



Archive Dr. Schebera, Berlin

Hanns Eisler

International Conference

Monday 19 - Tuesday 20 April 2010

Stewart House, University of London



PROGRAMME

Monday 19th April

10.00am Registration and coffee

Eisler and Socialism:

10.45am **Joanna Bullivant (University of Oxford):** The Socialist Composer in the 'capitalist concert hall': Alan Bush's Reception of Eisler in 1930s England

11.20am **Maria Kiladi (RHUL):** The Workers' Music Olympiad in Strasbourg, 8 –10 June 1935

11.55am **Joy H. Calico (Harvard University):** Eisler's Comintern File

12.30pm Lunch

Principles of Eisler's Music:

1.30pm **Geraldo Martins Teixeira Jr. (University of Brasilia):** Gestus in *The Mother*

2.05pm **Richard P. Nangle Jr. (Boston University):** The Genre-Crossing Music of Hanns Eisler as Exemplified in *Vier Wiegenlieder für Arbeitermütter*, Op.33

2.40pm **Tobias Fasshauer (Freie Universität, Berlin):** Hanns Eisler's Principles of Orchestration

3.15pm Tea

3.45pm **Keynote Address: David Blake (University of York):** My Teacher Hanns Eisler

4.45pm Short break

Exile and Resistance:

- 5.00pm **Albrecht Betz (University of Aachen):** On the 'Duration of Exile'.
Eisler – Brecht - Benjamin
- 5.35pm **Florian Scheduling (University of Southampton) and Andrea Bohlman (Harvard University):** Eisler on the Move: Situating Mobility in the *Reisesonate*
- 6.10pm **Anna Papaeti (Universität der Künste, Berlin):** Composing Resistance: Bertolt Brecht and Hanns Eisler's *Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg*
- 6.45pm Short break
- 7.00pm Performance

Tuesday 20th April

Hollywooder Liederbuch and Composing Songs :

- 9.30am **James Parsons (Missouri State University):** Hanns Eisler's *Hollywooder Liederbuch* and Sonic Montage
- 10.05am **Jessica Payette (Oakland University):** Gesture as Connective Tissue in the *Hollywood Songbook*
- 10.40am **Oliver Dahin (Akademei der Künste, Berlin):** What's in a Song? Eisler's Voices in British Popular Music
- 11.15am Coffee

Composing for the Films:

11.45am **Johannes C. Gall (University of Hamburg):** *Why is Composing for the Films so Difficult to Understand? Aspects of a Babylonian Confusion*

12.20pm **Jennifer Turner (Victoria University):** 'A real composer's paradise': Hanns Eisler's Approach to Composition and Orchestration for the Film Score *None But The Lonely Heart*

12.55pm Lunch

A Miscellany:

1.55pm **James Garratt (University of Manchester):** 'Cheap Pseudophilosophical Phrase Making'? Eisler and the Social History of Music

2.30pm **Sabine Berendse and Paul Clements:** Hanns Eisler's Conversations with Hans Bunge

3.05pm Tea

Eisler and England:

3.30pm **Peter Schweinhardt:** 'My work was nil'. An Attempt to Rescue Eisler's Peculiar *Pagliacci* Production

4.05pm **Jürgen Schebera (Hanns and Steffy Eisler Foundation, Berlin):** Eisler, Jascha Horenstein and Alexander Goehr: The Long Way to the *Deutsche Symphonie* in London, January 1962

4.45pm Round Table (including Eric Hobsbawm, Alexander Goehr)

5.45pm A performance of songs by Hanns Eisler sung by the Strawberry Thieves Choir

6.15pm Close

ABSTRACTS

Sabine Berendse and Paul Clements, Hanns Eisler's Conversations with Hans Bunge

Between 1958 and his death in 1962 Hanns Eisler recorded fourteen conversations with Hans Bunge. These were later broadcast on East and West German radio. In 1975 the conversations were published in East Germany under the title: *Fragen Sie mehr über Brecht* ('Ask me more about Brecht').

Eisler was a sparkling communicator and these conversations range across a wide range of subjects, covering in fascinating detail Eisler's professional collaboration and personal friendship with Brecht, his period of exile in the USA and his life and work after the post-war return to East Germany. Eisler also describes his more general musical, artistic and political ideas. With the exception of a few short extracts which appeared in David Blake's *Hanns Eisler – A Miscellany* (1995) they have been neither translated into nor published in English.

Hans Bunge's daughter, Sabine Berendse, assisted by Paul Clements, is in the process of translating all fourteen conversations in the hope that an English-language edition will be published in 2012 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Eisler's death.

The paper will be presented in two parts. First, Sabine Berendse will give an account of the background to how the conversations came to be recorded and subsequently broadcast and published. There will follow a reading by Paul Clements of selected extracts, including a story told by Eisler when Bertolt Brecht came to visit him in London in 1935.

Albrecht Betz (University of Aachen), On the ‘Duration of Exile’. Eisler – Brecht - Benjamin

Early in July 1934 Eisler presented the first part of his music for *Roundheads and Pointed Heads* in Skovbostrand to Brecht and Walter Benjamin. Two months before, Benjamin had told Brecht in a letter, that he considered *Roundheads* as ‘uncommonly important and a complete success’. This parabolic piece contains some of the most profound songs Eisler-Brecht ever wrote: dealing with existential questions like the duration of exile, the seduction of compromises, the conscious and unconscious manipulation of truth. The surrounding discussion (in this summer of 1934) of these three great Berlin intellectuals concerned Kafka and his view of alienation. Where and how do the songs reflect these elements?

David Blake (University of York), My Teacher Hanns Eisler

The distinguished British composer David Blake studied with Hanns Eisler in 1960-1. In this keynote paper, he reflects upon Eisler as a composition teacher and as a guiding inspiration for his own work.

Joanna Bullivant (University of Oxford), The Socialist Composer in the ‘capitalist concert-hall’: Alan Bush’s Reception of Hanns Eisler in 1930s England

The career of the English communist composer Alan Bush (1900-95) in 1930s England has frequently been discussed in terms of his growing interest in the Soviet Union. Bush’s unambiguous expression of his rejection of his ‘formalism’ and commitment to the 1948 resolutions of the Soviet Central Committee and Prague Congress has resulted in a tendency to read his earlier efforts to forge connections between music and politics retrospectively, in terms of an internal conflict of musical (modernist) and political interests. This paper shall argue that, on the contrary, a far more important influence in the 1930s was Hanns Eisler. Not only was Bush active in the performance of Eisler’s music in England, but also, as his correspondence and unpublished writings of the decade reveal, his ideas about music and politics were profoundly shaped by Eisler. In particular, in the 1930s Bush explored a rapprochement between modern music and politics and a critique of bourgeois musical culture – in both his writings and his musical activities – that owes much to Eisler’s example. Following an initial discussion of Bush’s reception of Eisler, I shall examine a key case study, Bush’s *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, op. 18 (1937), a work that was completed when Bush was on holiday with Brecht and Eisler and which sets a political text. The work, I shall argue, both reveals some intriguing parallels with Eisler and is testament to the conflicts and contradictions of Bush’s ideas about modern music and politics in the early stages of his career.

Joy H. Calico (Harvard University), Eisler's Comintern File

In the summer of 1935 the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) formally endorsed a radical change of strategy. The United Front, in which socialists and communists of all stripes banded together to combat fascism in Germany and Italy, had proved unequal to the task. As a result the Comintern announced that the movement would expand to welcome all antifascist participants, even the bourgeoisie, in an unprecedented inclusive Popular Front. At the same meeting Hanns Eisler was named chairman of the Comintern's International Music Bureau, although he remained in its good graces only briefly. By 1937 he and Bloch were publicly disagreeing with Lukács over the role of avant-garde art in the Popular Front, and in 1939 he did not hide his contempt when Stalin signed the Non-Aggression Pact with Hitler. The Comintern kept a file on Eisler from 1935 until his death, and those documents are housed at the RGASPI in Moscow (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History). The file consists primarily of newspaper articles documenting Eisler's activities in the United States and East Germany, numerous letters from socialist choirs about his music (London Labour Choral Union, Clapham and District Socialist Choir, Barnes Labour Choir), and so on. There are also 16 pages of internal documents marked 'absolutely secret' pertaining to his activities between 1947 and 1953. This paper uses Eisler's Comintern file to shed light on his work with the Popular Front and his relationship with the Comintern.

Oliver Dahin (Akademei der Künste, Berlin), What's in a Song? Eisler's Voices in British Popular Music

Composed in 1942, *To a Little Radio* ('An den kleinen Radioapparat') is, at first glance, an innocuous one-minute fragment which fits well in its surroundings of Hanns Eisler's exile Hollywood Songbook. Divorced from its immediate context, however, the song has acquired a highly personal and idiosyncratic reception history in British popular music. This paper focuses on Sting's 1987 account (rebranded as *The Secret Marriage*), one which rests easily within this songwriter's mainstream style, and a more recent 2008 rendition by Chumbawamba which returns more faithfully to the original and, presumably, its socialist underpinnings.

A number of aspects relating to the reception of *To a Little Radio* in popular music will be explored: the two versions alter the music in terms of both content and context, and while the original song was already composed under the auspices of Lydia Goehr's notion of 'exile in exile', i.e. simultaneous vertical and horizontal doubleness, this very genetic aspect is reclaimed and further extended in both versions. Furthermore, the alternate dimming and heightening of the political element, now understood in an 'English' context, reveals an inherent ambiguity in Eisler's exile voice and begs the question of why this song in particular should have acquired such a sustained reception history. My paper will conclude by suggesting the specific qualities these British versions exhibit contribute to reciprocal understanding with Eisler's

song, marking them as intriguing interpretations laying testimony to the many voices of the 'little radio'.

Tobias Fasshauser (Freie Universität, Berlin), Hanns Eisler's Principles of Orchestration

In his *Principles of Orchestration* (first published in 1922) Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov expressed the idea that orchestration forms an integral part of musical composition. A similar view was held – on a different aesthetic basis – in the Second Viennese School and Hanns Eisler was no exception. In his lecture on *Modern Orchestration* (Conservatorio Nacional, Mexico 1939) Eisler stated: 'There is no technique of orchestration independent from composition. To know how to orchestrate means to know how to compose.' Also, in *Composing for the Films*, he and his co-author, Theodor W. Adorno, asserted in respect of "setting" technique' (Tonsatz) and instrumentation (i. e. orchestration) that 'for a good composer both are identical'.

This paper will mainly deal with two questions:

- How does the inseparable unity of compositional technique and orchestration, as proclaimed by Eisler, manifest itself in his music?
- How does Eisler reconcile the concept of orchestration as a function of form and structure with the common associations and meanings connected to instrumental sounds, something which a socially and historically conscious composer of 'applied music', like him, is challenged to exploit or neutralize?

These questions will be explored by analyzing examples from Eisler's experimental film scores from the early 1940s, widely regarded as the climax of his instrumental writing. Thus, an important yet neglected aspect of Eisler's music will be brought to scholarly attention.

Johannes C. Gall (University of Hamburg), Why Is *Composing for the Films* so Difficult to Understand? Aspects of a Babylonian Confusion

It is a little known fact that the English-language first edition of Eisler's and Adorno's book on film music and the several editions based on the German manuscript differ not only in structure and size but also in meaning, for which reason the respective readers will necessarily come away with divergent information. Whilst the text body of *Composing for the Films* is larger, it is not free of shortcomings arising from misleading or erroneous translation. However, the German editions are also problematic; none of them contains all of the revisions that Eisler and Adorno made during the three-year editing and translation process, as is revealed by the recently rediscovered original typescript of *Composing for the Films*. This paper will examine aspects of such Babylonian confusion along with its foundations in the intricate

history of the book, which at first was conceived as a study on 'Why Is Modern Music So Difficult to Understand?'. This paper will also argue for a corrective to the mentioned Babylonian confusion by means of a new translation of *Composing for the Films* as well as a revised edition of *Komposition für den Film*.

James Garratt (University of Manchester), 'Cheap Pseudophilosophical Phrase-making'? Eisler and the Social History of Music

To speak of Eisler's philosophy of music history may seem to overstate the case. Yet the composer's prose writings and lectures present a sophisticated and original take on the social history of music, diverging substantially from the cruder Marxist perspectives presented by some of his contemporaries. Focusing on texts from the 1920s and 1930s, this paper explores Eisler's sources for his music-historical ideas and constructions, comparing his historiographical strategies with those of other contemporary Marxist musical commentators. It also examines the factors shaping his narrative of the place of music within the workers' movement.

Maria Kiladi (Royal Holloway, University of London), The Workers' Music Olympiad in Strasbourg, 8-10 June 1935

During the early 1930s, the rise of Fascism in Germany created the necessity for a co-ordinated action on behalf of the workers. A number of Workers' Music organisations were founded at an international level, the most significant of which was the International Music Bureau, an organization that had as its main task the co-ordination of the activities of the International workers' music movement.

The Workers' Music Olympiad of Strasbourg was an attempt to demonstrate a workers' united front against the threat of fascism. Hanns Eisler was a key figure behind the organization of the event, and became its most vocal advocate. Altogether, around 3,000 members/singers from various countries participated, and the event became a significant anti-fascist campaign.

The London Labour Choral Union, under the conductorship of Alan Bush, represented the British Workers' Music Movement. This was the first time that a British representative participated at an international workers' music event of such significance, and the occasion was greeted with much enthusiasm on behalf of the international movement.

This paper will give an account of the event and will assess the significance of the participation of the British delegation for the development of the Workers' Music Movement in Britain. Most importantly, it will highlight Hanns Eisler's influence on the Union's conductor, Alan Bush, an influence that encouraged Bush to transform the

Choral Union from a London Labour choir to a valuable and much respected member of the International Workers' Music Movement.

Geraldo Martins Teixeira Jr. (University of Brasilia), Gestus in *The Mother*

A central feature of the collaborative work between Brecht and Eisler is gestus, a means whereby the relationship between the music-body and the music-scene becomes more articulated particularly within the context of a critical reception that adopts an anti-Wagnerian posture.

Taking as a starting point *The Mother*, a play written by Bertolt Brecht with music by Hanns Eisler, this paper aims to analyze the organizational and stylistic features of Eisler's score, the compositional strategies that are employed to effect the gestus, the difficulties faced by Brecht and Eisler when approaching the relationship between music-body and music-scene, and the dramaturgical construction of the music.

Richard P. Nangle Jr. (Boston University), The Genre-Crossing Music of Hanns Eisler as Exemplified in *Vier Wiegenlieder für Arbeitermütter*, Op. 33

Hanns Eisler crossed musical and aesthetic boundaries in much of his work by variously combining popular and folk-like music idioms with practices and procedures reflective of his classical training under Schoenberg. This is evident, sometimes subtly and at other times patently, in the varied genres in which he worked and made his own, including chamber music, film and stage music, mass songs, political songs, and Lieder. The 'in-betweenness' or crossing of boundaries between styles and genres lends his work its impetus and dynamism and has contributed to its wide-ranging reception over the years.

This paper will undertake a multidimensional analysis of *Vier Wiegenlieder für Arbeitermütter* (Four Cradle Songs for Working-Class Mothers), a song cycle that is illustrative of Eisler's genre-crossing approach. The analysis highlights the incisive text-music relationship of the cycle through examination of compositional method and musical elements discernible in the notated score, as well as essential aspects of performance practice, such as vocal delivery. Eisler's use of varied musical techniques and styles contributes to multiple distancing effects (*Verfremdungseffekte*) in the songs, whose texts are by Brecht.

The reception of the *Vier Wiegenlieder* will also be addressed in the paper. The cycle was written for Helene Weigel in 1932 and performed by her and Georg Knepler, her accompanist at the time, at workers' rallies in Berlin. Since then, the genre-crossing quality of the songs has given rise to new performative contexts and diverse reception.

Anna Papaeti (Universität der Künste, Berlin), Composing Resistance: Bertolt Brecht and Hanns Eisler's *Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg*

This paper examines Hanns Eisler's music for Bertolt Brecht's *Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg* in the context of debates about artistic representation in the aftermath of World War II. Conceived by Brecht in California in 1943 as an anti-Nazi resistance piece, *Schweyk* was not performed until 1957. Projecting the anti-hero of Jaroslav Hašek's 1923 novel forward in time to the Nazi occupation of Prague, the work makes use of many comic elements and characters, as well as parodies of Hitler, Himmler and the SS. Its music has been characterized by Eisler as the most significant of all the works he wrote for Brecht's plays. This paper will examine the aesthetic and musical means through which Eisler expresses resistance to fascism. It will also assess the decision to complete and stage *Schweyk* in the mid-1950s, in light of postwar debates regarding the difficulties of representing traumatic and genocidal history. Adorno's controversial dictum 'after Auschwitz to write a poem is barbaric' formulated this challenge uncompromisingly. In Adorno's evaluation, traditional forms of artistic representation and expression were radically compromised by the 'social catastrophe'; art after 1945 must resist its inherent cheerfulness (*Heiterkeit*) and restrict itself to 'negative' and indirect approaches to collective trauma. For Adorno, Brecht's (and by implication Eisler's) humorous and parodic treatment of the Nazis trivialized the totality of horror and its social context. While taking Adorno's criticisms into account, this paper will show that Eisler's music attains a more complex and defensible position with respect to mourning and resistance.

James Parsons (Missouri State University), Hanns Eisler's *Hollywooder Liederbuch* and Sonic Montage

Composers who write as much about music as did Eisler are rare. Berlioz and Schumann readily come to mind, yet Eisler arguably does them one better. A reading of his prose provides any number of insights into his creative output, a fact making it even more curious that no one has explicated his music from the 1940s in light of the contemporaneous study he wrote with Theodor Adorno, *Composing for the Films*. A key example is his *Hollywooder Liederbuch* (1942-43), a collection of 47 songs ostensibly lacking closure, overarching structure, and narrative coherence. Eisler's dedication to montage allows for a more nuanced interpretation. Just as he and Adorno advocate an 'antithetic relation' between film and music in order to dispel 'the illusion of direct unity', in the *Songbook* Eisler revels in all-embracing contrasts, turning not to a single poet but ten (running from the Bible to Brecht). A similar impetus accounts for the plethora of musical idioms, be they the Schubertian allusions or evocations of the musical style of Eisler's erstwhile teacher, Schoenberg. Yet sonic montage allows the composer much more than acknowledging the California Traumstadt, his residence when he wrote the *Songbook*. Thus the heterogeneity is no happenstance. Rather it is a carefully-constructed pathway toward modernity, one that rejects the Romanticism of yesterday and Wagnerian 'Gesamtkunstwerk' and

instead celebrates the ‘fissures’ of eclecticism and therefore ‘makes the best of the aesthetically accidental . . . by transforming an entirely extraneous relation into a virtual element of expression’.

Jessica Payette (Oakland University), *Gesture as Connective Tissue in the Hollywood Songbook*

Recent scholarship on Eisler’s *Hollywood Songbook* emphasizes the poetic and personal significance of its intertextuality; in particular, Eisler’s references to monumental German song cycles and situation of Brecht’s texts among those by revered German humanists. However, Eisler’s creation of a network of intertextual musical gestures that stabilize the fragmented and depersonalized quality of the cycles within the cycle has gone unnoticed. This network musically articulates a condition repeatedly addressed in firsthand accounts of the exile experience: the notion that the exile has led several distinct lives, which end abruptly and result in multiple ‘deaths’. Eisler – perhaps in an effort to fulfill Brecht’s criteria for ‘a great work of vocal music’ in which ‘one can develop the mind, on all sides, dialectically’ – also devises the network to project a profound dialectic: the sense of bleak stasis that ultimately underlies the exile’s frantic motion.

Eisler’s settings of Brecht’s poems reflecting on life in Scandinavia and Hollywood best expose how songs that are presumed to be distant from one another, on the basis that they belong to different internal cycles, are intertwined through mirroring musical gestures. Songs that on the surface have no obvious relation to one another suddenly become conjoined by Eisler’s careful deployment of rhythmically stagnant bass lines, harsh cross relations in accompanimental harmonies, mechanistic endings that resist closure, the use of aggressive trills at the conclusion of songs, and vocal declamation that fluctuates on a spectrum from tenuous to lyrical.

Jürgen Schebera (Hanns and Steffy Eisler Foundation, Berlin), *Eisler, Jascha Horenstein and Alexander Goehr: The Long Way to Deutsche Symphonie in London, January 1962*

One goal Hanns Eisler carried on in his last years was to effect performances of his orchestral works at important music centres in the West – especially his opus magnum *Deutsche Symphonie*, written in exile between 1935 and 1947. His old friend Walter Goehr (composer, radio and record producer, exiled to Great Britain in 1933) was the first who proposed a London performance when he came to East Berlin in 1959 to conduct several radio productions of Eisler’s works. The plan would be realized only after his death, when Goehr’s son Alexander, composer and music producer for the BBC, started concrete preparations in January 1961. This was the beginning of a one year long artistically and politically complicated way to the final

BBC concert performance of January 6, 1962. Another old friend of Eisler, conductor Jascha Horenstein, was also involved in this process.

Using the preserved extensive correspondence between Eisler, Goehr and Horenstein (unpublished till now), the paper will show the difficulties in finding a conductor, when the BBC's 'first choice' Sir Adrian Boult after studying the score said 'very sorry, but I cannot do this work', and Jascha Horenstein also declined ('Dear Hanns, it yet begins with the title – I have a deep discomfort with all things that come along as "German"...'). Secondly are shown the serious political problems of doing the symphony by an East Berlin composer (who wrote the GDR-anthem) after the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961. But finally when the performance happened at BBC's Maida Vale studio, Eisler came to London for the last rehearsals and the concert. His impressions and those of friends who also attended will mark the end of the paper.

Florian Scheduling (University of Southampton) and Andrea Bohlman (Harvard University), Eisler on the Move: Situating Mobility in the *Reisesonate*

Eisler reception as well as his own writings and accounts offer only a sparse documentation of the composer's movements and responses to travel, the space between places. Yet, as routes between the political composer in Berlin and activist composer in exile, Eisler's journeys are at the juncture of what many biographers have alleged to be two very different and almost irreconcilable stases in his career. What, then, of the composer's musical productivity on the proverbial road? Begun in Prague after his departure from Berlin in 1933, refined in London, and completed in New York, Hanns Eisler's idiomatic *Reisesonate* dates from the time of the composer's seemingly obsessive yet sparingly documented travels. It thus accompanied him on his own journey, first from the European Continent to London and subsequently to America. The conspicuous title itself confirms this autobiographical resonance with the more approximate: 'travel'. With this lexical overtone in mind, the three-movement violin sonata, one of many chamber music works Eisler wrote as a traveller, focuses our attention on the mobility of the composer. The sonata's seeming eclecticism communicates with several worlds: whilst informed by the laden tradition of German chamber music, the texture of the short and seldom performed piece is still one of levity. The work is informed by Eisler's engagement with serialism, new objectivity and counterpoint. It is argued that the musical language of the sonata incorporates many of the idioms that permeate the genres associated with this polyglot composer in dialectic conversation. The *Reisesonate* thus places the act of mobility at the joint of home and exile, connecting emigration and immigration, departure and arrival.

Peter Schweinhardt, 'My work was nil'. An Attempt to Rescue Eisler's Peculiar *Pagliacci* Production

The filmic adaptation of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* of 1936 is the strangest of the 'purely British' productions in which Hanns Eisler was involved. The content and genre of the veristic model are considerably far off Eisler's aesthetic focus, they even were a target of his mockery. However, it would be a misguided scholarship that took in Eisler's polemic statements and denied works with an unclear genesis like *Pagliacci* a differentiated analysis. Eisler's inventive exile production, one which research has not touched on, will be discussed with a focus on three aspects: firstly, it is one of only two of the many cinematic *Pagliacci* adaptations which embed Leoncavallo's work within an extensive, new background plot. Since this may have been the main reason why Eisler joined the production, the configuration of music and film will be presented in detail. Second, the sources for the film score (predominantly Eisler autographs, in part copyist scores) located in the Hanns Eisler Archive in Berlin will be critically examined and analyzed according to their use in the film. Finally, this will raise issues relating to the aesthetics of production and the history of the work, such as Eisler's connection with British film exile, or the perspective of his future involvement with filmic adaptation of musical theatre (*Gasparone*, *Fidelio*). It should not be ruled out that in the process of this work-oriented salvage operation, one or the other of Eisler's polemic remarks will be jettisoned.

Jennifer Turner (Victoria University, Australia), 'A real composer's paradise': Hanns Eisler's Approach to Composition and Orchestration for the Film Score *None But the Lonely Heart*

Eisler came to Hollywood with extensive experience as a composer working collaboratively in film and theatre in Europe. In making his way in America, he was able to gain work on feature films in Hollywood. Two of his scores were nominated for Academy Awards – a reflection of his skills and ability to adapt to the requirements of the business of working in the film industry in America.

Nevertheless, Eisler was critical of the Hollywood film production process. The book *Composing for the Films* (1947) is a detailed exposé, from a knowledgeable and skilled insider, of the shortcomings of the Hollywood studio system. He was especially critical of the usual Hollywood practice of separating the task of orchestration from composition.

Whilst he was pragmatic and capable of practical compromise within this demanding environment, Eisler strove to maintain his integrity as a composer, pursuing where possible, his belief in the ability of music to engage in a complex, meaningful interaction with the picture. He expressed enthusiasm for the potential for timbral variety provided by the new electronic instruments in combination with the imaginative use of traditional instruments.

In this paper I will discuss Eisler's working process and his composition for the RKO feature film *None But the Lonely Heart*, which was nominated for the Academy Award of Music (Score) in 1944. Musical examples will demonstrate his exploration of timbral variety and other aspects of his distinctive voice, situated in relation to his theories and his practical working knowledge of the Hollywood film industry.