



MORRICONE

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

I know you don't like being asked what your favourite piece of your own music is, but mine is 'The Ecstasy of Gold' from The Good, the Bad and the Ugly, with Tuco running round and round Sad Hill cemetery and the soaring soprano voice. I think this is the finest piece of film music you have ever composed...

Well, it's a piece of cinema that pleases me too. That music suffered from one of the difficulties of film scoring, the timings of the film and the need to synchronise. Nobody ever cares about these things, but in those three minutes and 20 seconds there was so much action, and in this piece I succeeded in giving the music a unified feel while still respecting the timing and synchronisation of the images.

Extract from an interview with Morricone by Christopher Frayling, reprinted in *Sight & Sound*, December 2020

Although sponsored by United Artists, this sprawling civil war saga yanked the western out of its Hollywood conventionality, while exposing the grasping cynicism of capitalism and the brutal absurdity of war.

In order to explore the connection between the three desperados, Morricone and Leone created musical motifs for each, using a flute for Blondie (Clint Eastwood), an ocarina for Angel Eyes (Lee Van Cleef) and human voices for Tuco (Eli Wallach), as they schemingly seek the Confederate gold buried in Sad Hill cemetery.

The ocarina also imitated a howling coyote in the title theme, which became a global chart hit for Hugo Montenegro. Yet, for all its anthemic recognisability, this legendary passage is upstaged by 'The Ecstasy of Gold', which dazzlingly combines triumphant horns, swirling strings and Edda Dell'Orso's sublime mezzo-soprano, and 'The Trio', which makes thrilling use of guitars, trumpets and castanets to counterpoint the tight close-ups and precision cutting, creating an operatic audiovisual effect.

David Parkinson, bfi.org.uk

'This short cigar belongs to a man with no name. This long gun belongs to a man with no name. This poncho belongs to a man with no name.' Thus ran the US advertising teaser for *A Fistful of Dollars*, the hugely successful 1964 Sergio Leone Western made on the cheap in Spain and Italy that helped Clint Eastwood become a movie star. Notice that the teaser concentrates on iconic objects rather than the actor. This is because at the time Eastwood was mainly known as the 'ramrod' character in the television series *Rawhide*. But those objects helped to define the anti-hero he played and would continue to play in *For a Few Dollars More* and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. The figure of 'the man with no name' (who was to be called Joe until the name was dropped, and is referred to throughout the last in the trilogy as 'Blondie') is an integral part of the creation of the so-called 'Spaghetti Western'. There's

no need here to sketch out the well-documented history of this form; our interest is rather in trying to evoke the extraordinary impact on masculine lives of the icon known as ‘the man with no name’ and of the actor who played him – an icon roughly contemporaneous with the original screen James Bond.

There are endless indicators of influence: growing boys learnt to narrow their eyes and say little in confrontations because of him. Advertisements for cigarillos abounded. The poncho might seem a ridiculous accoutrement, but for macho playacting it allowed that crucial swatting of it over the shoulder to signal that death was about to be dispensed. Stubble became fashionable. As much as the recreation of pioneer times in Bob Dylan’s *The Basement Tapes*, Leone’s fascination with a grubby, weathered historical accuracy fed into the ‘back to nature’ frontier imagery of musicians like Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young and The Band. Leone is credited with reviving the Western at a time when it was virtually dead in Hollywood – dead mainly due to the run of stodgy, talkative, repetitive and domesticated examples that sustained the career of John Wayne and other veterans into the early 1960s. Spaghetti Westerns were manna, too, for the Italian film industry, which like its counterpart in the UK had a tradition of bringing in American actors for lead roles. But according to the witnesses in Christopher Frayling’s seminal book *Sergio Leone: Once Upon a Time in Italy* the creation of ‘the man with no name’ – as much an amoral, or rather immoral, superhero as a Western archetype – is clouded in vainglorious disputes.

‘I took Clint Eastwood on above all because Jimmy Coburn cost too much,’ Leone told Frayling. The director had first seen Eastwood in an episode of *Rawhide* called ‘Incident of the Black Sheep’. ‘Clint didn’t speak much but I noticed the lazy, laid-back way he just came on and effortlessly stole every scene... When you mix that with the blast and velocity of the gunshots, you have the essential contrast that he gave us.’ Meeting him sealed the deal. But the origin of Eastwood’s ensemble has become the subject of controversy. In one version, the actor bought the costume at a Santa Monica wardrobe store and borrowed the gunbelt pistol and suede boots from *Rawhide*, but Leone demurred, claiming it was his idea.

There’s no question however that Eastwood’s persona was the essence of the icon. Screenwriter Sergio Donati certainly thought so: ‘Clint is a guy who in real life is absolutely like in his movies. You never know what he thinks. He talks slowly.’ Eastwood’s instincts as an actor went against those of most of his colleagues. He tried to reduce his lines in *A Fistful of Dollars* to a minimum thereby making the nameless one even more of an enigma. But, says production designer Carlo Simi, he can’t take credit for the poncho: ‘This costume came out of the original script... He is dressed like a deserter from the Confederate army. He then tries to get rid of half his uniform and, finding a Mexican person asleep... he steals his poncho. This [scene] was cut out.’

The first ‘Dollar’ film I saw was Leone’s civil-war epic *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. The shock of its innovation on a boy who had seen dozens of Western movies on television, not to mention *Rawhide* and other Western series such as *Gunsmoke*, was profound. And if later, when I was watching what I thought was more sophisticated cinema, Leone’s ‘myth seen through the eyes of a child’ felt too childish and too violent, a rep screening of *For a Few Dollars More* in a double bill with *The Harder They Come* (which opens with a cinema full of Jamaican rude boys lapping up a Spaghetti Western) soon put me right. The audacity of Leone’s ideas can be experienced in full force again in the superb new print of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*,

revealing a carnivalesque epic in which Eli Wallach’s Tuco character (‘Ugly’) predominates and Eastwood enjoys an enigmatic but victorious back seat. It is the last appearance of ‘the man with no name’, but it’s also the bridge to the persona Clint Eastwood built up in films with other directors, not least those he has directed himself.

Nick James, *Sight & Sound*, September 2008

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY
(IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO)
Director: Sergio Leone
Production Company: P.E.A. – Produzioni Europee Associate
Producer: Alberto Grimaldi
Production Supervisor: Aldo Pomilia
Production Manager: Fernando Cinquini
Assistant Directors: Giancarlo Santi, Fabrizio Gianni
Script Supervisor: Serena Canevari
Screenplay: Age, Scarpelli, Luciano Vincenzoni, Sergio Leone
Screenplay: Sergio Donati *
English Version: Mickey Knox
Story: Luciano Vincenzoni, Sergio Leone
Director of Photography: Tonino Delli Colli
Camera Operator: Franco Di Giacomo
Assistant Cameraman: Sergio Salvati
Special Effects: Eros Baciocchi
Editors: Nino Baragli, Eugenio Alabiso
Sets/Costumes: Carlo Simi
Assistant Art Director: Carlo Leva
Make-up: Rino Carboni
Hairdresser: Rino Todero
Titles: Lardani
Music: Ennio Morricone
Choir: Cantori Moderni di Alessandro Alessandroni
Soloists: Bruno Battisti D’Amario, E. Wolf Ferrari, I. Cammarota, Fred Catania, Michele Lacerenza, E. Samale, Franco De Gemini, F. Traverso
Whistler/Vocals: Alessandro Alessandroni *
Vocals: E. Gioieni, F. Cosacchi, G. Spagnolo, Edda Dell’Orso
Music Director: Bruno Nicolai
Music Recording: Giuseppe Mastroianni
Mixer: Fausto Ancillai *

Cast
Clint Eastwood (*‘Blondie’, the good*)
Lee Van Cleef (*‘Angel Eyes’, the bad*)
Aldo Giuffrè (*drunk Confederate officer*)
Luigi Pistilli (*Father Pablo Ramirez*)
Rada Rassimov (*Maria, the prostitute*)
Enzo Petito (*gun seller*)
Claudio Sarchilli (*Mexican peon*)
John Bartho (*the sheriff*)
Livio Lorenzon (*Baker, old man in bed*)
Antonio Casale (*Jackson, one-eyed man*)
Sandro Sarchilli (*Mexican peon*)
Benito Stefanelli (*member of Angel Eyes’ gang*)
Angelo Novi (*a monk*)
Antonio Casas (*Mexican father*)
Aldo Sambrell (*member of Angel Eyes’ gang*)
Al Mulloch (*one-armed bounty hunter*)
Sergio Mendizábal (*blonde bounty hunter*)
Molino Rocho (*Union officer in charge of prison camp*)
Lorenzo Robledo (*Jeff, member of Angel Eyes’ gang*)
Mario Brega (*Corporal Wallace*)
Eli Wallach (*Tuco Ramirez, the ugly*)
Chelo Alonso (*Mexican mother*) *
Francisco Braña (*bounty hunter 2*) *
Antonio Padilla Ruiz (*Mexican boy*) *
Silvana Bacci (*Joe’s girl in Socorro*) *
Ricardo Palacios (*bartender in Socorro*) *

Italy 1966©
180 mins

* Uncredited

MORRICONE

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo)
Sat 7 Aug 17:10; Sun 29 Aug 18:20; Mon 30 Aug 18:15
White Dog Sat 7 Aug 20:50; Fri 20 Aug 18:10; Fri 27 Aug 20:45
Once upon a Time in the West (C’era una volta il west)
Sun 8 Aug 12:00; Fri 27 Aug 14:00; Tue 31 Aug 14:00
The Mission Sun 8 Aug 15:10; Thu 12 Aug 20:30; Thu 26 Aug 18:00
Days of Heaven Mon 9 Aug 21:00; Tue 31 Aug 17:50
Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom (Salò o Le 120 giornate di Sodoma)
Tue 10 Aug 17:45; Wed 25 Aug 17:50
A Fistful of Dollars (Per un pugno di dollari)
Tue 10 Aug 20:50; Mon 30 12:20
Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down (Atame!) Wed 11 Aug 20:50; Thu 19 Aug 14:15; Mon 23 Aug 21:00; Tue 31 Aug 20:45
The Hateful Eight Sun 15 Aug 15:00; Sun 22 Aug 18:00
Once upon a Time in America Tue 17 Aug 17:40; Sat 28 Aug 11:20
The Legend of 1900 (La leggenda del pianista sull’oceano)
Sat 21 Aug 11:50; Sun 29 Aug 15:10

Cinema Paradiso (Nuovo Cinema Paradiso)
Sat 21 Aug 14:30; Thu 26 Aug 14:30
Two Mules for Sister Sara Sat 21 Aug 20:30
For a Few Dollars More (Per qualche dollaro in più)
Sun 22 Aug 12:10; Mon 30 Aug 15:00
The Untouchables Tue 24 Aug 14:30
The Thing Tue 24 Aug 20:50
The Battle of Algiers (La battaglia di Algeri) Wed 25 Aug 14:30

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