

FORTY FORT

TOM ALEXANDER
CINÉMUSIQUE

A TRIBUTE TO 12 GREAT FILM DIRECTORS

CINEMUSIQUE

The evolution of any creative project can take some very unexpected twists and turns. The recording which was intended to be the immediate follow up to the album, *What's Ahead?* — my solo piano debut in 2001 — had the working title, *Flying Against the Time Zones*. However, new melodies and ideas revealed themselves during the composing process and I suddenly found myself with what was shaping up to be an entirely different musical direction. I didn't resist this new inspiration, which was fueled by the cinematic vision of some of my favorite film directors — films I saw at my family's movie theatre, owned and operated by my dad and his brothers, and where I spent the majority of the first 24 years of my life. The project would become *Cinemusique — A Tribute to 12 Great Film Directors*. I recorded the piano tracks at Echo Beach Studios in Jupiter, Florida at the end of 2001. The remaining tracks, which included electronic keyboards, percussion, guitar, melodica, and bouzouki, were recorded at Island Boy Studios in Miami early the following year.

Then, something odd happened. Really odd.

An album deal opportunity came along with a real budget and the chance to record the music for *Flying Against the Times Zones* with a full roster of musicians.

I put *Cinemusique* on hold with the intent to release it in the “relatively” near future.

So, *Flying Against the Time Zones* was indeed the follow up to *What's Ahead?*.

Different musical and media opportunities presented themselves in the interim.

When I finally did revisit the *Cinemusique* music, I discovered the audio files I had in my possession were compromised. Was this some kind of bizarre trickery the musical gods were playing on me? Buzzes, pops, overmodulation, and a litany of other technical hiccups were present in nearly all the tracks. I was crestfallen.

I assumed, since my tracks were pulled directly from the masters, some kind of digital gremlins ruined it forever. I didn't even want to hear about what dwelled in the deepest recesses of various hard drives over the past two decades. I would just forget it and move on. And so I did.

Then, in November of 2020, I learned a copy of the original masters existed in their original, clean condition. And so — here it is — nearly two decades after it was recorded.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention some of the themes from *Cinemusique* did turn up on *Flying Against the Time Zones* in slightly altered forms, but the majority of this music has never been heard before on any of my recordings or have even been performed in a live setting.

I hope you enjoy listening to it as much as I did “rediscovering” it.

1. **Clowns and Cappuccino (for Federico Fellini)** - Italy's master filmmaker was famous for his striking cinematic vision. His collaborations with composer, Nino Rota, created some of the most memorable moments in international cinema.
2. **A Manhattan Romance (for Woody Allen)** - Allen and New York are almost synonymous. From his earliest days to his Golden Era from 1977 to the mid 1990s, he's captured New York in striking black and white and golden hues that echo a glorious past.
3. **Sketches of Ellis Island (for Francis Ford Coppola)** - In all of Coppola's incredible work, no scene resonates more with me than when young Vito Corleone, surrounded by his fellow immigrants, enters New York harbor and sees the Statue of Liberty. I imagine my own grandparents journey and seeing Lady Liberty for the very first time.
4. **Shadows on the Staircase (for Alfred Hitchcock)** - The Master of Suspense, and his alliance with composer Bernard Herrmann, produced some of the most iconic moments on the big screen.
5. **Tears Behind the Smile (for Charles Chaplin)** - Chaplin opened the door to cinema for many artists, either directly or through his generational influence which remains evident today. Be it humor, pathos, or a deep, meaningful message, his towering talent for visuals and music endures.
6. **Bicycles and Cafes (On a Rainswept Sunday) (for Francois Truffaut)** - I've always been struck by the innovative cinematic vision of European filmmakers. Truffaut's perspective was so unique and fresh, particularly his ability to capture the city and countryside of his beloved France — storytelling weaved through a tapestry of unforgettable imagery.
7. **Silence and Light (for Ingmar Bergman)** - In college, Bergman was the “go to” if I was lucky enough to catch it on television, at an art house in New York or Philadelphia, and later video cassette. Arguably the greatest director of his era, he set the standard for some of the most memorable moments in the history of film.
8. **Soldier on the Road (for Akira Kurasawa)** - I can't say anything about Kurasawa that hasn't already been said. I can only share how his films made me feel personally. If there's one word to capture it, I'd say awestruck. What he put on film was often from his own dreams. And they've played in my own dreams — both the beautiful and the unimaginable.
9. **Recipes from Hell's Kitchen (for Martin Scorsese)** - Rawness. In his earliest days, Scorsese captured New York with the grit and unflinching eye on the underbelly many filmmakers ignored. Over his long career, the evolution and refinements have been dramatic, but the storytelling never shies away from direct and often brutal honesty.
10. **Shutter Speed (for Stanley Kubrick)** - For me, a Kubrick film is an event. Like no one else since, I feel like when I'm watching his stunning images fill the screen, there's no place I'd rather be. And few directors have used music the way he did.
11. **Next Galaxy Over (for Steven Spielberg)** - There's no question, Spielberg would have become a legendary director without his partnership with composer, John Williams. But, not unlike Fellini and Rota and Hitchcock and Herrmann, his pairing with Williams is often spoken about in the same breath, as well it should. Williams marries his iconic themes perfectly with the unparalleled cinematic magic Spielberg creates.
12. **The Magnificent Mercury (for Orson Welles)** - At age 25, Welles delivered what many have called the greatest film of all-time, Citizen Kane. That lofty accolade is entirely subjective of course. But no one can argue that what that film did do was usher in an entirely new era of filmmaking. Of course Welles' brilliant (but admittedly somewhat uneven) career gave us a catalogue of cinema to revisit forever.

All Compositions by Tom Alexander
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Tom Alexander — Piano, Keyboards, Keyboard Bass, Melodica, Percussion, Guitar, Bouzouki.

Piano tracks recorded by Chas Payson at Echo Beach Studios, Jupiter, FL, November, 2001.
All other tracks recorded by Tom Eastwood at Island Boy Studios, Miami, FL, January through March, 2002.

Mixed by Tom Eastwood
Mastered by Ric Fierabracci at Cranky Boy Studios, Simi Valley, CA
Sleeve Design by Andrew Morrell and Tom Alexander

Producer: Tom Alexander
Associate Producer: John Fifield

My love and thanks to my wife and son, Gwyn and Peter Alexander.



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