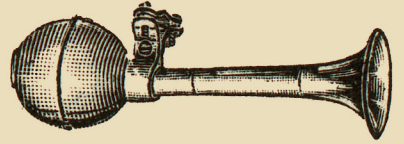


Cartoon Music



Vicki and Ergo ride their little bicycles with square wheels and honky hooters and tell you about their love of this funny music. Features, amongst others, the music of Carl Stalling, Roger Roger and BBC Radiophonic Workshop, all collaged with conversation and ridiculously pointless repetitions.

There is something that has always fascinated me about cartoon music. In many ways it is our first encounter with "unconventional" music. By unconventional, I mean that the music is "action based", so instead of the 4/4 beat and a repetitive, catchy melody you might find in a pop song or Mozart, for example, we hear music that is dictated by the action taking place on screen.

So the cat hits the mouse with a big CLANG

... the mouse falls to the floor with the glissando of a trombone

... the cat runs away and pizzicato violins flutter

... unfortunately an anvil drops from nowhere onto his head with a reciprocated CLANG

... the spirit of the cat ascends to heaven to the strains of a harp

The structure of this kind of music, when removed from the context of the cartoon, is more like 20th century avant-garde music than anything else.

Try listening to one of the cartoon scores of Carl Stalling or Scott Bradley, then compare this with a composition by Gyorgy Ligeti, John Cage, or Iannis Xenakis, and the parallels are manifold.

Cartoon Music is also a very important reference in terms of sample music, because it was the practice of many cartoon composers in the "golden age" of the cartoon to liberally use "quotations" from other pieces of music across history in order to humorously comment on the on-screen action, which has massive parallels with the practice of many contemporary sound-collage artists.

