
To the Movies, with the Great Ennio Morricone

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Movies are light, movement... and sound. Movies are also music. Even silent cinema had its music. And there are films that have ranked high in a privileged spot within the collective memory thanks, mostly, to its soundtrack, its score.

Ennio Morricone, who died last Monday in Rome, has probably been the most influential of cinema composers, undoubtedly one of the most prolific and popular.

Some identify him above all for his music for the famous spaghetti westerns, with which he began with the Italian director Sergio Leone.

And certainly, some of those compositions have had better luck than the films to which they belonged. But Morricone was a very versatile author and fortunately the public and critics always paid him great tributes.

Three out of Hundreds

Most likely, many have heard some of these songs and do not know who the author was. This is what happens with great works: they transcend their own creators. If one were to choose three classics from Morricone's extensive production, one would have to start with his music for *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (Sergio Leone, 1966), which is perhaps his most widespread theme; it became a worldwide hit immediately.

But more emotional and moving was his score for *Cinema Paradiso* (Giuseppe Tornatore, 1988), even though some consider it too sweet and pretentious. An evocation of that film cannot be conceived without its great musical theme, which sums up the overwhelming power of the story.

However, critics seem to agree that Morricone's best work for cinema was the music of *Once Upon a Time in America* (Leone, 1984), a true achievement, since he managed to create a rich background for more than 300 minutes of film.

It's not Music for Music's Sake

Something has always been said about Morricone's work for cinema: it is formally good, not infrequently brilliant, and it's always functional. Ennio Morricone did not gloat in the self-sufficiency of his art. He composed to listen... and also to see.

So right now, when you enjoy some of those creations, you just have to close your eyes to catch a glimpse of a memorable scene. With the music of Ennio Morricone one always feels like being in the cinema.

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff
