The Great Cartoon Composers

Carl Stalling & Scott Bradley

The Cartoon Style

- Carl Stalling and Scott Bradley together defined the musical treatment that we have come to know as the "Classic Cartoon Style":

    - tight synchronization of music and image ("Mickey-Mousing")

    - Musical quotations from popular songs and well-known classical repertoire

    - Brief, rapidly changing musical cues

Cartoon Musical Documents

- The Bar-Sheet - creative tool

- The Cue-Sheet - Legal/Financial Tool

Carl Stalling - Bio

- born Lexington, Missouri 1891.
- age 12 - silent movie house accompanist.
- early twenties, accompanist at Isis Movie Theatre in Kansas City.
  met Walt Disney who was producing animated comedy shorts in Kansas City.
- composed several early cartoon scores for Disney, including Plane Crazy and Gallopin' Gaucho in 1928, (but not Steamboat Willie, Disney's first released sound short).
- Early discussions with Disney about whether the animation or the musical score should come first led to Disney creating the "Silly Symphonies" series of cartoons.
- pioneered the use of "bar sheets" which allowed the musical rhythms to be sketched out simultaneously with the storyboards for the animation.
- 1936 - went to Warner Bros. access to song catalog and orchestra musicians.
- remained with Warner Bros. until his retirement in 1958.
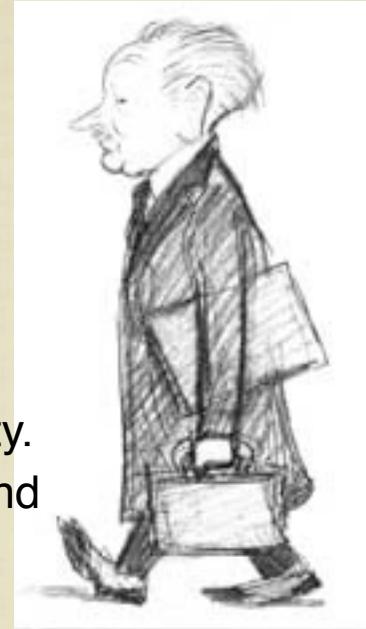
Carl Stalling - career highlights

- credited with the invention of the **click track** at Disney.

- credited with invention of **bar sheets** (also while at Disney)

- At Warner Bros., wrote a cartoon score every week for 22 years

- worked with directors Tex Avery, Bob Clampett, Friz Freleng, Robert McKimson, and Chuck Jones

- developed the "Looney Tunes" style of very rapid changing, highly synchronized musical cues

- made extensive use of the many works of Raymond Scott, whose music was licensed by Warner Bros. in the early 1940s.

THE CLICK TRACK

- Music Metronome, synchronized to film projector

- Music tempo is specified in Beats per Minute (BPM)

- Film rate is specified in Frames per Second (FPS)

- we usually want to know "How many Frames per Beat?"

BPM-FPB Conversion

- **Frames per Beat (FPB) = 1440 / BPM**

  - 60 BPM = 1440/60 = 24 FPB

  - 90 BPM = 1440/90 = 16 FPB

  - 120 BPM = 1440/120 = 12 FPB

BAR SHEETS

- derived from Music Notation, especially Orchestra Score

TIME flows from left to right --->

Track-Orientation adopted by most Media software
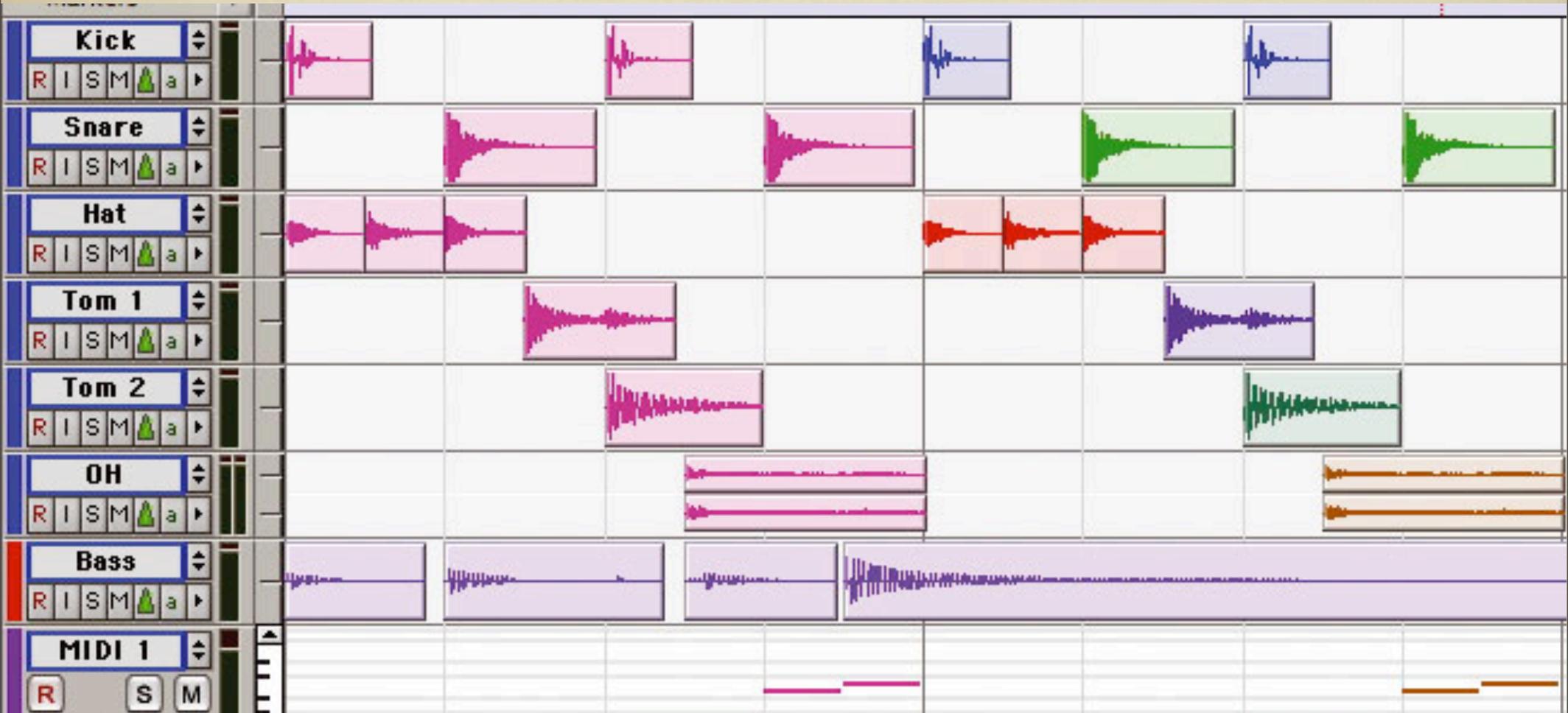
TIME flows from left to right --->

Bar Sheet for "Shuffle Off to Buffalo (Rudy Ising, Frank Marsales, 1933)"

Bar Sheet for "Shuffle Off to Buffalo (Rudy Ising, Frank Marsales, 1933)"

"TEE FOR TWO"

Music by Scott Bradley

Copyright by Loew's, Inc.

"URINE FOR IT"

SEQ2
SC1

ACTION	STEP 16x — STEP 16x	STEP 16x — STEP 16x	STEP 16x — STEP 16x	STEP 16x — STEP 16x
DIALOGUE				
CAMERA	← BG PAN			→
SOUND				
MUSIC	2/16 MARCH	2/16	2/16	2/16

ACTION	BOUNCE 16x — BOUNCE 16x	BOUNCE 16x — BOUNCE 16x	JUMP 32x	CONTACT 8x — CONTACT 8x POSE 16x
DIALOGUE				
CAMERA	BG PAN →			
SOUND				
MUSIC	2/16	9/16	ASCENDING 2/16	BRASS 9 TAPS 2/16

Notes:

FUN ON ICE   90 BPS

CARL STALLING -
THE WARNER BROS.YEARS (1936-58)

1936 - Warner owns several music publishing companies.

Studio makes money on publishing, licensing, radio play, sales of sheet music, sales of recordings, live performances.

- Stalling contractually required to feature verse and chorus of a WB song in every "Merry Melodies" cartoon.

Friz Freling: "We had to put two singing choruses in every cartoon, the idea being that if people heard something they liked in the theatre, maybe they'd go out afterwards and buy the song sheets."

- required to compose/record 6 minutes of music each week.

- many early WB writers/directors did not like this situation. They had to design the story to stop and have a chorus of the song. Bob Clampett: "We'd have a great story going along, but then we'd ... stop and have the singing chorus."

Carl Stalling -
The Warner Bros. Years (1936-58)

ca. 1940 - stopped writing cartoons with a particular song in mind. Instead, Stalling used portions of several Warner Bros. songs to match changing story situations in each cartoon

- Stalling liked using the WB library of popular songs. He would often search for song titles that matched the on-screen story situation.

- depended on the audience catching the song reference, at least the title

- CS would extend the gag beyond the title pun by changing orchestration, tempo, etc. to make the song anything from a dirge to a dance, fitting the tune to the mood of the scene.

Carl Stalling - career highlights

- Tendency to musical quotation and puns.

- Chuck Jones: "*He was a brilliant musician. But the quickest way for him to write a musical score [...] was to simply look up some music that had the proper name. If there was a lady dressed in red, he'd always play "The Lady in Red." If somebody went into a cave, he'd play "Fingal's Cave." If we were doing anything about eating, he'd do 'A Cup of Coffee, A Sandwich, and You.' I had a bee one time, and my God if he didn't go and find a piece of music written in 1906 ... called "I'm a Busy Little Bumble Bee.*" (Adamson, quoted in Goldmark, p. 22)

Carl Stalling - Musical Puns

SCENE	MUSIC
A drunken character staggering:	"How Dry I Am", "Little Brown Jug"
Western (Cowboy) setting	- Rossini "William Tell Overture"
Jewish character	- Yiddish wedding song, "Khosn, Kale Mazl Tov"
Black characters	"Sweet Georgia Brown"
Old South	"Camptown Races", "Dixie"
German characters	"Ach du Lieber Augustin"
Japanese characters	"Chinatown, My Chinatown"
An establishing shot of a home	"There's No Place Like Home"
Character Waking Up	Edvard Grieg's "Morning Mood"
complex mechanical processes (e.g. a factory scene):	Raymond Scott's "Powerhouse"
Any scene with food:	"A Cup of Coffee, A Sandwich, And You"

Carl Stalling - Musical Puns

CARTOON	SCENE	MUSIC
"Catch as Cats Can" (1947)	Sylvester swallows a bar of soap	- "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles"
"Porky's Duck Hunt" (1936)	Daffy taunts Porky	- "Listen to the Mocking Bird"
"Angel Puss" (1944)	cat dressed up as an angel	"An Angel in Disguise"
Booby Hatched (1949)	hen and chicks shivering in cold	"Am I Blue"
Mouse Wreckers (1949)	Cat looking at book on nightmares	"Sweet Dreams, Sweetheart"
Mutiny on the Bunny (1950)	Sam the pirate kidnaps Bugs	"Put'em in A Box and Throw'em in the Deep Blue Sea"
Little Red Rodent Hood (1952)	Sylvester dresses up like an angel	"Angel in Disguise"

The Cue Sheet

- listing of all music used in a film production

- written after production is completed

- filed with performing rights organization for purpose of collecting royalties

Sample Music Cue Sheet

Series/Film Title: *Urban Skies*
Episode Title/Number: *Grape Soda (#12)*
Estimated Airdate: *1-12-99*
Program Length: *60 minutes*
Program Type: *Comedy series*

Company Name: *Urban Skies Productions*
Address: *7920 Sunset Blvd., L.A., CA 90027*
Phone: *1-800-662-4490*
Contact: *Chris Moll*
Network Station: *Showtime*

Cue #	Cue Title	Use*	Timing	Composer(s) Affiliation / %	Pulisher(s) Affiliation / %
1	Urban Skies Theme	MT	0:16	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%
2	Running Home	BI	0:08	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%
3	Backwards Love	BI	0:13	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%
4	Uptown	BI	0:09	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%
5	Skies the Limit	BV	1:03	Terry Oakley (ASCAP) 33 1/3% Larry Joyce (PRS) 33 1/3% Ennio Blake (APRA) 33 1/3%	Terrycotta (ASCAP) 33 1/3% Larry Joyce Music (PRS/ASCAP) 33 1/3% Ennio B. Music (APRA/ASCAP) 33 1/3%
6	Synthroid	BI	0:05	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%
7	Coffee In Bed	BI	0:32	Rhonda Sims (ASCAP) 100%	Urban Skies Music (ASCAP) 100%

*Use Codes: **MT** = Main Title   **VI** = Visual Instrumental   **BV** = Background Vocal
VV = Visual Vocal   **ET** = End Title   **BI** = Background Instrumental
T = Theme

The Cue Sheet

"Bugs Bunny Rides Again" (1948)

The Cue Sheet
"Bugs Bunny Rides Again" (1948)

disc 71 - cue sheet handout

The Cue Sheet
"Bugs Bunny Rides Again" (1948)

- dir.: Friz Freleng

- disc 71 - cue sheet handout

THE CUE SHEET

"BUGS BUNNY RIDES AGAIN" (1948)

- dir.: Friz Freleng
- music: Carl Stalling

- disc 71 - cue sheet handout

Scott Bradley (1891-1977)

- most famous for scoring the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) theatrical cartoons, including those starring Tom and Jerry, Droopy Dog, Barney Bear, and cartoons by Tex Avery.

- Bradley was a conservatory-trained composer and English horn player who studied under expressionist composer Arnold Schoenberg.

- 1930s - first cartoon scores for Ub Iwerks, a former Disney animator who had opened his own animation studio the year before.

- 1934 Bradley began composing for Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising, who were producing cartoon shorts for MGM.

- 1937 - MGM establishes its own cartoon studio, Bradley hired permanently,

Bradley with animator Tex Avery (ca. 1955)

Scott Bradley

- early style incorporated fragments of popular and traditional melodies, (common practice in scores for animation.)

- by the late 1940s, his compositions had become more original and complex, sometimes using the twelve-tone technique devised by his teacher, Schoenberg.

- expressed pride in his "funny music" and believed scoring for animation offered far more possibilities to the serious composer than live-action films.

- Musical style is extremely precise. Carefully "micky-moused" his musical themes to screen action, even more so than Carl Stalling.

Jerry's Cousin (1951)

- oscar-nominated (lost to *Gerald McBoing-Boing*)

- directed by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera

- music by Scott Bradley (#57) includes quotes from:
  - *"Lydia, the Tattooed Lady" (Arlen and Harburg)*
  - *"The Dickey Bird Song" (Fain and Dietz)*
  - *"Hail To the Chief" (James Sanderson (music) and Sir Walter Scott (lyrics)*