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one man or a group of four or five men can come up with some fabulous sounds. And so you're into a new study. It is a pity, but that's the way it is today, and you either go along with it or be dropped."

Faith was, in fact, quite flexible and adapted to the changes in music with surprising facility. For one thing, he understood rhythm sections. Unlike some composers and arrangers, he had the knack of picking the right musicians to play his music. The emphasis in his writing was often on strings and woodwinds, but he wrote extremely well for brass; he knew how to make it swing.

"I do three albums a year," he said. "There is a rock influence in the things I've done in the last few years. I've just had to. You cannot sell Gershwin, you cannot sell Rodgers—they've had it. . . . The Establishment won't buy it, and the young people aren't interested, so you've got to give it to them their way."

What had gone wrong with film scoring? Percy's answer was in accord with the analysis of most important film composers. Under the old structure of the film industry, in the time of the dominance of the major studios, there was a key figure in the musical equation: the music director. Himself a musician, he functioned as intermediary, arbitrator, and translator between the composer and the producer and/or director. In the present phase, this figure has vanished, and now the composer is forced to deal directly with producers and directors, who often have little or no understanding of the dramatic function of music.

"That's what's going on now," Percy said. "And so I haven't done a film score in three years. I'd just as soon do my recordings, do a few concerts, play some golf and fish, rather than get involved with directors and producers who really don't know anything about music and will admit it to you but will stand over your shoulder while you're writing. That's a terrible amount of pressure to be under."

"My son Peter is . . . involved with a film right now where they've done three scores, by three very well-known writers. One of them was Dave Grusin, who is a great, great talent. Dave was brought in after they threw out the first score."

"The producer was practically standing over his shoulder all the time, wanting Dave to play the score on the piano as he was writing it. So at the recording session, on the scoring stage, when they were in rehearsal, Dave called the producer out to stand beside him, in front of the orchestra, and said, 'I want you to listen to this,

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because I wouldn't want to waste any time.'

"Dave played four bars and stopped and turned to the producer and asked, 'What do you think of it so far?' This is in front of the orchestra! So the producer is a little stunned, because he isn't in an office with Dave, where he could clobber him, he's in front of thirty or forty men. He asked, 'Well, isn't there more?' and Dave said, 'Sure.'

"So Dave said, 'Okay, boys, bar 5.' And then he went on and played bars 5, 6, 7, and 8, and stopped again, and said, 'What do you think of it so far?' And the producer turned around and walked out, figuring that he was being had.

"Dave finished the score, and then they threw that one out, and now they're working on a third score.

"I'd hate to depend on that form of composition for my bread and butter."

Therein lies the real misfortune of Faith's career. Not adept at the machinations of Hollywood—he was perhaps too testy and blunt for the politics of that Byzantine place—he was never given the film assignments he deserved and thus has not received his due as a composer. But there are clues to how good he was, one of them being his score for *The Oscar*. That turgid melodrama, one of the worst turkeys ever produced on a large budget, is memorable only for its music. The score is full of song—joyous, witty, sardonic, and delicately tender by turns—all of it beautifully orchestrated, as one would have expected. One of the ballads, given lyrics and titled "Maybe September," has an unusual and even startling construction. It reaches its end and then totally unexpectedly continues into an exquisite coda, an entirely new melody. "I just felt the need for it there," Percy said matter-of-factly.

Because of the paucity of his film scores, Faith will always be known as an arranger. But his arrangements are models of taste and clarity from which any music student could and should learn. Perhaps all that Bach work in his own student days had its effect, but whatever the cause, you can always hear the lines—all of them, all the way to the bottom of his orchestrations. The writing was always fresh, and he had a wonderful command of colors.

His albums continue to sell, although most of the recent "pop" material he had to work with ran shallow in terms of linear and harmonic content. Still, if ever a man knew how to make a silk purse of a sow's ear, Percy Faith did. ●