

Introduction

It is a truism that more people will encounter classical music through popular media such as film and television than in the concert hall or from recordings. Yet despite this acknowledgement of a consumer with only a partial awareness or who is ignorant of musical history, studies of the use of classical music in cinema have often implied an idealised spectator with a privileged knowledge of the arcane history of repertoire and of musical styles. Such a strategy is familiar in other disciplines, of course, which have abandoned any search for individual response, celebrating instead textual and intertextual richness; the text is what it is, and potential readings are there to be divined. However, what is sometimes overlooked is the historical moment that informs the use of specific repertoire.

What follows is an essentially diachronic study of the use of baroque instrumental music in post-war films up to the present day. Films here provides a useful historiographical perspective on baroque repertoire in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, demonstrating how musical style and currents of musical thinking have informed and to an extent determined cinematic practices. A short section on the use of baroque music in silent cinema establishes an important pre-war context and reveals many of the abiding connotations of baroque music in films – as a signifier of a generalised past, of religion, and of courtliness. Following this, I trace the history of the Vivaldi revival, the impact of which would be felt in cinema from the 1950s onwards. That revival, surely the most important baroque revival of the twentieth century, led to a new interest in, and a wholesale reassessment of, Italian baroque repertoire. This was soon manifest in films such as *Les Enfants terribles* (Jean-Pierre Melville, 1950) and *The Golden Coach* (Jean Renoir, 1952) which, in many respects, exemplify the main ways that baroque repertoire has been exploited up to the current day. *The Golden Coach*, *Dangerous Liaisons* (Stephen Frears, 1988) and *The Favourite* (Yorgos Lanthimos, 2018), for example, all begin with scenes where the protagonists are seen dressing for the day (a cinematic trope in period dramas, marking a separation between the private and public) to the accompaniment of music by Vivaldi or Handel. Premised on the coequality of the events depicted and the music heard, this essentially integrationist approach contrasts with a dissociative appropriation of similar repertoire. With their contemporary settings, *Pickpocket* (Robert Bresson, 1959), *Accattone* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1961) and *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962) have no apparent connection to the music of eighteenth-century composers such as Fischer, Bach or Vivaldi. In Bresson's case, baroque music functions as punctuation while Pasolini's films provoke a sense of social and cultural dissociation. Lars von

Trier's use of baroque repertoire in *Dogville* (2003) and *Manderlay* (2005) revisits both approaches. Such variant practices rely in no small part on the music's readily identifiable stylistic features, particularly its repeated rhythmic patterns and its regular metres. While the fluid rhythms of the late-romantic music characteristic of the Hollywood studio era were always ultimately subordinate to the drama, shadowing and supporting it, the more rigid metrical designs and rhythmic formulae of baroque music suggest self-involved indifference, resistant to nuanced integration.

Accounts of these two general approaches to baroque music, the integrationist and the dissociative, are complemented by two shorter sections that explore different modalities of more modern re-imaginings of baroque repertoire, one performative, the other compositional. The first of these two final sections considers the role that performance practice has played in cinema, specifically that of historically informed performance (HIP). The way that Vivaldi was performed in *Les Enfants terribles* is considerably different from the music heard in *Manderlay* some fifty-five years later, and the range of potential meanings that film-makers could exploit has inevitably altered. HIP was a response to debates about authenticity conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, and early music proved to be a testing ground for an emerging musicology of performance. New methodologies of performance analysis, particularly of recordings, did much to reshape an understanding of the contribution of performance to musical meaning, and one of the abiding lessons was that no repertoire is 'innocent'; music is shaped and given meaning in performance and reflects not just the moment when the music was composed but also the prejudices and attitudes of the era in which it was performed. The same is inevitably true of the use of such repertoire in cinema, and in highlighting the role of musical performance in films a historiographical approach provides a valuable perspective. In different ways, HIP informed films such as *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* (*Chronik der Anna Magdalena Bach*, Jean-Marie Straub & Danièle Huillet, 1968) and *Tous les matins du monde* (Alain Corneau, 1991), biopics wherein the subject and focus was performance itself. However, to commercial cinema, HIP soon became merely another musical fashion to be used and discarded. It seems unlikely, after all, that HIP was uppermost in the minds of the producers of the Bond movie, *A View to a Kill* (John Glen, 1985), when they opted for Trevor Pinnock and the English Concert's recording of the Four Seasons. Indeed, mainstream film has continued to exploit pastiches and parodies of baroque repertoire, such as the Albinoni Adagio in G minor and Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Such repertoire takes considerably greater licence with original material, synthesising key stylistic elements and combining them with more modern musical trends. The

same can be said of the neo-baroque, a subgenre of minimalism which shared some common ground with HIP, and which is the subject of the final section of this Element. Where HIP broadly recreated the performance circumstances that a composer (supposedly) would have anticipated, effectively clothing the music in period dress, the neo-baroque, particularly the music of Michael Nyman and Philip Glass, rethought baroque music more radically and clothed it in modern dress. Both approaches would play a part in cinema, the latter in a broader range of guises, from period films through eco-politics to the horror film.

1 Baroque Music Before World War Two

It is necessary first to sketch in something of the use of baroque instrumental repertoire in pre-war silent and sound cinema. This will help establish a baseline from which to assess the impact of the Vivaldi revival in particular and also show how such music was deemed to offer a limited and often very specific set of connotative values, many of which still operate in cinema today.

Baroque music features rarely and usually very specifically in silent cinema, though a comment by a musical director of the silent era, Max Winkler, sets Bach amongst other certain composers in a way that suggests the determining factor was the classical canon: ‘We began to dismember the great masters. We began to murder the works of Beethoven, Mozart, Grieg, J. S. Bach, Verdi, Bizet, Tchaikovsky and Wagner – everything that wasn’t protected by copyright from our pilfering’ (Cooke, 2010: 11). A survey of the compendiums and encyclopaedias of cue sheets, however, paints a different picture. Ernö Rapée’s *Encyclopaedia of Music for Pictures* lists only two pieces by baroque composers: a Menuet [*sic*] by Handel (in the section, ‘Minuets’) and his Largo (an arrangement of ‘Ombra mai fu’ from *Xerxes*), both under the rubric of ‘Religious Music’ (Rapée, 1925). E. Lang and G. West, in their primer, *Musical Accompaniment of Moving Pictures*, also recommend Handel’s Largo (an instance of ‘Impressive Moods’) and Bach’s ‘Little Fugue, Gm’ (presumably the ‘Little Fugue’ in G minor, BWV 578) for ‘Speed’ (Lang & West, 1920). Of the some 3,000 pieces in the second volume of Hans Erdman, Giuseppe Becce and Ludwig Brav’s encyclopaedia, the *Thematisches Skalenregister* (thematic catalogue), compiled by Becce alone, most are from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with 11 pieces by Handel and 14 by Rameau, all of them filed under ‘opera excerpts’ (Erdmann, Becce & Brav, 1927). There is only one piece by Bach in any of the aforementioned encyclopaedias: the Sinfonia from the beginning of Part II of the *Christmas Oratorio* (BWV 248), which is labelled as ‘Hirtenmusik’ (Shepherd’s Music) in a section entitled ‘Pastorella alten Stils. Weihnachten’ (Pastorals in the old style. Christmas) in the *Thematisches Skalenregister*. Winkler’s reference to

Bach is not, then, representative and marks the composer as an exception to a more general rule of the use of baroque repertoire, premised on his status as a ‘great’ who stands out from the mainstream, something we will encounter in variant forms later.

We cannot be certain to what extent cinema organists, many of whom had a church training, might have brought baroque repertoire to bear on silent films, not least because Bach was a touchstone of technique and pedagogy for cinema organists. George Tootell, for example, recommends Bach’s organ compositions as ‘the *only* safe and certain way to gain technical perfection in organ playing’ (Tootell, 1927: 53), though it is significant that he is amused and therefore unconvinced by an engineer-mechanic’s proposal of Bach’s Toccata in F major as a suitable piece for film accompaniment (Tootell, 1927: 10). Tootell does, though, prescribe two pieces by Bach and one by Handel under the heading ‘Old Time’: a minuet (‘stately’) from *Berenice* (‘The Minuet from *Berenice*’); a Gavotte and a Gigue by Bach (perhaps the Gavotte from Partita for solo violin No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006 and the Gigue from French Suite No. 5 in G major, BWV 816). Winkler claims that ‘[t]he immortal chorales of J. S. Bach became an “Adagio Lamentoso” for sad scenes’, suggesting that what might have been played in church on Sunday was recycled in the cinema on Monday (Cooke, 2010: 11).

Four non-mutually exclusive attitudes to baroque music emerge from this brief survey: first, as a signifier of religion and Christianity (‘Christmas music’), an association that presumably derived from attending church services or concerts of religious oratorios; second, an antiquating effect whereby early music connotes a generalised rather than a coeval past (‘Old Times’); third, as an expression of dignity and formality, suitable for depictions of the aristocratic world (‘stately’); and fourth, the straightforward appeal of a ‘good’ recognisable tune, more familiar today as a Popular Classic, for example Handel’s ‘Largo’, ‘The Minuet from *Berenice*’, and so on. What baroque music did *not* do is just as significant: it did not serve as a standard illustration of emotional states – love, grief, jeopardy, amongst others – or provide thematic material deemed suitable for character types – villain, hero, heroine and the like. Consequently, we can venture that baroque music was only occasionally heard in conjunction with silent films.

Nevertheless, some of the repertoire’s principles informed the musical taxonomy of silent cinema, at least in Europe. Irene Comisso has argued that there is a direct line from the musico-hermeneutic concept of *Affektenlehre*, and the eighteenth-century principles on which it is based, to the film-music designation of *Stimmungen*. These *Stimmungen*, or moods, were central to the methodology of the first of the two-volume *Allgemeines Handbuch der Film-Musik*, as Irene Comisso explains: ‘The *Stimmungen* are ... depicted by recourse to metaphors

for the emotions such as “agitato” or “mysterious”; these, in turn, correspond to specific musical themes and clichés, here arranged like a hermeneutic code. . . . In constructing this “classifying structure”, clear reference is made to the music-rhetorical “figures” devised by the *Affektenlehre* (Comisso, 2012: 98). Maria Fuchs offers support by tracing the personal connections between the two main authors of the *Handbuch*, composers Hans Erdmann and Ludwig Brav, and the musicologist Hermann Kretzschmar who, along with but separately from Hugo Goldschmidt and Arnold Schering, was responsible for the development of a modern interest in the *Affektenlehre* (Fuchs, 2014: 163–4). Fuchs points to the European preference for classifying music according to mood, in contrast to the American preference for programmatic titles (Fuchs, 2014: 161–2). The latter practice earned Erdmann and Becce’s scorn, much of which was directed at Ernö Rapée, the New York-based musical director, whose (misleadingly titled) *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* and *Encyclopaedia of Music for Pictures*, rather than organising music according to expressive properties, opted for illustrative titles such as Aeroplane, Arabian, Birds, and so on (Rapée, 1924, 1925).¹

In his survey of the use of Bach in silent film, James M. Doering notes the singular absence of J. S. Bach in the Library of Congress holdings of silent-film music (Doering, 2019). Where the surname did crop up, it more often than not referred to composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rather than the eighteenth. When J. S. Bach made his appearance it was clearly signalled, as in two ‘Deluxe Theater’ presentations of the silent era, Max Winkler’s combinative score for Giulio Antamoro’s *Christus* (Doering, 2019: 15) and Hugo Riesenfeld’s compilation score of J. S. Bach, Rameau, Vivaldi, Handel and Corelli for Ernst Lubitsch’s *Anna Boleyn* (1920) (released as *Deception* in the USA) (Anderson, 1987 and Altman, 2004: 315–16). In both cases, the music was clearly anachronistic and drew instead on different but familiar connotations of religiosity and courtliness respectively. Thereafter, ‘[a]s the twenties progressed . . . [a] core of three pieces emerged as the essential Bach repertoire: the Bach-Gounod “Ave Maria”, the Air on the G String, and the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor’ (Doering, 2019: 28).

As silent cinema gave way to the sound era, Bach’s Toccata and Fugue in D minor quickly established itself as a horror-film trope (van Elferen, 2012). Its

¹ A line of thought from eighteenth-century music through to Kretzschmar, thence to Erdmann and Becce, has been more recently traced in topic theory, thence into film-music theory. For more, see part 3 of Neumeyer (2015, 183–265); and Mirka (2014). Mirka points out that the early twentieth-century reinvention of *Affektenlehre* misrepresents the subjective component admitted by Mattheson. Mattheson did not insist, as Kretzschmar and his followers did, that specific musical affects bore unequivocal meaning.

Grand Guignol opening statement, a gesture like a slashing blade, was used in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (Rouben Mamoulian, 1931), *The Black Cat* (Edgar G. Ulmer, 1934) and *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935), and has become an abiding signifier of sociopathy more generally (Lerner, 2009 and van Elferen, 2012). Setting aside that the piece might not actually have been written by Bach at all (Williams, 1981), its associations with cinematic horror have become intertwined (exceptions being the abstract interpretations of experimental filmmaker Mary Ellen Bute's *Synchromy no. 4: Escape* (1937) and the more mainstream *Fantasia* (Walt Disney, 1940)), cropping up regularly in various knowing guises in *Sunset Boulevard* (Billy Wilder, 1950), *Rollerball* (Norman Jewison, 1975) and *The Babadook* (Jennifer Kent, 2014).

Baroque music in early sound cinema more generally clearly lagged behind such local instances. Surprisingly, despite recognition of him as a 'great master', to use Winkler's term, Bach was not the subject of a biopic during this era, while his contemporary, George Frideric Handel, was accorded the honour in *The Great Mr Handel* (Norman Walker, 1942). That it was made during the war to some extent explains its nationalist orientation, with the composer portrayed as very much the English gentleman rather than a German immigrant, a tension also felt in Handel studies and described as 'the battle for the *Umlaut*' (Mann & Knapp, 1969: 6). That same nationalistic context also motivates the use of the music of Purcell in the Gainsborough production of *The Wicked Lady* (Leslie Arliss, 1945) (and later in extreme contrast in Wendy Carlos's adaptation of the march from the same composer's Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary for *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, 1971)). *The Wicked Lady*'s deployment of various movements from Purcell's *Abdelazer* suite as diegetic accompaniment in marriage and dance scenes was perhaps determined by the coincidence of its release in 1945 with the 250th anniversary of the death of Henry Purcell (1659–95). Important commemorative concerts were staged in London in that anniversary year, some of them organised by Michael Tippett, featuring his arrangements of the earlier composer's work together with some by Benjamin Britten (Wiebe, 2012: 77–9). The following year saw the premiere of Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, based on the Rondeau from Purcell's *Abdelazer* suite, and a production of *The Fairy Queen* at Covent Garden, the first opera to be staged after the war. Together, this and other interest constituted a Purcell revival. On the continent, though, a rival revival was gathering pace.

2 The Vivaldi Revival

It is difficult today to imagine a world where a seemingly ubiquitous composer like Vivaldi was a relative unknown, yet a review in *The New York Times* of

a concert in April 1950 commends the organisers for having ‘made at least a step in awakening the local public to the remarkable quantity and quality of Vivaldi’s music, so little known to audiences of today’ (Downes, 1950). Composers and conductors rediscovering and championing their national forebears is a familiar story and by no means limited to the Purcell revival. Bach had benefited from a similar dynamic in the nineteenth century, ushered in by Johann Nikolaus Forkel’s biography and Felix Mendelssohn’s performance of the St Matthew Passion in 1829 (Haskell, 1988: 13–16). The same currents were at work in the Vivaldi revival and an agreed and well-documented narrative emerged, one in which Bach would play a minor role (Verona, 1964; Rinaldi, 1978; Abbado, 1979; Nicolodi, 1980; Talbot, 1988; Paul, 2016: 159–98). Despite several of Vivaldi’s concertos having been transcribed by Bach and the Italian’s influence being noted by Forkel, a general Teutonic disdain for the Italian composer, evident since the eighteenth century, remained. The full weight of retroactive authority began to be felt only after two German musicologists, Julius Rühlmann and Paul Graf Waldersee, independently argued that Bach’s transcriptions of Vivaldi were more than technical exercises: they influenced him as well.² It was not, though, until the early twentieth century and the publication of Albert Schering’s 1905 history of the concerto, *Geschichte des Instrumentalkonzerts*, that Vivaldi’s true contribution to music history was recognised. In 1927, Vivaldi was familiar enough to the lay public for Fritz Kreisler to pass off his own Concerto in C in the composer’s name. However, if one were looking for a thematic catalogue of Vivaldi’s instrumental work at that time, all that was available was an article by Wilhelm Altmann in a musicological journal that accounted only for (most of) the music printed during Vivaldi’s lifetime, a hundred or so sonatas and concertos; this from a composer who we now know wrote over 500 concertos alone. There remained a highly significant ingredient to be added to the mix of enthusiastic nationalist entrepreneurship and academic (re-)evaluation: manuscript discovery.

In the late 1920s, a monastic community in Montserrat sent a collection of manuscripts to the Biblioteca Nazionale in Turin, which in turn forwarded them to a professor of music at the University of Milan, Alberto Gentili. Amongst the various papers, Gentili discovered fourteen large volumes of what he recognised as Vivaldi’s autograph manuscripts, and subsequent detective work brought to light the other half of the collection. Collectively known as the Turin manuscripts, the collection amounted to several hundred works in various genres – concertos, sonatas, operas, serenatas, motets, sections of the Mass, Psalm settings – as well as sketches and early drafts. As Michael Talbot puts it,

² Rühlmann (1867), 393–7, 401–5, 413–16; and Waldersee (1885).

‘at a stroke Vivaldi cease[d] to be, in practical terms, a “specialist” composer comparable with Corelli and [became] instead a “universal” composer comparable with Handel’ (Talbot, 1988: xix). World War II saw the loss of only a few Vivaldi manuscripts and research continued fairly uninterrupted with the publication of two slim monographs by Michelangelo Abbado and Mario Rinaldi, both of whom would, in due course, write the history of the revival (Abbado, 1942; Rinaldi, 1943). A more general interest in Italian baroque repertoire was attested by Marc Pincherle’s biography of Corelli (1933, rev. 1954), the first full-length monograph of Tomaso Albinoni, written in 1945 by Remo Giazotto (a character we will encounter later), Pincherle’s biography of Vivaldi in 1948 and Franz Giegling’s 1949 study of Torelli.³

Several professional and semi-professional organisations dedicated to Vivaldi were active before and after the war, the most famous example being the Rapallo concerts staged between 1933 and 1938 by the poet Ezra Pound and the violinist Olga Rudge. Separately, Olga Rudge teamed up with David Nixon, a violinist, to form the Vivaldi Society in Venice, the inaugural concert of which was on 24 March 1938. That enterprise failed, but in its place came the *Settimana musicale* or ‘Vivaldi week’ staged between 16 and 21 September 1939, a week of concerts under the direction of the composer Alfredo Casella organised by The *Accademia Musicale Chigiana* in Siena, which hosted the *Centro di Studi Vivaldiani* (Adams, 1975: 116). In 1947, the publishers Ricordi, in collaboration with the Treviso-based *Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi*, founded by Antonio Fanna and the composer Gian Francesco Malipiero, initiated a project with the aim of publishing all of Vivaldi’s music. As Manfred Bukofzer noted in his survey of baroque music, until that time ‘[o]nly a small part of Vivaldi’s incredibly prolific production [had] ever been published’ (Bukofzer, 1947: 229). The widest dissemination of Vivaldi’s work, though, would come from recordings, particularly on the new format of the long-playing record, which within ten years would supplant the till-then industry standard of the shellac 78 rpm. With its longer playing time – over twenty minutes per side rather than five – the LP could accommodate four baroque concertos on a single disc. The new format coincided with the establishment of new orchestras whose slimmed-down forces clarified Vivaldi’s contrapuntal complexities: ‘Angelo Ephrikian’s “Orchestra della Scuola Veneziana” (founded in 1947), Renato Fasano’s “Virtuosi di Roma” (1948) and the conductorless ensemble “I Musici” (1952), and similar small chamber groups

³ Giazotto (1945); Pincherle (1948); Giegling (1949). During the 1950s, Pincherle revised and expanded his 1933 biography of Corelli, published as Marc Pincherle (1954), *Corelli et son temps* (Paris: Editions Le Bon Plaisir), translated into English by Hubert E. M. Russell and published in 1956 as *Corelli: His Life, His Work* (New York: W. W. Norton).

formed in France, Britain and the USA' (Talbot, 1988: xx–xxi). Until that time, Vivaldi's music had been shrouded in nineteenth-century orchestrations, illustrated by a concert conducted by Bernardino Molinari at the Basilica of Massenzio that the heroine attends in *Lo Squadrone Bianco* (Augusto Genina, 1936).⁴ The performance is of the Largo, the second movement of Vivaldi's Concerto No. 4 in F minor, Op. 8 (RV 297), that is, Winter from the Four Seasons. It is played by a large symphonic orchestra, which includes two full-size harps and grand piano at a sedate 55 bpm (modern performances are around the 75 bpm mark) (Fertonani, 1989). A recording of the Four Seasons, featuring Louis Kaufman as the soloist, won the Grand Prix du Disque in 1950, and while it was Vivaldi's concertos that were to occupy centre stage for some time to come, there was no shortage of other overlooked Italian composers' music to record.⁵ Dorottya Fabian observes that 'a large part of [the early-music] movement's activity between the 1950s and the 1970s was still the exploration of the repertoire' and thus, rather like the architects of the *politique des auteurs*, who were swamped by American films banned during the wartime occupation, consumption preceded evaluation (Fabian, 2003: 3–4).

A backlash was not far off. Eleven years later, the journalist and musicologist H. C. Robbins Landon skewered the fashion for all things baroque in a scathing piece published in *High Fidelity* in June 1961, 'A Pox on Manfredini'.⁶ It described how, after a period abroad living in Vienna, he returned to a Manhattan where 'you didn't play Mozart quartets on the phonograph, you stacked a pile of LPs on the changer – Albinoni, Geminiani, Corelli, Locatelli, and, of course, the father-figure of barococo music: Antonio Vivaldi'.⁷ Such

⁴ The film can be viewed online at www.dailymotion.com/video/x2ykujx (accessed, 28 December 2020) and the section in question is 00:27:18–00:28:58. Catherine Paul sums up the approach succinctly: 'As Cesare Fertonani has shown, Bernardino Molinari's sumptuous orchestrations (e.g., sixteen first violins) had many personal and modern twists to them, such as his rendition of the continuo by the combination of a harpsichord and an organ, or his rewriting of entire movements. Ultimately, performances of Vivaldi's music made the Venetian composer familiar to audiences, even if that meant adjusting his music to expectations of late nineteenth-century Italian opera audiences' (Paul, 2016: 161).

⁵ The recording was made by the American violinist Louis Kaufman with the Concert Hall Society Orchestras, conducted by Henry Swoboda and recorded in Carnegie Hall in 1947. It was first released on the Concert Hall Society Inc. record label as 78 rpm discs in 1948, and subsequently as an LP in 1950 as CHC-1001. An earlier recording of 1942 conducted by Bernardino Molinari with the Rome Augusteo Orchestra had been released on the Parlophone Cetra label in 1942: BB 2043–8.

⁶ The reference to Manfredini, hardly a household name and even today warranting only three paragraphs in *Grove Music Online*, may have been used by Landon to suggest a made-up name or because of the homophony with Mantovani, a modern composer forever associated with wall-paper music.

⁷ A considered account of this attack and the context of the baroque revival can found in Fink (2005), 186–297.

calcification into cliché is similarly captured in a scene from ‘La Ricotta’, Pasolini’s satirical contribution to the portmanteau movie, *RoGoPaG* (Roberto Rossellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Ugo Gregoretti, 1963). The film portrays the making of a biopic of Christ, with a motley cast and crew overseen by Orson Welles as the cynical director. When a *tableau vivant* of the descent from the cross is ready to be filmed (a reconstruction of the Mannerist painter Rosso Fiorentino’s *Deposition*, Pinacoteca Comunale, Volterra, oil on wood, c.1521), music is cued. By mistake, a pop song plays. ‘Not that one . . . *Publicani!* Blasphemers. The Scarlatti record!’ the first assistant director shouts. Along similar lines, at a round-table discussion in 1964 where Pasolini faced a panel of students and faculty of the Centro Sperimentale de Cinematografia, one commentator noted that the use of Bach had become ‘somewhat of an affectation’ (Pasolini et al., 1965: 39). This, though, is to jump ten years ahead. Before the drift towards cliché through overexposure, the impact of the Vivaldi revival would be felt in the cinema of the early 1950s.

2.1 Melville, Renoir and the Integrationist Approach

It was European and particularly French cinema which initially embraced Vivaldi, the first significant example being *Les Enfants terribles* (Jean-Pierre Melville, 1950). This claustrophobic tale of a quasi-incestuous relationship between a young brother and sister was adapted by Jean-Pierre Melville and Jean Cocteau from the latter’s novel of the same name, with the author providing a voice-over.

Paul (Edouard Dermit) is a frail teenager, looked after by his older sister, Elisabeth (Nicole Stéphane), to whom this task falls because their mother is bedridden. When the mother dies, Elisabeth is forced to find work as a model in a dress shop, and befriends Agathe (Renée Cosima), a woman of her own age. Through Agathe, Elisabeth meets Michael (Melvyn Martin), a rich young American, to whom she becomes engaged. The four youngsters, together with Paul and Elisabeth’s long-term friend Gérard (Jacques Bernard), move into Michael’s house, which Elisabeth inherits outright when her fiancé dies in an automobile accident. Paul falls in love with Agathe and she with him, though both remain unaware of the reciprocity because of Elisabeth’s jealous treachery. Love-struck, Paul commits suicide and, as he lies dying, the truth comes out. Elisabeth shoots herself in front of Agathe.

Save for the diegetic performance of ‘Were You Smiling At Me’ by Melvyn Martin (who plays Michael), the music consists exclusively of concertos by Vivaldi and Bach, and was specially recorded for the film with no subsequent