Available at <http://www.americancomposers.org/gershwin.htm> (accessed 4 October 2005).
- . “Gershwin, *Second Rhapsody*.” Program note for American Symphony Orchestra, 1998–99 season. Available at [http://www.americansymphony.org/dialogues\\_extensions/98\\_99season/2nd\\_concert/oja.cfm](http://www.americansymphony.org/dialogues_extensions/98_99season/2nd_concert/oja.cfm) (accessed 4 October 2005).
- Peysner, Joan. *The Memory of All That: The Life of George Gershwin*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993.
- Prendergast, Roy. *Film Music: A Neglected Art; A Critical Study of Music in Films*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 1992.
- Pudovkin, Vsevolod. *Film Technique*. Translated by Ivor Montagu. Enlarged ed. London: Newnes, 1933. (Orig. published 1929.)
- Robertson, Patrick. *Film Facts*. New York: Billboard Books, 2001.
- Rosenberg, Deena. *Fascinating Rhythm: The Collaboration of George and Ira Gershwin*. New York: Plume, 1993.
- Rotha, Paul. *Celluloid: The Film To-day*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1931.
- Sabaneev, Leonid. *Music for the Films: A Handbook for Composers and Conductors*. Translated by S. W. Pring. London: Pitman, 1935.
- Salt, Barry. “Film Style and Technology in the Thirties.” *Film Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1976): 19–32.
- Schiff, David. *Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Schneider, Wayne D. “Orchestral” section, Work-list for “Gershwin, George” in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.grovemusic.com/shared/views/article.html?section=music.47026.6.5> (accessed 10 October 2006).
- Schwartz, Charles. “Gershwin, George.” In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 7:302–4. London and New York: Macmillan, 1980.
- . *Gershwin: His Life and Music*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973.
- Shirley, Wayne. “George Gershwin: Yes, the Sounds as Well as the Tunes Are His.” *Schwann Opus* (Fall 1998): 6a–11a.
- Suriano, Gregory R., ed. *Gershwin in His Time: A Biographical Scrapbook, 1919–1937*. New York: Gramercy, 1998.
- Taves, Brian, ed. “Archival Notes.” *Cinema Journal* 39, no. 4 (2000): 111–14.
- Watts, Stephen. “Alfred Hitchcock on Music in Films.” *Cinema Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (1933–34): 80–83.
- Webster, James. “Schubert’s Sonata Form and Brahms’s First Maturity.” *19th-Century Music* 2 (1978): 18–35.
- Wood, Ean. *George Gershwin: His Life & Music*. London: Sanctuary Publishing, 1996.
- Wyatt, Robert, and John Andrew Johnson, eds. *The George Gershwin Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

## Abstract

Around the time of its premiere in January 1932, George Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* for Piano and Orchestra was erroneously described as an "expanded" version of music that had been written specifically for a 1931 Fox film entitled *Delicious*, and for decades this misinformation has been echoed by Gershwin scholars. In fact, Gershwin put the finishing touches on the *Second Rhapsody* months before *Delicious* went into production, and his sketch for what in essence is the complete work was made when the screenplay was still in its embryonic stage. Relying on evidence that includes Gershwin manuscripts, various drafts of the screenplay, the conductor's score that was used for the film's recording sessions, and—importantly—the recently restored film itself, this article seeks to clarify both the chronological and the substantive relationship between the fifteen-minute *Second Rhapsody* and the film's seven-minute "New York Rhapsody." Along with offering the first detailed account of the musico-narrative content of the film's "New York Rhapsody" sequence, the article shows that the "New York Rhapsody" is a truncation of the *Second Rhapsody* engineered not by Gershwin but, probably, by Fox employee Hugo Friedhofer.

Keywords: George Gershwin, *Delicious*, *Second Rhapsody*, "New York Rhapsody," "Rhapsody in Rivets"

Humanities and former Chair of the departments of Music and Art History. Four volumes of his six-volume edition with extensive commentary of the madrigals of the Ferrarese composers Alfonso Fontanelli and Luzzasco Luzzaschi have been published by A-R Editions. The last two volumes are in press. He plans next to turn to a study of the group of Roman madrigalists working during the last third of the sixteenth century.

JOEL E. RUBIN is Assistant Professor and Director of Music Performance at the McIntire Department of Music, University of Virginia. He holds a PhD in ethnomusicology from City University of London (2001) and is coauthor of *Klezmer-Musik* (Bärenreiter, 1999) and *Jüdische Musiktraditionen* (Bosse, 2001), and he is cocurator of the ongoing Jewish Music Series of CDs for Schott Wergo. Rubin is also an acclaimed performer of instrumental klezmer music. His fifth solo album, *Midnight Prayer* (2007) is on Traditional Crossroads.

REINHARD STROHM is Heather Professor of Music at Oxford University. His main areas of interest are late medieval music, Italian opera of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and contemporary debates in musical historiography. His forthcoming publications include *The Operas of Antonio Vivaldi* (Olschki, 2007); *The Classicist Ideology: Music and Culture in the 17th and Early 18th Centuries*, written together with Ruth HaCohen (Ashgate, 2008); and a critical edition (Early English Church Music) as well as facsimile edition (University of Chicago Press) of the English Mass settings in the Lucca Choirbook.

ROBERT WALSER is Professor of Musicology at UCLA. He is the author of *Keeping Time: Readings in Jazz History* (Oxford, 1999) and *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Wesleyan, 1993). A recipient of NEH, ACLS, and Whiting Foundation Fellowships, he has twice been awarded the Irving Lowens Award for Distinguished Scholarship in American Music.

JAMES WIERZBICKI is an adjunct Associate Professor of Musicology at the University of Michigan, where he teaches classes in film music and other twentieth-century topics. He also serves as executive editor of the *Music of the United States of America* (MUSA) series of scholarly editions and as an associate editor of the *Journal of Film Music*. In 2005 his monograph on the electronic score for the film *Forbidden Planet* (*Louis and Bebe Barron's "Forbidden Planet": A Film Score Guide*) was published by Scarecrow Press.