The complete melodic outline of the work is repeated several times, with newly invented ornamentation at each appearance. In this performance, a poignant climax is reached in the third statement of the melody, with the erhu “singing” out beautifully in the instrument’s highest range. Our excerpt stops before the final statement, which releases some of the tension. The version we hear today of The Moon Reflected on the Second Springs has, like most traditional pieces, been shaped over several generations since its modest beginnings, when it was performed by a blind, gifted Chinese musician.

**Listening Guide**

**Abing: The Moon Reflected on the Second Springs (Er quan ying yue), excerpt (5:36)**

**DATE:** First recorded in 1950 by Abing

**MEDIUM:** Erhu (2-string fiddle), with yangqin (hammered dulcimer)

**GENRE:** Chinese traditional music, from Jiangsu region

**SCALE:** Pentatonic (5-note), with pitches D-E-G-A-B

**FORM:** 4 musical phrases, repeated and elaborated

**TEMPO:** Slow, with very gradual acceleration

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:**
- Lyrical melody made up of 4 melodic phrases, derived from pentatonic (5-note) scale.
- Entire melody played 4 times, each a variation with new embellishments.
- Unique timbre of bowed erhu supported by hammered yangqin.
- Exploration of varied articulations and registers of solo erhu; reaches a climax in highest range.

Short, rhythmically free introduction by erhu is followed by lyrical melodic phrase 1, played in low range; accompanied by yangqin; ends on low G.

Melodic phrase 2—begins up an octave in middle range and louder, with brief countermelody on yangqin; ends on sustained D.

Melodic phrase 3—higher range, begins with soft staccato note, ends on sustained pitch of G.

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Listening Guide continues
Melodic phrase 4—returns to middle range; serves as a short closing idea ending on D.

Returns to phrase 1 in low range; soft, with first note plucked, continuation of melodic phrases, yangqin more audible; phrase 3 extended in tremolo (fast repeated note), with rising yangqin line:

Returns to phrase 1, in low range and with short opening notes; long elaboration of middle phrases, with statement of second idea in very high range; reaches climax and descends to cadence pitch of D.

Music for Films

"A film is a composition and the musical composition is an integral part of the design."

—H. G. WELLS

KEY POINTS

- Music sets the mood, helps establish the characters, and creates a sense of place and time in a film.
- There are two principal types of music in a film—underscoring and source music.
- Silent films were generally accompanied by solo piano or organ.
- Film music may be newly composed or may borrow from Classical or popular repertory; rock, country/western, and jazz gained favor in film music after the late 1940s.
- The late 1930s is considered the Golden Age of films and film music.
- The Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev wrote scores for two epic films—Alexander Nevsky (1938) and Ivan the Terrible (1944–45)—both about Russian historical figures and both directed by Sergei Eisenstein.
- Post–World War II films used music sparingly, and composers explored more modern special effects.
- The film music of John Williams marks a return to full orchestral resources and the use of leitmotif (recurring themes) associated with characters or situations.
- In the 1980s, the synthesizer had a significant influence on the film music industry.

Music has helped to create some of the most memorable moments in film history. The opening of 2001: A Space Odyssey, the Paris montage from Casablanca, and the shower scene in Psycho are all accompanied by music that has become an integral part of the film experience.