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DAVID THORBURN: One of the ways to think about the American musical, generally, is to recognize that it's a distinctive, maybe even a unique American form and with the Western movie, the two most distinctive contributions that Hollywood has made to the art of movie making. Listen to this entry on musicals, the very beginning of the entry on musicals from *The Oxford Companion to Film.*

"The history of the screen musical is essentially that of the American musical. The outstanding examples of the genre have been made in Hollywood, and only the American industry has consistently produced musicals throughout the sound era." The book was published in the early '70s, just as Hollywood movies were undergoing the transformation I've alluded to.

"Indeed with the Western, the musical could be claimed as Hollywood's outstanding contribution to the history of cinema." So that's a good context for thinking both about the Westerns we'll be talking about in the next two weeks and about the musicals we're thinking about this week.

Perhaps before we go any further, it would be useful for me to give a very quick talk about the problem of definition because there is music in almost all films. How do we distinguish a musical, a true musical, from a film that contains music? And the simplest answer is also the most obvious one. We would embrace a definition, I think, that would say that a film in which song and dance are so essential that to remove them would leave virtually nothing means you're watching a musical. And that would distinguish it then from many, many films in which musical elements may be present, even musical performances may be present, but they are not at the very essence of what the film is. And the film is not entirely dependent upon those elements. So a simple, straightforward definition.

One way we can measure the significance, the centrality, of the musical and also of the Western, because the numbers are somewhat similar for the Western-- the centrality of the musical to the studio system is to look at the numbers. And between 1927 and 1947, just over 900 musical films, were made. That's approximately 48 films a year. That's roughly 10% of the

total production of movies during that period were musicals.

And one of the things it shows, of course, is how steady the audience for musicals were, how stable the system became relatively quickly, allowing for the elaboration and repetition of the fuller exploration of this particular genre of movie.

And you can recognize the decline, too. There are people who would argue that the musical, in its exuberance, and the American musical especially, in its exuberance and optimism, represented essentially a pre-war value. And there are people who say, well, after the war, the musical began to decline. There are other explanations for why the musical began its decline, and the primary one is the one I've already implied. The studio system was breaking down, and the captive audience of millions and millions of people who went to the movies every week was disappearing.

But in the period between 1949 and 1958, a much briefer period, only 23 films a year were made. They were still a significant proportion of the Hollywood output, but you can understand-- you can see the tremendous decline.

And then in the period between '59 and 1980, only seven films that could be named musicals a year. The genre is virtually-- not exactly extinct, but it's now a specialty item. And musicals continued to be made, but they are hardly part of the regular fare of moviegoers.

So we can think of the musical as one of the distinctive expressions of the Hollywood studio era. And in their optimism and in their-- maybe in even in their relative reluctance to engage directly with political and social questions, they express a certain value or a certain perspective that particularly illuminates the remarkable entertainment industry that Hollywood became.

I want to just say a very few words about the dominant themes in these films. They're what you might expect from this combination of music and comedy. One recurring topic is the theme of show business. Many musical films have as their plot-- there's a kind of subgenre of musical films devoted to the question of putting on a show. And the drama of this subcategory of musicals is you begin at the beginning with the cast being assembled, and you watch the difficulties, the internal and public difficulties, that the show has getting on the boards.

And one very common-- this is derived, in some sense, from forms of musical performance that existed on Broadway before they migrated to Hollywood, before they were adopted and adapted by Hollywood. And what's embedded in this show business theme, for example, are

larger themes. And one of them is the theme of community. In other words, you'll see a very concrete and dramatic articulation or dramatization of these principles in *Singin' in the Rain* this evening. All of the themes I'm talking about now you will find, I think, expressed, dramatized with great authority and wit in *Singin' in the Rain.*

So the idea is that this putting on of a show means that you have a community of people who have to get along together, and what is discovered in the tensions and problems that begin to develop? There are things that have to do, if we jump down in my categories to the next one, not to high culture popular but to the next one, to class or position-- you can see that, in some sense, the theme of community leads also then, at least implicitly, into an interest in the relative questions of hierarchy, as against questions of talent. In other words, I'm the important singer, but my understudy has the better voice. What's the tension there? What's going to happen there? And you'll see how this theme, with wonderful comic energy, plays itself out in *Singin' in the Rain*.

But what I want you to recognize as embedded in that theme is what we-- not only in what I'm calling the theme of community, or the theme of class, social class or social hierarchy or social position, and the tension between individual talent and social position, which repeatedly expresses itself, at least implicitly, in these music-- what does this say? That the musicals do have, at some level, a kind of implicit political subject matter, that they're often about democracy or about how to get along. And in fact, during the most recent crisis of partisan disagreement in Congress, I was thinking, gee, if I could send them a couple of musicals, and if they pay attention to them, maybe they could get along, too. Probably too hopeful an idea. But there is a political dimension to the drama, even to the confined drama of putting on a show, that some very good musicals bring to the surface.

Another central theme is the one I skipped over-- the conflict, often a tension or a conflict between high and popular culture, with Hollywood and the musical film almost always standing on the side of the popular as against the moribund and pretentiously sclerotic, old-fashioned older forms. And they often create a kind of cartoon of the older forms in order to celebrate their own energy. But this tension is a recurring one in musicals, and you'll see versions of these themes in both the musicals that are on our roster for this evening.

Finally, implicit in what I've been saying is the theme of convention and restraint versus spontaneity, energy, what we think of as "the natural." And I'll say more about this tonight when we talk about the dance sequences in *Singin' in the Rain*. But at the moment, just let me

emphasize the extent to which this principle of a kind of conflict between what is handed down, what is conventional, what is expected and what is dictated by your spontaneous needs, desires, a sense of joy is a constant source of tension and energy in many, many musicals and is one of the central organizing principles of *Singin' in the Rain.* And we'll come back to that tonight when I talk more fully about that film.

Well, what I'd like to do with the time I have left is try to illustrate in a certain way two different things. And they're partly in conflict, and therefore, in some sense, I'm simplifying, but it's an intellectually justifiable simplification. What I want to do simultaneously is give you a kind of brief sense of the history of the musical but also a sense of the different flavors within the broad category of the musical that might be possible. This is obviously an impossible task in 30 minutes or so, but we're going to accomplish it anyway in a very reduced and crystallized way, I think.

As you might imagine, the central impetus for the musical occurred technologically with the advent of sound. As soon as sound became possible, people were thinking, ah, we can sing in the movies. Music is going to be important in the movies. And of course, that was in fact the case.

The very first sound film, *The Jazz Singer*, was about singing. It had ten interpolated songs in it and only two lines of dialogue. In it, Al Jolson, the famous blackface performer, played a performer in blackface, a Jew actually, a white man, who played a black, most famously, on stage.

In this particular film, he plays a religious family's-- the son of a religious family, of a Jewish family, who wants to sing jazz, not to be a cantor in the synagogue. And his father's very angry at him because he thinks he's betraying-- and can you see embedded there is the theme of, in a certain sense, high religious culture versus popular culture? In the very first film that interpolated music, that theme is already present.

And in 1928, Jolson again appeared in a film called *The Singing Fool* that made a great success. And what then followed in 1929 were a whole series of musical films, of films that incorporated music, including, in 1929, a film called *The Broadway Melody of 1929.* And it contained a backstage story, like the one I've already described, about two sisters from vaudeville who tried to reach Broadway and star on Broadway. And therefore, the putting on of a show is one of the implicit subjects.

But this form of early musical was derived from Broadway in a very direct way. And it often did not have a coherent plot. It often involved a series of singing and dancing numbers interspersed with comic dialogue of some kind-- literally a revue, not a play. And then some versions of the revue began to have more systematic plots, animated, I think, generated by this theme of putting on a play. And *The Broadway Melody of 1929* was an astonishing success. It was partly because it was the most fully success-- most fully musicalized film up to that time.

And it was so popular, it was-- incidentally, the songs written for it were written by Herb Nacio Brown and Arthur Freed, the two people who are at the center of *Singin' in the Rain.* Nacio Brown's songs are in *Singin' in the Rain*, and Arthur Freed, of course, is the great executive producer responsible for more of the great musicals in the Hollywood era than any other figure. So they begin even that early, at the very earliest stages of the medium's history.

And so then *Broadway Melody* was so popular and so successful that in 1930, 70 new musicals were produced, mostly in imitation. And the film won an Oscar for Best Film. So it immediately established musical films, films with music, song, and singing and dancing in them as a central category.

Most early musicals were revues of this sort, very early ones. They combined-- they used Broadway, Hollywood, vaudeville, and radio stars, incorporated them in lavish musical numbers interspersed with sketches. And again, they were not necessarily coherent plots, and most of them didn't even attempt to present a coherent plot. This kind of film, more coherently plotted, remained a subcategory of musicals all the way through the history of musicals.

And that's why I want to qualify the idea that I'm giving you a history. I am giving you a kind of history, but it's a complicated history because the forms I'm talking about don't completely disappear and get supplanted by the more advanced forms. They live together simultaneously. And the question of whether one is a more advanced form than another might be debatable, although I think there are distinctions, as you'll see, that do suggest that there's a kind of progression, an increasing understanding of what it would mean to make a musical film that was truly coherent, that wasn't simply presenting us with the joy of song and dance in a way unconnected to story or character.

But it remained a subcategory. This revue remained a subcategory of musical films all the way through the history of the form. And in 1946, one of the most remarkable versions of this was

made. It was called *Ziegfeld Follies*. And again, it was based on-- it was a film about-- a nostalgic film about a Broadway phenomenon, but it was a fully integrated film.

--of a form that was popular in the United States but even much more popular in Europe-- the stage operetta. It wasn't a full opera. It was often a kind of smaller comic drama that involves singing and dancing. And they were called operettas because they were understood to be smaller versions of opera, more amusing, less demanding versions of opera, I suppose, less pretentious and tragic versions of opera.

And there were a number of European directors who, when they immigrated to the United States, brought their distinctive feel to the making of early musicals. And some of the most powerful, artistically powerful early musicals fell into the category not of the revue but of the operetta.

And I want to show you one version of such a film now, one of my favorite passages from the great director Rouben Mamoulian in 1932, a scene from *Love Me Tonight*, made in 1932. It's a long sequence. I may have to skip some of it, but let me set it up for you.

In this film, Maurice Chevalier, whose English is so terrible that you'll have trouble understanding him-- his French accent is so deep at this point. He became much better at English because, as some of you, I hope, realize, he became a great star in the English-speaking world as well as in France. But in this film-- this is one of his earliest films, if not his first English film, and he plays, even though he's very well-dressed here-- he plays a working man, a middle class-- a tailor. He plays a tailor. And he owns a tailor shop in Paris. And in this opening scene, one of the men that he-- one of the aristocrats whose clothing he makes comes in to be fitted out for his wedding outfit, and Maurice Chevalier does so.

The plot of the film depends upon the fact that Maurice Chevalier, this middle class tailor who's trying to make a living in Paris in his shop, is brought into the ambit of an aristocratic family, of a royal family. And because there is an aristocrat for whom Maurice Chevalier has made a great many suits who owes him money, and Maurice chases him to his castle in the country, trying to find, trying to recover his money, and romantic entanglements ensue. And the larger part of the film actually involves a romance across social class between this Parisian tailor and a princess played by Jeanette MacDonald, one of the great musical stars of the studio era. So here is a scene from very early in *Love Me Tonight.*

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

-All right.

[WHISTLING]

[MUSIC - FELIX MENDELSSOHN, "WEDDING MARCH"]

-Maurice, it's beautiful.

DAVID THORBURN: Can you make it any louder? Can you hear it?

-You make a work of art.

-Work of art for your sweetheart.

-Oh, it's like poetry in a book. Oh, a beautiful large book.

-[INAUDIBLE]. The romance of the season--

-So clear like wind. Oh, me.

[LAUGHING]

-Oh. Oh [INAUDIBLE].

-Oh, you're a magician.

-Isn't it romantic?

-(SINGING) My face is glowing. I'm energetic. The art of sewing I find poetic. My needle punctuates the rhythm of romance. I don't give a stitch if I don't get rich. A custom tailor who has no custom is like a sailor. No one will trust him. But there is magic in the music of my shears. I shed no tears. Lend me your ears.

Isn't it romantic? Soon I will have found some girl that I adore. Isn't it romantic? While I sit around, my love can scrub the floor. She'll kiss me every hour, or she'll get the sack. And when I take a shower, she can scrub my back. Isn't it romantic? On a moonlight night, she cook me onion soup. Kiddies are romantic--

DAVID THORBURN: Would you freeze it one second? Very quick observation. I can't interrupt too often because I have a lot of clips to show you, and they're more important than my commentary. But let me remind you that even at this very early stage in the history of the musical, look at how visually sophisticated Mamoulian, and pay attention as the film, as the sequence goes on. But look at how he's working with the mirrors here and how it's doubling-- what it does to your sense of perspective and your sense of the environment of the shot. This is a visually sophisticated, very thoughtful, artistically manipulated camera, and it's Mamoulian's work. So very early in the history of the musical, we're already getting visually subtle effects.

-(SINGING)-- we'll have a troupe. We'll help the population. It's a duty that we owe to France. Isn't it romance?

-Isn't it romantic? Da, da, da, da. A very catchy strain. Isn't it romantic? Da, da, da. Oh, I forgot my cane. Oh, thank you very much.

-I better fix your tie.

-Da, da, da, da, da, da, da, da--

-Goodbye. Isn't it romantic? Da, da, da, da, da.

-Taxi.

-Oh no, I need some air. Isn't it romantic?

-[WHISTLING] At last I've got a fare.

-Railroad station!

-[WHISTLING]

-Not too fast. I hate to take a chance.

-Isn't it romance? Isn't it romantic?

[HONKING]

-[WHISTLING] Drive around the town.

-Isn't it romantic?

[HONKING]

-Da, da, da, da-- I think I'll take that down.

-[WHISTLING]

-A, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, C, A, B-flat. Isn't it romantic? Da, da, da, da. I like the noise as well. Isn't it romantic?

[SINGING CONTINUES]

Isn't it romance? Isn't it romantic?

[SINGING CONTINUES]

-Isn't it romance?

-Isn't it romantic?

DAVID THORBURN: That's Jeannette MacDonald.

-Music in the night, a dream that can be heard.

[END PLAYBACK]

DAVID THORBURN: OK. Can we have the lights also? Thank you. All right. I hope you enjoyed that lovely sequence. That device is called a "pass-along song." I've written it on the board. And I won't say more about how witty and wonderful the film is, except to suggest that apart from its wonderfully amusing and witty qualities, I hope you implicitly recognized why I took the time to describe the plot to you because what does the music do? What does this song do in this early part of the film? It predicts the plot. It predicts the story. It carries the story into the countryside to the very castle where the plot will take Maurice from Paris later in the story. And not only that. What is dramatized by the way in which this song moved from tailor to aristocratic well-dressed man to composer, artist to cab driver to soldier to gypsy to Princess Jeanette?

And also that it covers physical territory as well as-- it crosses social barriers. It crosses particular social classes. It crosses differences of gender. It crosses ethnic difficult-- what does

it say about music? Music creates community. Music is democratic. Music can overcome barriers, which is going to be ultimately the message of the film itself.

So it's an immensely subtle, crystallized moment in the film, and it has all kinds of powerful thematic implications for later in the film, apart from the fact that it's a wonderfully rich introduction to the primary character and to the joys of music.

Reality is, however, that until the advent in something like 1933 of work by Busby Berkeley, the great choreographer and director working, at this stage, primarily for the Warner Brothers Studio did we begin to see forms of the movie, forms of film, forms of cinema that were uniquely adapted to the nature of music itself. That is to say, Busby Berkeley became a legend in Hollywood for the immense extravagance and elaborateness of his dance numbers and of his production numbers. They were an elaboration of something that was popular in the Broadway theater before the advent of movies. But what Berkeley did was take this tendency of the Broadway theater and cinematize it in a certain way.

And we can get some sense of what Berkeley was like, what Berkeley's work is like, by talking about the way in which he created a new attitude toward film spaces. He loved to create receding arches and doorways and even waterfalls and to destroy what we might call "theatrical space" by exploring the camera's powers coupled with the power of editing, the power of editing now linked to rhythms of music.

So he created, essentially, a choreography for the camera. No seated audience could have had the views and experiences that the Busby Berkeley production numbers began to provide. And there's a moment in *Singin' in the Rain* tonight that explicitly recalls this tradition of the musical. There's a moment in which a character in the film has a megaphone, and the front of the megaphone dissolves into a circle of costumed dancers in a sequence called "Beautiful Girls." That's the name of the number. And that whole number is an homage to this Busby Berkeley tradition.

Well, there were certain disadvantages to the Berkeley strategy. One of them was that especially in the extremity with which he began to pursue his expressive aims, he began to sort of dematerialize his women. He began to objectify them. And many of his films, many of his production numbers, literally objectify parts of a woman's body, especially breasts and bottom and legs. And there's almost, in a certain sense, a kind of dehumanizing impulse in which the human figures, especially when he used-- he often would use cameras that would

rise very high.

He invented a shot called the "Berkeley top shot." Often cut a hole in the ceiling of the places in which they were filming so he could move up higher. And he would film from so far above that the individual lineaments of bodies would disappear, and only the patterns that they made appeared. What he anticipated was MTV and forms of expressive filmmaking that severs a musical experience, or an audiovisual experience animated by music, driven by music, from subject, from plot, from story.

In other words, there's something in one sense very visionary about what Busby Berkeley was doing. But of course, he was doing this often in the middle-- always in the middle of films that had stories and characters. And one of the issues in his films were the production numbers were far more lavish, interesting, and witty and aesthetically energized than the stories that carried them. And in a certain sense, the stories were really the platform to generate these kinds of performances.

So the films were not as aesthetically coherent as one would like, but they were full of these astonishingly expressive musical numbers, audiovisual experiences. And let me just show you one that will give you a sense of his extravagance, of his extremism, in a certain sense, although that's part of the pleasure we take in how far he can go. There's something deeply camp, deeply campy about Busby Berkeley's choreography. And he reveled, he reveled in these kinds of gestures. But here is one of the most famous of the-- although not by far the most extreme or ridiculous, of these kinds of gestures from a film Berkeley made in 1933 called *42nd Street.*

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

-(SINGING) Say I know a bundle of humanity. She's about so high. And I'm just driven to insanity when she passes by. She's a snooty little cutie. She's been so hard to kiss.

DAVID THORBURN: See how we started a theatrical space.

-And then I'll tell her--

DAVID THORBURN: Dick Powell, one of the great performers of the studio era, both musical and stage.

- --healthy, and you've got charms. It'd really be a sin not to have you in my arms. I'm young, healthy, and so are you. When the moon is in the sky, tell me what am I to do? Say-- If I could hate ya, I'd keep away. But that ain't my nature. I'm full of vitamin A, say!

I'm young and healthy, so let's be bold. In a year or two or three, maybe we will be too old. I'm young and healthy, and you've got charms. It'd really be a sin not to have you in my arms. I'm young and healthy, and so are you. When the moon is in the sky, tell me what am I to do? If I could hate ya, I'd keep away. But that ain't my nature. I'm full of vitamin A, say! I'm young and healthy, so let's be bold. In a year or two or three, maybe we will be too old.

-I'm young and healthy, and you've got charms. It would really be a sin not to have you in my arms, dadum.

-I'm young and healthy, and so are you. When the moon is in the sky, tell me what am I to do?

-If I could hate you, honey, I'd keep away. But that ain't my nature. I'm full of vitamin A. Whoa-- I'm young and healthy, so let's be bold. In a year or two or three, maybe we will be too old.

DAVID THORBURN: The Berkeley top shot.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

See how he's moved to a kind of abstraction here?

-If I could hate ya, I'd keep away. But that ain't my nature. I'm full of vitamin A, say! I'm young and healthy, so let's be bold. In a year or two or three, maybe we will be too old.

[END PLAYBACK]

DAVID THORBURN: You think there might be something almost grotesque about those final images? On the other hand, can you also see how in a system that is censored, in which women are not allowed to be seen on a bed without one foot at least on the floor, in which there is a kind of sexual energy and a kind of testing of boundaries running through this kind of display as well.

We're running out of time, and I have another even more magnificent sequence to show you to finish out this attempt to give you at least a quick flavor of the varieties of experience available in the musical before we look at a fully integrated musical this evening with *Singin' in*

the Rain.

Let me say very quickly then, to jump to the bottom, the final aspect of this is what Arthur Freed and his cohorts articulated as the idea of a musical that would integrate sufficiently music and dance with character and story in a way that would be coherent. And the musicals made under Arthur Freed's direction, often called the "Freed Unit" at MGM, tried to satisfy this criterion. They were, in many ways, more coherent in terms of the relation between the singing and the dancing and the story than these earlier forms were, although they were often less imaginatively expressive in some cases, although this is not true, I think, of *Singin' in the Rain.*

But there is another stage to mention in this development or evolution, and it's one of the most important in the history of the Hollywood musical. And it has to do with the partnership between Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, mostly at the RKO studios. They made nine films together between 1933 in 1939 at RKO. And they introduced another element into the musical film that is then, I think, incorporated in a certain degree in the so-called integrated musical of MGM.

So my last example this afternoon comes from the great Astaire-Rogers musical, *Top Hat.* And let me set the stage for you. Get ready to show it because we're running out of time. The situation is this-- and it dramatizes even more fully the idea that there are potentially sexual tensions, sexual themes embedded in the experience of watching a song and dance musical.

What the Astaire-Rogers musicals brought to the table that had not been there before was, in some sense, a kind of psychological element. Even though in the Astaire-Rogers films, the singing and dancing was still in some sense much more central to the film than the rest of the story, and the stories were often thin, what they did introduce was an individuation. In the Busby Berkeley numbers, you can see the women are-- all the characters in fact are-- hard to differentiate from the backdrop or from the curtains. They are objectified in a certain way. Especially when he gets going, they become parts of an abstract pattern.

In the Astaire-Rogers films, Astaire and Roger's characters are deeply, sharply individuated, and certain kinds of psychological themes begin to enter in. In this clip you're going to see now, a fairly characteristic one and probably the single most famous dance number in the history of the studio era, a dance number based on the song "Cheek to Cheek," danced by Astaire and Rogers-- in this sequence, we are in a setting that's worth mentioning to you. We're on board a cruise ship. Wealthy Americans are there. It's wealthy people, aristocrats.

The Astaire and Rogers characters have met earlier, and they haven't really hit it off. And the Rogers character, the woman, thinks that Fred Astaire is an immoral man, that he commits infidelities against his wife. And she's under the mistaken impression that the woman he's with is his wife.

So what happens in the sequence, essentially, is that in front of what she believes to be his wife, he asks her to dance-- he asks Rogers to dance with her, and then, to her surprise, Astaire's apparent wife says, oh, go ahead. I'd love to see you two together. And she says, well, I'm-- and so when the dance begins, she's sort of resistant. She thinking, ah, this is disgus-- and she goes along with it, but she feels there's something wrong about it. And then as the dance goes on, you can see her resistance begin to break down. And you can see the dance becoming more and more mutual. And you can see her enthusiasm for the dance increase.

And think about what the dance, first of all, how profound and brilliant this dance is as an embodiment of mutuality and collaboration because one of the reasons Rogers was so remarkable was that she was capable of dancing at the same complex, astonishing level as Fred Astaire himself. And it's an image of mutuality and of collaborative artistry that's very remarkable.

But it's also a metaphor for other kinds of mutual interactions that are physical. And I hope you will pay attention to that subtext as you're watching this remarkable sequence. The fact that Rogers begins in an act-- hostilely, resistant, and yields slowly is a key to the energy we see here. OK.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

-Nice to see you again, Miss Tremont.

DAVID THORBURN: Ginger Rogers.

-You've robbed me of the pleasure of introducing you two. You've already met.

DAVID THORBURN: Now, remember, Ginger is mistaken about this. Fred's not really married to her. And of course that's a typical Hollywood trick because we're able to enjoy the [FRENCH] of infidelity and of the idea of straying from your wife, but it isn't really true.

-I don't know what I'd do without her.

-Oh, that's sweet of you, darling. But you two run along and dance, and don't give me another thought.

-That's what I'm afraid of. I think Madge is a very brave person.

-Yes, I have tremendous admiration for her.

DAVID THORBURN: You see how the misunderstanding adds tremendous sexual energy, wit to the scene.

-Well, if Madge doesn't care, I certainly don't.

-Neither do I. All I know is that it's--

(SINGING) heaven. I'm in heaven. And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak. And I seem to find the happiness I seek when we're out together dancing cheek to cheek. Heaven, I'm in heaven.

DAVID THORBURN: Kristen, can you put the sound off? And pay attention-- [INAUDIBLE] I'm going to do the terrible damage to this. Keep watching as I'm talking, and imagine you hearing the song, all right? But because we're running out of time, I don't want to lose our energy, and I don't want to keep you over. So this dance continues. As you'll see, it's quite a long sequence, and he's singing to her in his weedy-- really not a very good singer, is he? It doesn't seem to matter. But one of the things you should watch is the way they move out of a crowded space into a more private space and how the intimacy of their-- and how the dance partly stops for a moment. Then it resumes. And they move-- as you'll see in the sequence, they move into a space that's completely private, and her-- and if you watch her expression, you can also see that she's beginning to yield, that she's beginning to become enthusiastic. OK. Put the sound back on.

-(SINGING) --charm about you will carry me through to heaven. I'm in heaven. And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak. And I seem to find the happiness I seek when we're out together dancing cheek to cheek.

DAVID THORBURN: --the sound for a second. My final comment-- we're coming to near the end of this sequence, although it will extend. I want you to hear the music, too. But watch especially the way the

intensity of this picks up and then subsides. Ask yourself what rhythms are being implicitly dramatized here and then why, at the very end, it's time for a cigarette. OK.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[END PLAYBACK]