

Cadman Sees American Composers as Pioneers in Creating Musical Scores for Motion Pictures

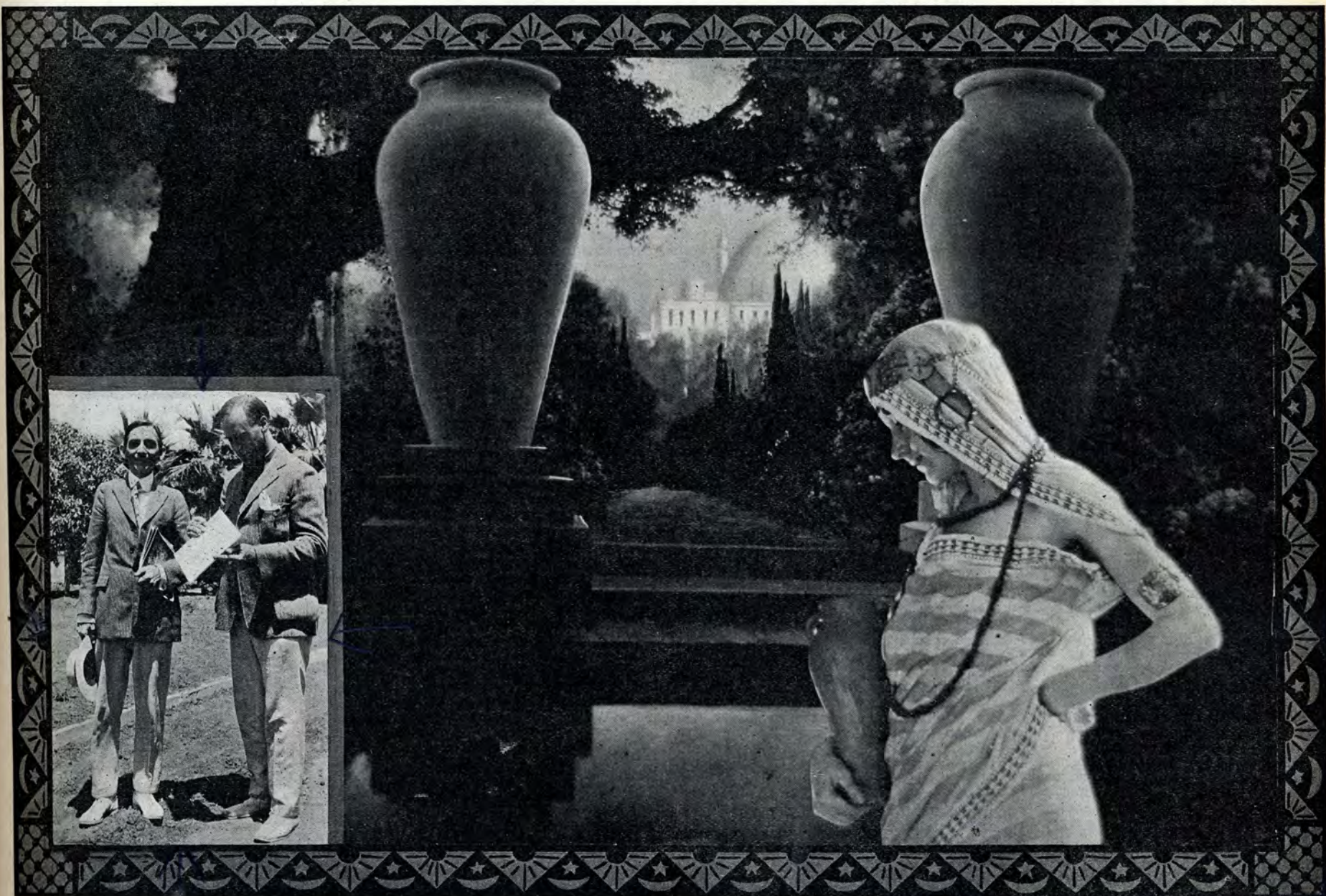


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Creating Old Omar Khayyam's Atmosphere by Means of Music

ONE of the scenes from the film of "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," produced by Ferdinand Earle, for which Charles Wakefield Cadman is writing the musical setting. The picture has inspired the composer of "Shanewis" to do some remarkable work, as described by MUSICAL AMERICA's representative. The inset in the lower part of the photograph shows Mr. Cadman (left) and Mr. Earle (right).

By HAZEL GERTRUDE KINSELLA

WHEN is a porch not a porch? We skip, mentally, over the good *sensible porches* of Nebraska, over "piazzas," "verandas" and "galleries," to the porch of southern California, which, not being a porch, is a *patio*!—and to the particularly interesting patio which is to be the "feature" of the new home of Charles Wakefield Cadman, in Hollywood, just out from Los Angeles.

The writer learned about these subtle differences in porch architecture on Saturday morning of last week, when she made her first visit to the Cadman home on Western Avenue, Los Angeles. The trip was made early in the forenoon, while it was still cool, and one was instantly reminded of the quaint "pre-movie" epoch in the history of southern California, by the charming adobe-style dwelling of the composer.

Just at 9 o'clock we reached the picturesque pink stucco home, with its quaint decorations of blue and gold, and were ushered into the parlor-music-room. To our remark that it was becoming very warm, Mr. Cadman agreed, decisively, that it was "Hot! Plus," and told us that it had been so hot the day before that he had waited and mowed the front lawn in the evening, by moonlight.

We began to talk of lawns and gardens, and immediately Mr. Cadman began to tell us of the lovely new home which he and his mother are building up in the cooler and more secluded hills of Hollywood. "Are you interested in plans?" he asked, and immediately went down on the floor just in front of us with the blue prints. The new home will be a combination of colonial and Spanish styles, with sunparlors and Spanish gates, but the picturesque *patio*

(porch without a roof), with its friendly out-of-doors fireplace, is the keynote about which all the rest of the house is being built. Mr. Cadman's studio will be upstairs, away from the telephone and callers, facing the west, and affording a view of the lights of the city at night, and of the ocean by day.

The very mention of Hollywood suggests "movies," and we felt it a privilege to be told of the music which Mr. Cadman is now writing for the "silent opera"—this his first venture in this field. Said he, in speaking of it:

"On account of my residence in Los Angeles, which is the center of the movie world, what is more natural than that I should be attracted to this phase of America's musical life? The feature film for which I am writing the music is the forthcoming screen production by Ferdinand Earle, of 'The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.' The film will include many rarely beautiful oriental scenes and episodes, and suggestions of the romance of the desert. I insist that the music and the picture should be as intimately correlated as possible, and in this story of Omar and his student friends it has been my idea to reflect the festive and barbaric spirit of oriental 'pomp and circumstance' of a by-gone day.

"Three years ago it would not have been possible to achieve high-class musical results in the movies, but now there are at least thirty-five or forty good, real symphony orchestras (at least in effect) in our large theaters, which play and rehearse daily, and which are capable of playing the best music in a strikingly effective manner. And I am firmly convinced that the American people will listen to good music—good melody and rhythm—no matter how complicated it is, or how much counterpoint is used in its development. In this film music I

do not try—consciously—to be 'high-brow,' but neither do I allow it to become too 'free' in form. As sane a musicianship may be employed in writing film music as in any other line of musical endeavor.

Details of Picture

"The Rubaiyat pictures will include torchlight processions, mob scenes, night scenes, love episodes, and so on. Right now they are 'shooting'—as they call it—out on the desert at night, and some of the most characteristic music will be that accompanying these out-of-doors desert night scenes, in which are seen the processions of camels, and the camp-fires."

Much of the original manuscript and some orchestrations (still in pencil) were lying about on the piano.

"Would you like to hear some of it?" asked Mr. Cadman. MUSICAL AMERICA readers will, I know, be interested in an "advance review" of this beautiful and virile music, so:

The first music which Mr. Cadman played was that which is to accompany one of the desert night camp-fire scenes. "I can't make my fingers go as fast as the violin parts," warned Mr. Cadman, as he started to play. "I hear everything orchestrally, in an entirely different manner from that which is suggested to some musicians by a piano manuscript." (Maybe Mr. Cadman's fingers don't go as fast—that we didn't notice—but we do wish that many young pianists could learn his secrets of pianistic "tone-color" and make us hear instrumentation as Mr. Cadman does.)

The music of this episode will be highly scored for strings (including harp) and wood-wind; it is written in frequently alternated 3-4 and 4-4 measure; is in oriental ballet style; and employs, as thematic material, the main

Persian scale (C, D, E-flat, F-sharp, G, A, B-flat, C). One felt, in listening to it, that Mr. Cadman's long period of research in Indian and other primitive and Oriental folk-music, has been most valuable, helping him to *sense* the emotional appeal of the pictures suggested by the "Rubaiyat." The groups, the stately processions of the desert, the community, folk and ballet forms and color, are all vividly suggested in this splendid new Cadman music. (We urged Mr. Cadman to make much of it available to pianists by the means of piano arrangements.) As in all real folk-music, rhythm is a strong feature of the work.

Creates Oriental Atmosphere

Then Mr. Cadman gave us the score of the "Dance in a Sheikh's Tent"—a ballet to accompany the episode-picture of an Arabian dancing girl. This is scored for wood-wind, strings, and two horns; it opens very rhythmically, the peculiar effects of percussion in the introduction, and throughout the sketch, being produced by single rhythmic notes played by the bassoons and double-basses. Mr. Cadman also played us illustrations from several of the love episodes.

Then, following the maxim that the "first shall be last," he played for us the big and dramatic overture, or symphonic prelude (which he has just completed), which, played as the introduction of the picture, cannot but "set the stage" and create the atmosphere, for the spectacle to follow. Here again, the Persian scale was employed, and the heart-appeal of the seductive and sensuous primitive folk-rhythm strongly featured. Following the dramatic entrance comes a lovely second theme, elaborated with arabesques (Mr. Cadman—a whole or-

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