

# Conductor's personality outshines movie music lineup

By Keith Powers, Contributing Writer

Posted at 3:01 AM

Some concerts spotlight the soloist. Some highlight a world premiere. Some, the orchestra.

Saturday evening's New Bedford Symphony Orchestra program at the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center focused on comedy.

It came from a stand-up guy — the conductor, Yaniv Dinur. In a Movie Night pops program that wended its way through themes and suites from a dozen well-known films, Dinur told jokes, changed costumes and generally proved that there's an open mike somewhere that would benefit from his skills — if he ever decided to put down the baton.

Dinur's approach was just the sort of thing this music needed. Film music has the advantage of coming pre-approved by most listeners — nobody can fail to connect the sound onstage with the memories of the action, romance or drama that it was written to accompany.

Without that visual distractions, the music has to stand on its own. Sadly, most film scores fall into the category of sonic wallpaper.

Enter Dinur, stage center.

He joked about music written “Tempo di Camel” — Alan Menken's suite from “Aladdin” (it actually says that in the score). He started an applause-o-meter over the relative greatness of “Lord of the Rings” versus “Star Wars” (Jedis win easily).

He even did a mid-performance wardrobe change — we'll let you guess, but the orchestra was playing John Williams's “Superman” theme.

Dinur's interludes linked together brief themes and more developed suites that had only marginal musical interest. Howard Shore's arrangement of the “Lord of the Rings” music, Bernard Herrmann's scores from “Psycho” and “Vertigo,” and the Morricone's (father and son) soundtrack to “Cinema Paradiso” all had enough character to let them breath a little on the concert stage, just as they do in the movie theater.

But most of the music was poorly developed, insipid, and offered heart-on-the-sleeve emotions. Justin Hurwitz's “La La Land” score sounded like a commercial for a retirement village. Menken's “Beauty and the Beast” music felt like it was stolen from any random 1920s-era vaudeville show. Alan Silvestri's “Back to the

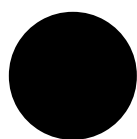
Future” — a suite arranged from of all three movies — made everyone want to go back somewhere, but not to that music. Monty Norman’s James Bond soundtrack neither shook nor stirred.

It wasn’t all boring — just a lot of it. Concertmaster Jesse Holstein had a number of interesting solos, including the aching line from John Williams’s “Schindler’s List.” The horns and percussion — no less than seven percussionists onstage — had plenty to say during the evening; film music usually reverts to loud noises when there’s no other option. Keyboardist Pei-yeh Tsai had some nicely played accents during the “Cinema Paradiso” segment.

It all goes to prove that music is appropriate to its function, not some absolute notion that is simply good or bad. Getting a lump in your throat, when you hear the “Beauty and the Beast” theme in a movie theater, is unavoidable. Yawning when you hear it in the concert hall is too.

The NBSO’s season finale will be Saturday, May 26 at 7:30 in the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center. The program includes piano soloist Roberto Plano performing both Ravel concertos. For information and tickets visit [www.nbsymphony.org](http://www.nbsymphony.org) or call the Z box office at 508-994-2900.

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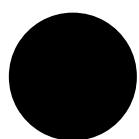
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