MoMA HONORS RENOWNED FILM SCORE COMPOSER FRANZ WAXMAN WITH A 21-TITLE RETROSPECTIVE ON THE CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH

Month-Long Series Features Sunset Blvd., The Bride of Frankenstein, Rebecca, and Special Programs Include Ute Lemper in Concert (December 17) and Roundtable Discussion of Waxman’s Contribution (January 17)

FRANZ WAXMAN: MUSIC FOR THE CINEMA

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

NEW YORK, November 28, 2006—To mark the centenary of the birth of composer Franz Waxman, The Museum of Modern Art presents a retrospective of 21 films that feature a number of his most innovative and influential scores. Franz Waxman: Music for the Cinema, which is presented December 16, 2006–January 17, 2007, includes early works from Germany and France (Scampolo [1932] and Liliom [1934]), as well as a selection of his landmark Hollywood genre scores, including The Bride of Frankenstein (1935), Sunset Blvd. (1950), and Peyton Place (1957). A cabaret evening featuring Ute Lemper singing some of Waxman’s songs will take place on December 17, and on January 17 a symposium will be held at MoMA to discuss Waxman’s musical and cinematic legacy. The exhibition is organized by Ron Magliozzi, Assistant Curator, Research and Collections, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art.

Waxman (German, 1906–1967), one of the most influential and honored artists in the age of classic Hollywood film scoring, spent his early career working as a banker to pay for music lessons before moving to Dresden and then to Berlin to study music formally. In Berlin he played in and arranged music for a jazz band, the Weintraub Syncopaters. Before long, he was orchestrating the scores of some of the early German musical films of the late 1920s.

Waxman’s first movie work to win international attention—orchestrating and conducting Frederick Hollander’s score for Josef von Sternberg’s classic The Blue Angel (1930)—led to his first major composing assignment for producer Erich Pommer: Fritz Lang’s Liliom. By then, Waxman was living in Paris, where the film was shot, and he subsequently moved to the United States with Pommer for his next arranging project, Joe May’s Music in the Air (1934).

Waxman’s first original Hollywood score was James Whale’s The Bride of Frankenstein (1935), which led to a two-year contract with Universal Studios as head of their music department. He scored 12 of the more than 50 Universal films on which he worked as music director, before accepting a seven-year contract with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), where he developed his prolific compositional skills on adventure films, horror films, and comedies. He scored one of his earliest career-making successes with David O. Selznick’s Rebecca (1940), directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

Waxman left MGM in 1943 and began a long association with Warner Brothers, composing music for such films as Vincent Sherman’s Old Acquaintance (1943) and Mr. Skeffington (1944),
Howard Hawks's *To Have and Have Not* (1944), and Peter Godfrey's *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1947). In 1947 Waxman founded the Los Angeles International Music Festival, which presented world and American premieres of major works by composers such as Arnold Schoenberg, Dimitri Shostakovich, Igor Stravinsky, William Walton, and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Waxman received 12 Academy Award nominations for the 144 films he scored in his 32 years in Hollywood, finally winning the Oscar in 1950 for Billy Wilder’s *Sunset Blvd.* He went on to become the only composer to receive the Academy Award for Best Score of a Dramatic or Comedy Picture two years in a row (*A Place in the Sun* followed in 1951). His output during the 1950s and 1960s included some of his most important and eclectic scores, including Henry Hathaway’s *Prince Valiant* (1954) and J. Lee Thompson’s *Taras Bulba* (1962), and such epic and jazz-oriented scores as Don Siegel’s *Crime in the Streets* (1956), Billy Wilder’s *The Spirit of St. Louis* (1957), Joshua Logan’s *Sayonara* and *Peyton Place* (both 1957), and Fred Zinnemann’s *The Nun’s Story* (1959).

SCREENING SCHEDULE

FRANZ WAXMAN: MUSIC FOR THE CINEMA

Saturday, December 16

3:00 Waxman Prelude. 2006. USA. Produced and directed by John Goberman. From Franz Wachsmann to Franz Waxman. 4 min. New York premiere.

Based on Ferenc Molnár's dramatic fantasy, this score caught the ear of Frankenstein (1931) director James Whale. In French, English subtitles. 118 min.

Waxman's first American score instantly set an enduring standard for the horror genre. 75 min.

Waxman's lyrical, Aaron Copland–inspired score gives this adaptation of the notorious bestseller the unexpected resonance of authentic Americana. 157 min.

Sunday, December 17

Haas plays a homeless waif suffering from the inflation and poverty of pre-Nazi Germany whose fortunes change when she meets a British businessman. In German, English subtitles. 88 min.

5:00 Waxman Prelude. See Saturday, December 16, 3:00.

A concert of works from the Waxman songbook and film scores, featuring famed German performer Ute Lemper. Hosted by Franz Waxman’s son, John Waxman. Approx. 45 min.

Thursday, December 21

As Charles Lindburgh, Stewart crosses the Atlantic in the company of Waxman’s intimate and inspirational score. 138 min.

Saturday, December 23

4:00 The Two Mrs. Carrolls. 1947. USA. Directed by Peter Godfrey. Screenplay by Thomas Job, based on the play by Martin Vale. With Humphrey Bogart, Barbara Stanwyck.
Featuring Bogart as a psychopathic, wife-murdering artist, this film allowed Waxman to explore the theme of obsessive madness. 99 min.

6:00 Mr. Skeffington. 1944. USA. Directed by Vincent Sherman. Screenplay by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein, based on the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim. With Bette Davis, Claude Rains.
Waxman’s homage to Richard Strauss’s Der Rosenkavalier follows Davis in one of her career-defining performances as a vain society woman in this epic melodrama of forsaken love. 146 min.

**Sunday, December 24**

1:30 *The Nun’s Story*. 1959. USA. Directed by Fred Zinnemann. Screenplay by Robert Anderson, based on the book by Kathryn Hulme. With Audrey Hepburn, Peter Finch. The score for this drama of a nun (Hepburn) serving in the Belgian Congo is a subtle yet radiant reflection on religious music. 149 min.


**Wednesday, December 27**

6:00 *Fury*. 1936. USA. Directed by Fritz Lang. Screenplay by Lang, Bartlett Cormack, based on a story by Norman Krasen. With Sylvia Sidney, Spencer Tracy. An indictment of mob mentality, this landmark social-problem drama and its score were both considered ahead of their time. 94 min.

8:00 *The Furies*. 1950. USA. Directed by Anthony Mann. Screenplay by Charles Schnee, based on a novel by Niven Busch. With Barbara Stanwyck, Walter Huston. A psychological Western about the power struggle between an Oedipal daughter (Stanwyck) and her domineering father (Huston), performed and scored on the scale of Greek tragedy. 109 min.

**Friday, December 29**

8:30 *Waxman Prelude*. See Saturday, December 16, 3:00.


**Saturday, December 30**


**Sunday, December 31**

2:00 *Rebecca*. 1940. USA. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay by Joan Harrison, Robert E. Sherwood, based on the novel by Daphne du Maurier. With Laurence Olivier, Joan Fontaine. Waxman’s first score for Hitchcock is as sumptuously romantic as this story of a nobleman’s young bride haunted by the memory of her husband’s first wife. 130 min. *Introduced by Jack Sullivan, author of Hitchcock’s Music (2006).*
5:00  **Old Acquaintance.** 1943. USA. Directed by Vincent Sherman. Screenplay by John Van Druten, Lenore Coffee. With Bette Davis, Miriam Hopkins. Elegant camp with Davis and Hopkins as authors whose lifelong professional and romantic rivalry is underscored with variations on a theme of yearning sentiment. 110 min.

**Wednesday, January 3**

6:15  **Scampolo, ein Kind der Stasse.** See Sunday, December 17, 1:30.

8:00  **Mr. Skeffington.** See Saturday, December 23, 6:00.

**Thursday, January 4**

6:30  **Fury.** See Wednesday, December 27, 6:00.

8:30  **Objective Burma!** 1945. USA. Directed by Raoul Walsh. Screenplay by Ranald MacDougall, Lester Cole, based on a story by Alvah Bessie. With Errol Flynn, George Tobias. Waxman created one of the most admired and influential scores of the genre for this WWII paratrooper action film. 142 min.

**Friday, January 5**

5:45  **The Spirit of St. Louis.** See Thursday, December 21, 7:45.

8:30  **Sunset Blvd.** See Sunday, December 24, 4:30.

**Saturday, January 6**

2:00  **Waxman Prelude.** See Saturday, December 16, 3:00  
**Crime in the Streets.** 1956. USA. Directed by Don Siegel. Screenplay by Reginald Rose, based on his teleplay. With John Cassavetes, Sal Mineo. Waxman composed one of the first complete jazz scores for this "problem picture" of a street gang plotting murder. 91 min.

4:15  **Edge of Darkness.** 1943. USA. Directed by Lewis Milestone. Screenplay by Robert Rossen, based on a story by William Woods. With Errol Flynn, Ann Sheridan. This quintessential WWII drama of the underground resistance in Norway finds Waxman scoring the struggle between good and evil. 120 min.

7:00  **The Nun’s Story.** See Sunday, December 24, 1:30.

**Sunday, January 7**

2:00  **Objective Burma!** See Thursday, January 4, 8:30.


**Monday, January 8**

6:30  **Crime in the Streets.** See Saturday, January 6, 2:00.
8:30  *Liliom.* See Saturday, December 16, 3:00.

**Wednesday, January 10**

6:00  *The Furies.* See Wednesday, December 27, 8:00.


**Thursday, January 11**

6:30  *Waxman Prelude.* See Saturday, December 16, 3:00.

*The Two Mrs. Carrolls.* See Saturday, December 23, 4:00.

8:30  *Peyton Place.* See Saturday, December 16, 7:15.

**Friday, January 12**


**Saturday, January 13**

6:30  *Sayonara.* See Saturday, December 30, 6:00.

**Sunday, January 14**

2:30  *Edge of Darkness.* See Saturday, January 6, 4:15.

5:00  *Taras Bulba.* See Friday, December 29, 8:30.

**Monday, January 15**

6:00  *Prince Valiant.* See Wednesday, January 10, 8:15.

8:00  *Old Acquaintance.* See Sunday, December 31, 5:00.

**Tuesday, January 17**


8:00  *Waxman Prelude.* See Saturday, December 16, 3:00.