



DIVE 2 - SEA MUTANTS

Rising next from the watery depths of The Soundtrack Zone is a rogue's gallery of "feature creatures" in which a film's – or television show's – aquatic protagonists are caught in an evolutionary "twilight zone" of beings who are not quite fish, not quite human—they're **SEA MUTANTS** who get top billing as they threaten or even in some cases befriend a human protagonist. Television's small screen has been awash with **SEA MUTANTS** from films such as **The She Creature** (1956–scored by Ronald Stein) and **The She Beast** (1966–scored by Ralph Ferraro) to TV series such as **Aquaman** (1968) and **The Man from Atlantis** (1977–scored by Fred Karlin).




While the complete scores have not yet been released for **Aquaman** or **The Man from Atlantis**, each show's theme is provided below to whet your aqua whistle:

Aquaman - <http://www.televisiontunes.com/Aquaman.html>

The Man from Atlantis - [http://www.televisiontunes.com/Man_From_Atlantis_\(The\).html](http://www.televisiontunes.com/Man_From_Atlantis_(The).html)

For this dive into the **Sea Mutants** genre, we lead with the creature that David Schecter described as "a man in a rubber suit more convincing than almost all other humanoid monsters before or since" (MMM-1952).



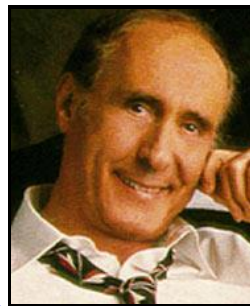
1954 – Creature from the Black Lagoon (Hans J. Salter, Herman Stein & Henry Mancini)



[Hans Salter](#)



[Herman Stein](#)



[Henry Mancini](#)

<http://mmmrecordings.com/Composers/Mancini/mancini.html>



Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM1o1xe5FGE>

Full Movie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_SleaZsUFk

Tagline: Clawing Monster from A Lost Age strikes from the Amazon's forbidden depths!



Posters

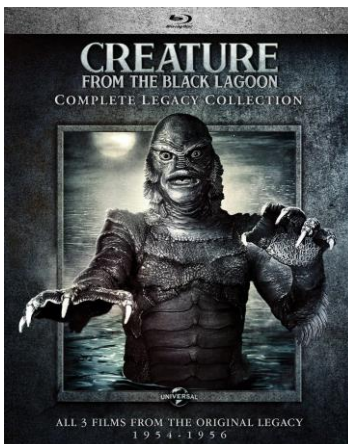
Plot Summary: A scientific expedition searching for fossils along the Amazon River discovers a prehistoric Gill-Man in the legendary Black Lagoon. The explorers capture the mysterious creature, but it breaks free. The Gill-Man returns to kidnap the lovely Kay, fiancée of one of the expedition, with whom it has fallen in love (www.imdb.com).



VHS



DVD



Blu Ray



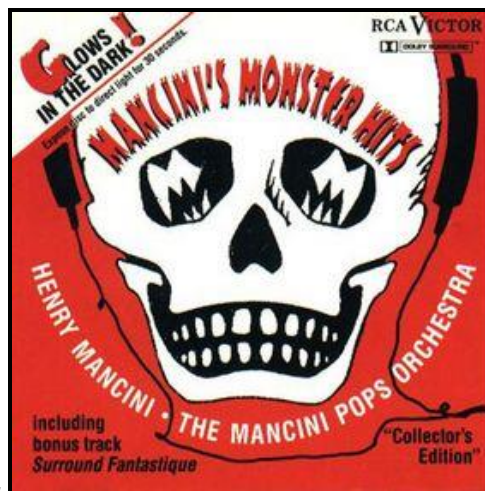
LP



CD 1



CD 2



CD 3

LP & CD: “The Monster Attacks” on Themes from Classic Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films – Dick Jacobs and His Orchestra (LP - Coral 757240 & CD - Varese Sarabande VSD 5407)

The Monster Attacks - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MclzJNVylkA>

LP: *Classic Horror Music of Hans Salter* (Citadel TT-HS-4) (not shown)

CD 1: *Creature from the Black Lagoon: A Symphony of Film Music by Hans J. Salter* (Intrada MAF 7054D)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJY1ExloELQ&list=PL4lIT-1m22r81q5laOT0vEkrvXnbWEKp7&index=3>

CD 2: 24 cues - 35:34 of re-recorded score on “Creature from the Black Lagoon” (MMM-1952)

CD 3: *Mancini’s Monster Hits* (RCA) – The Mancini Pops Orchestra

Suite - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGuTITSFQo&index=4&list=PL4lIT-1m22r81q5laOT0vEkrvXnbWEKp7>

Aqua Cues: Main Title (Herman Stein) / The Diver / Salvage of the Lady Luck / Kay and the Monster

The Monster Attacks - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNJRoSfVZxo>

Underwater Hunt - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CApLHv_NrAw

Music figures prominently in **Creature from the Black Lagoon (CFTBL)** with nearly every underwater scene underscored, with little dialogue and sound effects getting in the way of the music. “This helps make the aquatic scenes as engaging as the dry ones, something that few underwater films have accomplished” (David Schecter, CD liner notes: MMM-1952).

The score includes various minor melodic passages that suggest the tranquility and solitude of the lost lagoon (emphasizing woodwinds and gradually anticipating trombones). The most striking moments consist of “a discordant, blaring theme for trumpets, built around an ascending, three-note, shouting brass motif that is heard whenever the Creature attacks; a harsh and unexpected blare that literally jolts us out of our seats and provides an electrifying punch to the picture” (Randall Larson, *Musique Fantastique*, 1985: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey. [/ 85). Larson describes this theme as “da-DA-DAA” with a repeated, three-note crashing crescendo composed by Herman Stein.

While a portion of the film’s score composed by Hans J. Salter exists as a 14:57 suite on CD (Intrada MAF 7054D), Monstrous Movie Music’s stereo re-recording (MMM-1952) provides 24 separate cues, many of which were scored for or tracked (from other films) to accompany the underwater scenes in **CFTBL**. Of these cues, the score relies heavily on the Herman Stein-composed three-note Creature theme (**BAH-BAH-BAHHH!**). The last note is actually a three-note, half-step cluster chord referred to here simply as the three-note theme. This three-note theme became so closely associated with the Gill-Man of **CFTBL** that the theme was reused heavily in the Gill-Man’s two sequels: **Revenge of the Creature** and **The Creature Walks Among Us**.

Several composers—Herman Stein, Henry Mancini, and Hans J. Salter—provided the score for **CFTBL**, with library cues, previously composed by Robert Emmett Dolan and Milton Rosen, also tracked into the film. While Salter provided the majority of the score’s “monster attack cues” in the

film's latter half, these cues were based on material scored by Stein, including the famous "Bom-ba-BOM...three note figure with the dissonance at the end" (Randall D. Larson, "The Universal Film Music of Herman Stein," *CinemaScore*, No. 13/14, Winter 84/Summer 85, pp. 24-33).

With this "repeated three-note, crashing crescendo," writes Larson, "the music builds rapidly to suddenly break off, almost prematurely...lurching the audience along with the film's rising and falling moments of suspense and terror. The score is a mixture of these loud, brassy heart-beat/footstep motifs and...softer string and woodwind arrangements for the picture's quieter moments" (Randall D. Larson, *CinemaScore*, No. 9, 10/81, p. 22). While the three-note theme is heard to announce the Gill-Man on shore or underwater, the **CFTBL** score includes numerous cues composed for or tracked (from other films) to the film's underwater sequences. As described by David Schecter, these are:

- Henry Mancini's "The Diver" is heard when the female lead pulls on a depth marker. "When the scene cuts underwater, the lyrical music featuring woodwinds, harp, celeste, vibraphone, and strings descends with the camera.... A shot of underwater life is accompanied by beautiful clarinets, vibraphone, harp, celeste, and violins...."
- Milt Rosen's "Salvage of the Lady Luck" was originally used in 1953's **City Beneath the Sea** to accompany a scene that takes place almost entirely underwater. The cue was particularly suited to track the underwater—and otherworldly—world of the Gill-Man because of the prominent use of Novachord (an early relative of the synthesizer) that conveyed an otherworldly tone to the film's underwater narrative. **CFTBL** uses two minutes of the original "Salvage of the Lady Luck" cue (as used in **City Beneath the Sea**) when the two male protagonists don their aqualungs to search for rock samples on the lagoon's bottom. This portion of the cue is scored for muted trumpets, vibraphone, and harp.
- Herman Stein's "Kay and the Monster" (Parts 1 and 2) is considered a centerpiece of the score for **CFTBL** "both because of the magnificent sequence where Kay unknowingly partakes in a water ballet with the Creature, and also because of the dramatic impetus the music gives those mostly dialogue-free scenes." As Kay moves through the water, her pleasant swim is accompanied by "Kay and the Monster, Part 1," orchestrated for flutes, clarinets, swirling harp, orchestra bells, and vibraphone that distract the viewer from the terror lurking beneath the surface. The diversion is interrupted as we sight the Gill-Man from behind, with the Creature theme sounding on French horns. "As the Gill-Man swims after the oblivious Kay, the 'Creature Advancing' theme sounds on groaning clarinets, bass clarinets, bassoon, organ, and string bass. Then, understated trumpet versions of the Creature theme offer punctuation..., while gong adds threatening overtones. When the Gill-Man moves closer beneath Kay in a sexually-suggestive underwater mating dance, full orchestra builds tension."



Underwater Stalking: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ariuokNFhSw>

- Stein’s “Kay and the Monster, Part 2” picks up the action with gong followed by low instruments playing the Creature theme as the Gill-Man swims around Kay’s kicking legs. “Brass crescendos with trilling woodwinds and strings accent the three times the Creature reaches out to touch Kay...and when Kay submerges and the Creature retreats from sight, rhythmic low instruments remind us she is still not safe. After Kay resurfaces, the ‘Creature Advancing’ theme plays on low strings, bass clarinet, and bassoon, and as the Gill-Man watches her, brass and gong build the suspense.... The music calms...but... as...Kay...swims toward the ‘Rita’ [the expedition’s boat] with the Creature below her, the orchestra plays an increasingly powerful reprise of the ‘Creature advancing’ theme.... The Creature theme sounds just before Kay climbs safely on board, intensifying that last moment when we fear the beast will reach out and grab her.”

Assessing the overall score, Randall Larson characterized it as “a relentless, brassily horrific assault that kept audiences gripped through each of the monster scenes and gave life to the malevolent gill-man. Built around [the] shrieking 3-note ascending theme for the monster, the motif literally jolts the listener with its in-your-face trumpet screeching.

The score mixes this terror theme with a variety of plodding and pulsating suspense figures and a minor romantic melody to create an overall texture of brooding spookiness punctuated by sheer musical shock.” (Randall D. Larson, *Soundtrack!*, 9/94, Vol. 13, No. 51, p. 22). Jeff Bond similarly wrote that the score with “its shrill, three-note brass stinger for the monster” is “one of the most instantly recognizable and effective pieces of ‘scary’ music ever heard in the movies.” The score, added Jeff Bond, “moves seamlessly from impressionistic repose to outright chaos as the monster alternately hides in its swampy natural surroundings and launches its attack to the tune of Salter’s snarling brass trills” (Didier C. Deutsch (editor), *VideoHound’s Soundtracks*, Visible Ink Press, 1998, p. 733).

However, in his CD liner notes, Schecter observes: “Due to the blaring theme, **CFTBL**’s score has an unfair reputation for being loud and brassy, when in fact it contains many beautiful melodies and atmospheric cues. This misconception is because most of **CFTBL**’s released music is Salter’s, whose writing was not representative of the majority of the score.”



Readers interested in further analysis of the **CFTBL** score can check out Schecter’s complete CD liner notes (MMM-1952). At <http://www.mmmrecordings.com> (click on “Make Your Own Complete **Creature from the Black Lagoon** suite”), Schecter provides guidance on how to combine the “Creature” cues from the *Monstrous Movie Music* CD and the Intrada CD’s tracks for the same film “and do a fairly accurate job of reproducing the entire soundtrack. It includes the timings on the one-track Intrada CD suite, so people can know what cue is what on the disc” (1/18/01 David Schecter email posting to FILMUS-L).

For an excellent website honoring all three of the Creature films, click on the following link:

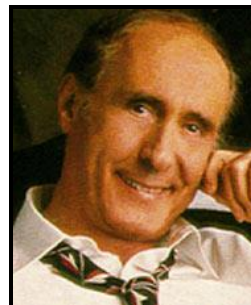
<http://fast.horrorseek.com/horror/blacklagoon/gillman.html>



1955–**Revenge of the Creature (Herman Stein, William Lava, Henry Mancini)**



[Herman Stein](#)



[Henry Mancini](#)

<http://mmmrecordings.com/Composers/Mancini/mancini.html>



Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rE6XCkjE5Q>

Full Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHatMfn7IB4>

Tagline: Terror is loose in the city!



Posters

Plot Summary: The Creature from the Black Lagoon is back! This time he's captured by scientists and transported to an aquarium in south Florida. Naturally, he's attracted to the lovely female scientist and manages to escape and kidnap her (www.imdb.com).



VHS

VHS – DVD – Blu Ray



DVD



Blu Ray



LP



CD

LP & CD: single cue “Main Title” on *Themes from Classic Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films* (LP - Coral 757240 & CD - Varese Sarabande VSD 5407)

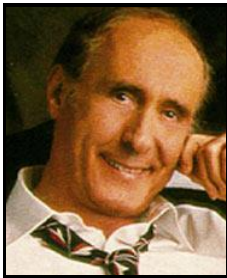
Aqua Cues:

Main Title - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zW6QHRKpAyw>

The score for **Revenge of the Creature** contains 72 cues, 53 of which appeared in the earlier **Creature from the Black Lagoon (CFTBL)**, and only 11 written specifically for the film (two by Herman Stein—including a new main title, eight by William Lava, and one by Henry Mancini). **Revenge of the Creature** heavily reuses the Creature’s three-note theme (**BAH-BAH-BAHHH!**) although the theme is “recorded with a slightly different orchestration that made it more ominous than suddenly shocking, until the scenes of the Creature attacking where it bursts forth loudly from the brass section out of an explosion of drums and cymbals” (Randall D. Larson, *Musique Fantastique*, 1985: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey, p. 85). Five cues borrow portions of the “Salvage of the Lady Luck” cue from **CFTBL**, in each case underscoring underwater action. The cue “[Main Title](#)” quickly establishes “an ominous and aggressive tone with assertive brass and swirling violin effects” (CD liner notes).



1956 – **The Creature Walks Among Us** (Henry Mancini, Irving Gertz, Herman Stein, Heinz Roemheld, Hans Salter)



[Henry Mancini](#)



Irving Gertz



[Herman Stein](#)



[Heinz Roemheld](#)



[Hans Salter](#)



Trailer 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIBjBkfMCZM>

Trailer 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7HCeYIFww>

Tagline: Fury stalks the streets and a city screams in TERROR! All New Underwater Thrills!



Poster

Plot Summary: The Creature is captured and turned into an air-breather by a rich mad scientist. This makes the Creature very unhappy, and he escapes, killing people and setting fires in the process (www.imdb.com).



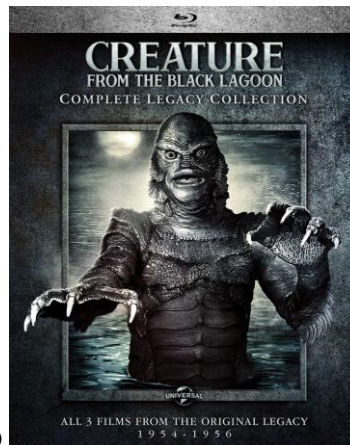
VHS



DVD



DVD



Blu Ray



LP/CD

LP & CD: single cue “Stalking the Creature” on *Themes from Classic Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films* – Dick Jacobs and His Orchestra (CD - Varese Sarabande VSD 5407 & LP - Coral 757240)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUB1XVO6lqQ>

Aqua Cues:

Stalking the Creature - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dicHH7VU1eg>

The Creature Walks Among Us contains 35 score cues, with original compositions scored by Henry Mancini, Irving Gertz, Heinz Roemheld, and Hans J. Salter. While most of the film’s score is original, Herman Stein’s three-note Creature theme (**BAH-BAH-BAHHH!**) is used with great regularity. Indeed, the opening 20 bars of the “Main Title” of **Revenge of the Creature** (already heavily borrowed from the “[Main Title](#)” of **CFTBL**) were used in the “Main Title” of **The Creature Walks Among Us**, with 28 bars of newly composed score provided by Heinz Roemheld. Overall, the score maintains “an appropriate air of foreboding tinged with a sense of compassion consistent with the film’s more sympathetic portrayal of the Creature” (Randall D. Larson, *Musique Fantastique*, 1985: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey, p. 85). The cue “[Stalking the Creature](#)” has “an appropriate air of foreboding, with perhaps a touch of compassion consistent with the more sympathetic, humanized portrayal of the creature” (CD liner notes).



1963 – **Tourist Attraction (TV) (Robert Van Eps)**



No Photo of Robert Van Eps Identified on the Internet

Tourist Attraction (Season 1 Episode 13): <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4k3lzx>



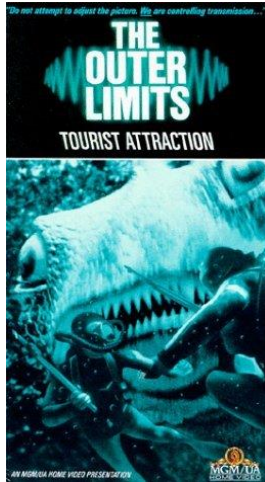
Tagline: “Moving through the deep, protected only by a tank of air and a hunting spear, the scientist-explorer descends beyond the San Blas shelf. ...unknown to him, the observer is himself observed. Hidden in the sinuous rills of seaweed, sightless eyes, blind for centuries, stare out of the abyss. The legendary creature of the deep, sensing through nerve receptors in its skin, becomes aware of the alien invader, man” (http://membres.lycos.fr/tmcr/daystar/tol_s1/tol_eps13.shtml).



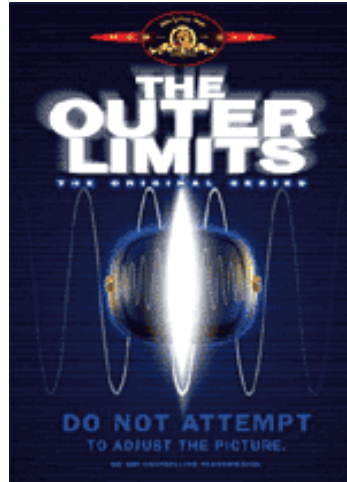
[Source](#)

Plot Summary: On a houseboat, [an] American tycoon...explores the deep of the Caribbean's ocean

and catches a prehistoric fish-lizard. Latin dictator Mercurio wants to keep this breakthrough to gain international credits. The monster escapes and its fellow species ravage the island of San Blas by breaking the dam which leads to the death of the military tyrant and frees the [people] of the cold money-maker (http://membres.lycos.fr/tmcr/daystar/tol_s1/tol_eps13.shtml).



VHS

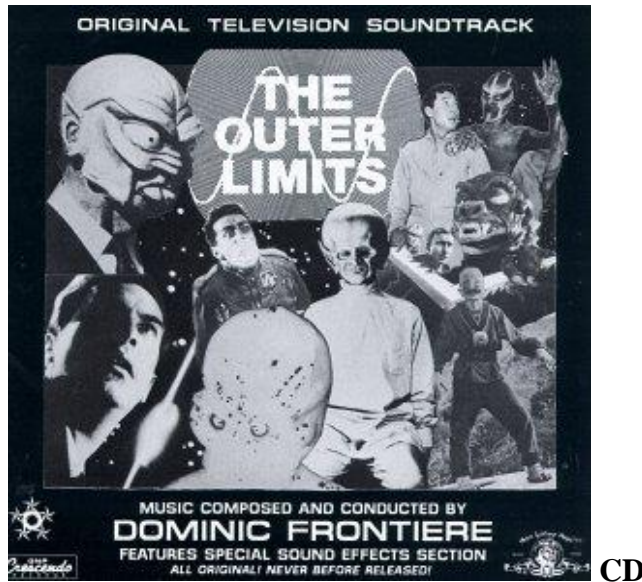


DVD



Blu Ray:

The Outer Limits - The Complete First/Second/Third/Fourth/Fifth/Sixth/Seventh Season (7 Pack)



CD: *The Outer Limits* (GNP Crescendo 8032) – 2 cues (– “Ichthyosaurus Mercurius” and “Ichthyosaurus Mercurius Thaws and Escapes”)

Aqua Cues/Notes: Ichthyosaurus Mercurius / Ichthyosaurus Mercurius Thaws and Escapes

Tourist Attraction (Part 1 of 2) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUzzbGpjYHg>

Tourist Attraction (Part 2 of 2) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyyODqacG-8>

One would be hard put not to notice the similarities between the big screen’s **Creature from the Black Lagoon** and the small screen’s **Tourist Trap** episode appearing on the 1963 TV series **The Outer Limits**. The score for **Tourist Attraction** actually was a mixed composition provided by Dominic Frontiere and Robert Van Eps, the latter’s score “a mixture of the kind of standard, ‘spooky’ music for which **Outer Limits** was famous.

Van Eps’ score includes “dreamy, ‘water’ music for the underwater scenes, featuring flute and harp” (<http://www.homevideos.com/outerlimits/ol13.htm>). But none of Van Eps’ “dreamy, ‘water’ music for the underwater scenes” was included on *The Outer Limits* soundtrack CD, nor was this reviewer able to track down a photo of Van Eps to include with this article.

The Outer Limits soundtrack CD does include two Frontiere-composed tracks – “Ichthyosaurus Mercurius” and “Ichthyosaurus Mercurius Thaws and Escapes” – that are cues used to signal the fish-lizards whose high frequency sounds eventually destroy the dam.



1965 – **War-Gods of the Deep (City in the Sea) (Stanley Black)**

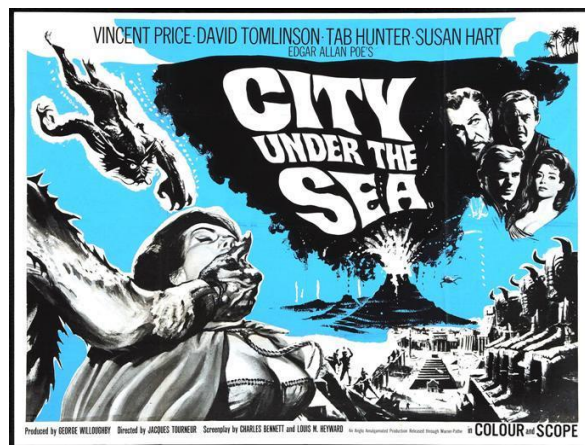
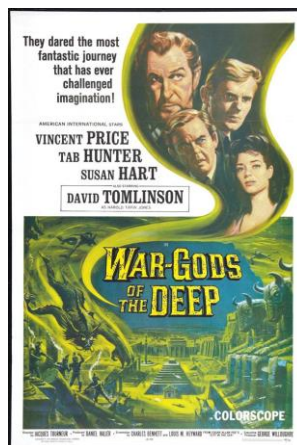


Stanley Black (Solomon Schwartz)



Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo8SrycaTFE>

Tagline: They Became Pawns in A WAR Beneath the Waves.



Posters

Plot Summary: Set on the Cornish coast in 1903, the film features a group of people discovering an

underwater society of smugglers who never age living in a lost underwater city along with their gill-man slaves.



DVD



Blu Ray



CD

CD: Quartet SCE055

Aqua Cues/Notes: Main Title (*) / Gillman Attack / Secret Watergate (*) / The City in the Sea (*) / Underwater Escape (*) – the Quartet Records website provides [samples](#) for some (*) of these cues.

Gergely Hubai's liner notes for the **War-Gods of the Deep** CD provide the following comments on the score's underwater-related cues.

- “Main Title / Turgillis Manor” – “The tumultuous opening is played during an underwater main titles sequence, featuring the city fanfare for the appearance of each name. The racing strings...for the waves are...introduced [and] only ease up when the film cuts to the seashore....”
- “Gillman Attack” – “Ben [Tab Hunter] hears a noise coming from the study and enters the room with only a candlestick. Though everything seems to be in order at first, the room is actually invaded by a gillman, a creepy sea creature hiding in the shadows. The brief struggle is scored with appropriate monster music...”



- “Kidnapped Jill / Secret Watergate” – “Following the secret passageway of the gillman, the trio [Ben and two others] finds a secret whirlpool that takes them down to [an] underwater system of caverns where the rest of the film transpires.”
- “Underwater Escape” – “The highlight of Black’s score is this epic, ten-minute long escape sequence that plays almost without any dialogue.... Shot in murky waters...., the ensuing chase sequence and gillman fistfights looks like a 19th century version of *Thunderball* with a guest appearance from The Creature.”
- “Final Escape / End Titles” – “Ben, Jill, Harold and Herbert get into ancient diving gear for a final escape, but their road to freedom is blocked by even more gillmen. The perilous action music occasionally slows down to represent the underwater setting until our heroes land on the seashore.”

Hubai notes that “Black uses a variety of simple musical tricks to enhance the picture with a magical quality.... The underwater scenes are usually scored with lightly orchestrated impressionistic music.” Reviewer Daniel Schweiger summed up Black’s score for **War-Gods of the Deep** as follows:

Black creates a virtual floating symphony of haunting strings, eerie bells and percussion, going for just about every way that richly melodic music can approximate deep water. Black’s impressive scope also powerfully embodies Vincent Price’s romantically haunted privateer and the menace of his gillmen-filled domain. The fact that Black can even hold his breath for ten straight minutes of this constantly intriguing, ever-roiling stuff says more than enough about his creative staying power ([Source](#)).



1980 – **Humanoids from the Deep** (James Horner)



[James Horner](#)



Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0rtiHjUP0w>

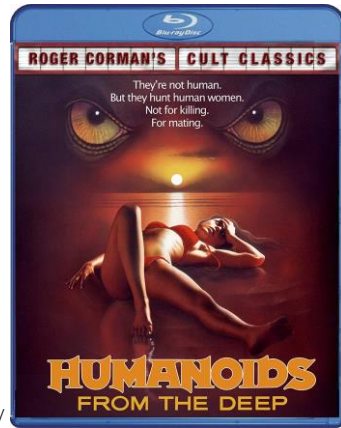
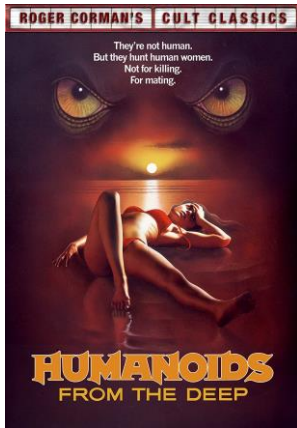
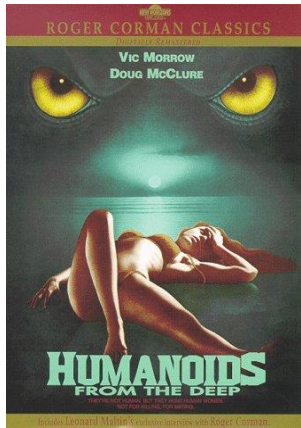
Full Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4IUVOgP8Uc>

Tagline: From the Caverns of the Deep...It Strikes!

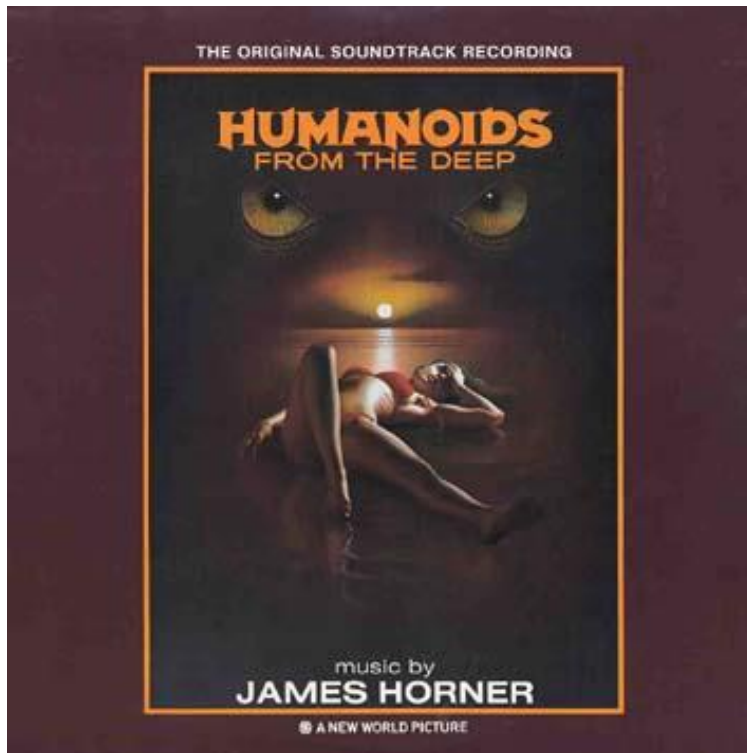


Poster

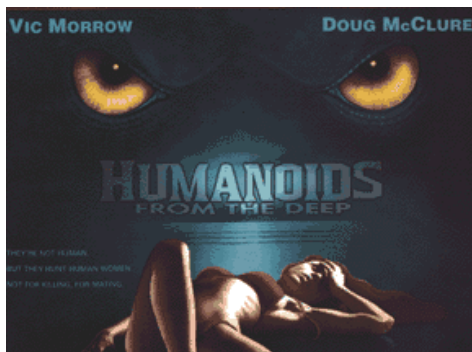
Plot Summary: Scientific experiments backfire and produce horrific mutations: half-man, half-fish which terrorize a small fishing village (www.imdb.com). The town is caught in a debate between the desire of the local salmon cannery to expand operations and environmental protest from the Native Indians. But swimmers around the area start turning up mutilated. A marine biologist determines that salmon treated with experimental growth hormones at the plant were accidentally dumped in the sea where they were devoured by coelacanths that subsequently mutated into monstrous humanoid creatures attacking human women in a desire to climb the evolutionary chain and breed (<http://members.fortunecity.com/roogulator/horror/humanoidsfrdeep.htm>).



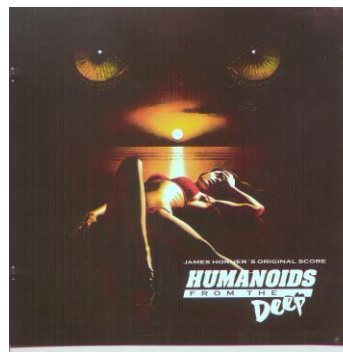
DVDs – Blu Ray



LP



CD 1



CD 2



CD 3



CD 4

LP: Humanoids from the Deep (Cerberus CST-0203)

CD 1: Humanoids from the Deep (Private Release)

CD 2: Humanoids from the Deep (Stars SCD-98427 Limited Edition)

CD 3: Battle Beyond the Stars / Humanoids from the Deep (GNP Crescendo GNPD-8075)

CD 4: Humanoids from the Deep (Buysoundtrax BSXCD 8896)

Aqua Cues:

Main Title - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DreEHZSpccr>

The Buck-O - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyEDN6GaQ00>

Jerry's Death - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOM_rmDReuw

Night Swim - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQslUH171uo>

The Humanoids Attack - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1huOeR8HZs>

Search for Clues - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xfg2dazM3E>

Strange Catch - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8PbkELRC3A>

The Grotto - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnOkV0BxAPo>

Over the years James Horner's score for **Humanoids from the Deep** has been released in different versions. The earliest version was a Private Release (bootleg) CD that has slightly more music and cue titles completely different from the subsequent commercial CD releases, one on the Stars label and the other on the GNP Crescendo label. The GNP CD reportedly has superior "sound quality" that "makes the bootleg completely obsolete" (http://www.filmtracks.com/titles/battle_beyond.html). While both the Stars and GNP releases share the same cue selections in number and sequence, the order of the CD tracks is not same as these cues are heard in the film. Here's the comparison:

CD 1: / (Private Release) - **Humanoids from the Deep** (18 tracks) [1-Main Titles (2:23) / 2-The Last Voyage (3:37) / 3-Barron and the Beast (1:32) / 4-Grisly / Discoveries/The Stalking (4:15) / 5-A Festive Evening/Confronting Johnny (3:29) / 6-The Eavesdropper (2:00) / 7-On The Beach (1:17) / 8-Hooking a Whopper/Jerry's End (3:03) / 9-Trouble Brewing (1:30) / 10-Three's A Crowd (1:54) / 11-In The Heat of the Night/The Last of Linda (3:39) / 12-The Search (2:26) / 13-Shoot to Kill/DNA 5 (3:07) / 14-The Salmon Festival (3:51) / 15-Humanoids on the Loose (2:02) / 16-Carol's Peril (3:06) / 17-Aftermath/Labor Pains (1:56) / 18. End Credits (2:07)] / Note that CD 1 also includes 6 tracks from Horner's uncredited score for **Up from the Depths** (1979)

CD 2 & CD 3: 17-[Main Title](#) / 18-[The Buck-O](#) / 19-Unwelcome Visitor / 20-Night Swim / 21-Jerry And Peggy / 22-Trip Upriver / 23-[Humanoids Attack](#) / 24-Jerry's Death / 25-Search For Clues / 26-Strange Catch / 27-The Grotto / 28-Night Prowlers / 29-[Final Confrontation](#) / 30-Aftermath/New Birth / 31-End Titles

If you want to hear the CD tracks in the order as heard in the film, the tracks on either CD 2 or CD 3 should be sequenced as follows: 17-Main Title / 18-The Buck-O / 19-Unwelcome Visitor / 22-Trip Upriver / 21-Jerry and Peggy / 24-Jerry's Death / 20-Night Swim / 23-The Humanoids Attack / 25-31 (as listed on the CD).

More recently, Buysoundtrax reissued a 16-cue version of Horner's score for **Humanoids of the Deep** (CD 4) that includes "Outtakes from The Deep" (9:37). The CD also includes four cues from Christopher Lennertz's score for the 1996 version of **Humanoids from the Deep**.

As Randall D. Larson wrote in the GNP CD liner notes, Horner provided "a memorable and effective suspense score. Dominated by strings and percussion, the music is occasionally reminiscent of Jerry Goldsmith's **Alien** score, with its quiet solo trumpet, whispering strings, harp strums, and piano chords, while a gentle woodwind melody is evocative of portions of **A Patch of Blue**." Larson also described the score as effectively "brooding" and "dominated by strings and percussion...very much in a Goldsmithian vein.... Much of this apparent imitation was a product not only of Horner's admiration of Goldsmith, but of the filmmakers' desire to have the score sound like someone else's previous work" (Randall D. Larson, *Musique Fantastique*, 1985: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey, p. 323).

[Gary S. Dalkin](#) described the score as containing "some attractively romantic sea music," while another [reviewer](#) wrote that much of the score "lingers in the murky depths."

Commenting on the score as presented on the "Private Release" CD, [Jonathan Broxton](#) wrote:

"[Main Titles](#)" and "End Credits" give the fullest renditions of the score's omnipresent elements: an echoing trumpet motif similar to that in Patton, an almost childlike penny-whistle melody, and a boinging synthesizer.... Of the remainder, "The Last Voyage" starts with a playful string-and-xylophone melody but soon becomes much more sinister, with lots of clanging bells, thumping drums and forbidding string figures; "The Eavesdropper" and "The Search" are quite good, both featuring sombre, sinister strings, and "On The Beach" is very nice, with a delicate love theme punctuated by the boinging effects. Unfortunately,

a lot of the action cues (such as “Barron and the Beast”, “[Jerry’s Death](#)” and “The Last of Linda”) are rather sub-standard, and tend to rely far too heavily on Herrmann-style shrieking strings and dissonant ear-shattering noise to unsettle the listener, although “In The Heat Of The Night” is quite clever, mixing a rendition of the main theme with some orchestrations similar to those he would later use in Aliens, and “Carol’s Peril” has some effective frantic string work.”

[Jeff Berkwits](#), reviewing the score as presented on the GNP release, described it as having a “threatening ambiance”:

Tunes like “Unwelcome Visitor” and “The Grotto” impart an exceedingly anxious air via intensely resonant and, on occasion, rather discordant orchestration. The suspense is further magnified through screeching strings and obtrusive percussion on works such as “The Humanoids Attack” and “Final Confrontation,” with “[The Buck-O](#)” and “Jerry and Peggy” offering relatively relaxed—though still portentous—interludes. ...a haunting harp creating a suspenseful mood during “Night Swim” and skittering violins—slightly reminiscent of Bernard Herrmann’s infamous **Psycho** accompaniment—adding to the creepy atmosphere of compositions like “Night Prowlers.”

Outtakes from The Deep - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdNiaUYQnGo>



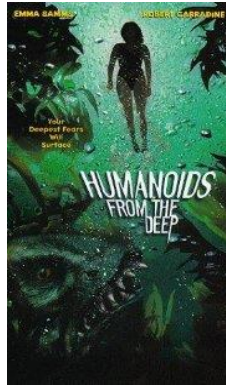
1996 – **Humanoids of the Deep** (Christopher Lennertz)



[Christopher Lennertz](#)

Trailer: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0nR0o_eYXE

Tagline: Your Deepest Fears Will Surface.

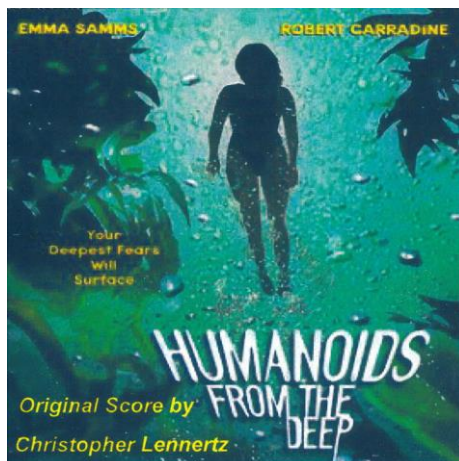


Poster

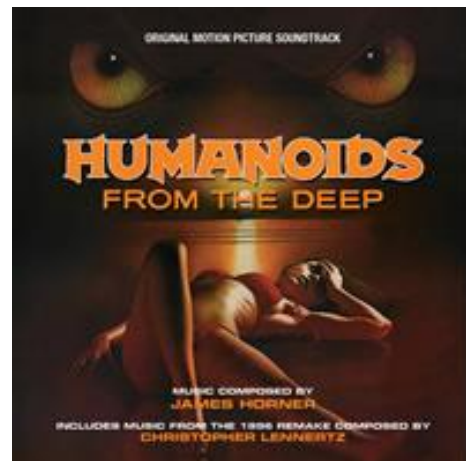
Plot Summary: While a town is in a state of alert, the monster of the sea keeps mutating the townspeople at an alarming rate. A researcher finds a genetic disorder that has been caused by a chemical that has been dumped into the water that has caused the creature to have an alarming appetite (www.imdb.com).



DVDs



CD 1 (bootleg)



CD 2

CD 2: 3 cues from *Humanoids from the Deep* (1996) (Buysoundtrax BSXCD 8896)

Aqua Cues:

Humanoids 1996 Suite Part #1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIydlDm58W0>

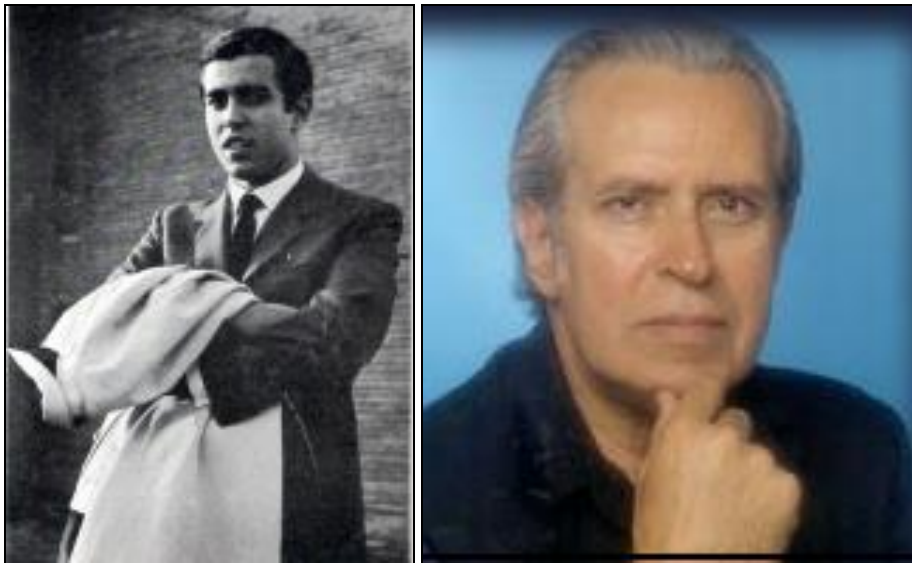
[Humanoids 1996 Suite Part #2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHGZPTJt2IQ) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHGZPTJt2IQ>

[Humanoids 1996 Suite Part #3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reIMy53JUI) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reIMy53JUI>

In 1996 a new version of **Humanoids from the Deep** was released, this time with a score by Christopher Lennertz. While there is a hard-to-find bootleg (CD 1) of Lennertz's score, his score for the film is available in the form of three suites on CD 2 with the above YouTube URLs providing links to these suites.



1980 – L'Isola Degli Uomini Pesce (Screamers) (Luciano Michelini)



Luciano Michelini

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CRjvEPP3GI>

Full Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBoiODaQs0c>

Full Movie (Screamers): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1Ckd3e0FeY&list=PLLIHEGgkFeUJLKw8spuQOGA7PdJedFA46>

Tagline: They're men turned inside out! And worse... they're still alive!



Posters

Plot Summary: After a prison ship sinks in the Caribbean, the prisoners and a doctor wash ashore on a seemingly deserted island. They soon discover a strange couple, who invite them to stay at their house. While the prisoners try to plan an escape, the doctor does some investigating, and soon finds out just what the pair is really doing...and why the prisoners keep disappearing mysteriously.

Originally released in Italy as (**L'isola degli uomini pesce - Island of the Fishmen**), the film was released in the United States as **Screamers**, with additional scenes and re-editing. In 1995, a sequel, **La regina degli uomini pesce (The Fishmen and Their Queen)** was released with an original score by Luigi Ceccarelli (but that soundtrack is not available on LP or CD).



VHS



DVDs



LP 1 (Italy)



LP 2 (US)

LP 1: L'Isola degli uomini pesce (Italy Cometa CMT 1009-21)

LP 2: Screamers (Web ST-101)



CD 1



CD 2

CD 1: L'Isola degli uomini pesce (Sweden Fin de Siecle FDS 22)

CD 2: L'Isola degli uomini pesce (Italy Cometa Edizioni Musicali CMT 10026)

Aqua Cues:

Main Title - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GMFoLP8FyU>

I Mostri - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJp9aKbjY>

Atlantide (Descent to Atlantis) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wg60LYjEQ5Y>

Randall Larson identifies three themes in Luciano Michelini's score for **Screamers** (aka **L'Isola degli uomini pesce**) (*Soundtrack*, 3/82, No. 1, p. 28). The first theme, heard in "[Main Title](#)," "opens with a 'screaming' chord from brass and strings over throbbing drums before moving into a rushing, frantic theme for horns" (Larson, *Musique Fantastique*, 1985: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey, p. 211). This theme is also heard in other cues such as "[I Mostri](#)," "Inside Out," "The Screamers Return," and "Various Troubles" as an "[Ennio] Morricone-esque action piece with slicing string chords over a driving keyboard and percussion rhythm, evoking a strong sense of urgency" (*ibid*).

The second theme, the real "aqua cue" ("[Atlantide](#)" or "Descent To Atlantis"), is heard as our protagonists descend in a diving bell to observe the fishmen swimming to the ocean's bottom to retrieve treasure from the sunken city of Atlantis. Luc Van de Ven describes this cue as "suitably dreamy" (*Soundtrack*, 3/82, No. 1, p. 29). To this reviewer's ear, this theme (also heard in "Barbara's Dream") is more appropriately described as a nostalgic mix of majesty and sadness.

The third theme is "a poignant Love Theme for strings and woodwinds" (*ibid*) and is heard in "Something for Barbara" and "Screamers–End Title."



1984 – [Splash](#) (Lee Holdridge)



[Lee Holdridge](#)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMIsXdoj2vU>

Full Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mH2XhGaRNMQ>

Tagline: Two days ago, this girl showed up naked at the Statue of Liberty. For Alan Bauer, it was love at first sight. Now, everyone is chasing her... trying to prove she's a mermaid. From the first laugh you'll be hooked.



Posters

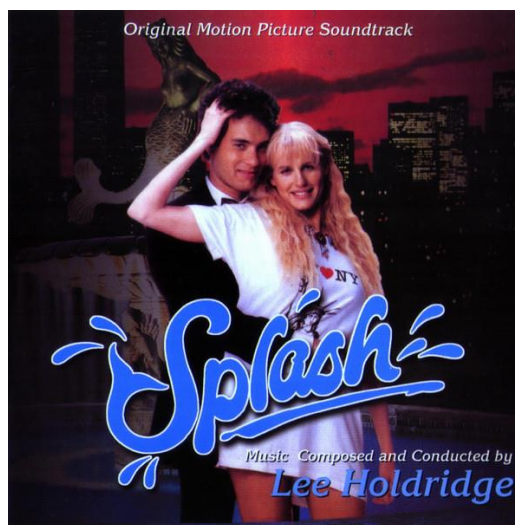
Plot Summary: A young mermaid rescues a young boy from drowning. Years later he returns to the same location, and again falls into the sea, again rescued by the mermaid. The mermaid decides to search for Allen in New York, sprouting legs when her tail dries. On finding Allen, they fall in love, but she has a secret, which will no longer be a secret if she gets her legs wet (www.imdb.com).



DVDs – Blu Ray



LP



CD

LP: Cherry Lane 00301

CD: Super Tracks Music Group LHCD-02

Aqua Cues: Love Came For Me / First Meeting / Underwater / Return Home / End Title

First Meeting / Underwater / Madison at Bloomingdale's - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxlXRUtmUKQ>

Escape and Chase / The Leap for Freedom / End Title - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHDTNjbPa1U>

Lee Holdridge's score for **Splash** is dominated by a beautiful love theme ("Love Came For Me") that conveys the love between the film's two protagonists. The theme's melody also is used for both the underwater and on land love scenes (Thom Santiago, *Soundtrack!*, 12/84, Vol. 3, No. 12, p. 19). The Rita Coolidge vocal of "Love Came For Me" that was not included in the soundtrack LP release is, fortunately, included in the CD release.

"Love Came for Me" Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPUmf8yqmGE>

"Love Theme" (*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcdiO99YISA>

*from the album *East of Eden and Other Original Scores Composed by Lee Holdridge*

Holdridge recounts his inspiration for the score: "When I first saw Daryl Hannah as the Mermaid flow across the screen, I knew this was the musical key to the score. ... For the underwater music, I thought that simplicity and transparency would recapture the charm and safety of Madison's underwater world" (CD liner notes).

The track "Underwater" is "a particularly charming and attractive melody" (Doug Raynes, *Soundtrack!*, 12/84, Vol. 3, No. 12, p. 20). The CD includes two versions of this cue.



1989 – **The Little Mermaid** (Alan Menken [Songs] / Howard Ashman [Lyrics])



[Alan Menken](#)

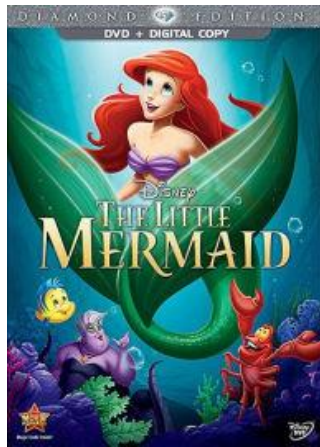
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oz0H4UHd2J4>



Tagline: Somewhere under the sea and beyond your imagination is an adventure in fantasy.



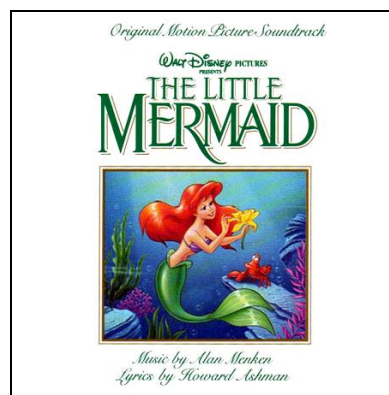
Plot Summary: Ariel, youngest daughter of King Triton, is dissatisfied with life in the sea. She longs to be with the humans above the surface, and is often caught in arguments with her father over those “barbaric fish-eaters.” She goes to meet Ursula, the Sea Witch, to strike a deal, but Ursula has bigger plans for this mermaid and her father (www.imdb.com).



DVD



Blu Ray



CD

CD: Disney CD-018

Aqua Cues:

Fathoms Below - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUDhH5foKRI>

Main Titles - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FssN9TAUAY&list=PL97D506D1D832E2CD>

Under the Sea - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XiFxrOYZpA>

Destruction of the Grotto - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgmYS57iffc&list=PL97D506D1D832E2CD&index=14>

Tour of the Kingdom - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZs9R0haI_s&list=PL97D506D1D832E2CD&index=16

Five years after **Splash**, Hollywood returned to the mermaid motif with Walt Disney's **The Little Mermaid**, the film's score penned by Alan Menken (songs) and Howard Ashman (lyrics). About half the soundtrack CD tracks are songs that, wrote Michael Thompson, "range from wistful yearning ('Part of Your World') to bright foot tapping—or should that be fin slapping? ('[Under the Sea](#)'), to nasty and seductive ('Poor Unfortunate Souls') as sung by the Sea Witch. All the other tracks have an epic romantic quality to them" (*SCL-Soundtrack Correspondence List #5*, October 1990, p. 2). Unfortunately, the CD does not include the instrumental version of "Under the Sea" heard at the beginning of the film's end.

While the score is heavily dominated by songs, the “orchestral bridges serve as a pleasant reminder that the score for these animated features is not just a bunch of songs, but is also a collection of instrumental moments that complement them and help move the action along” (Didier C. Deutsch, *musicHound Soundtracks*, 2000, p. 335). At the same time, in his review of the score *for Filmtracks*, Christian Clemmensen applauds Menken for providing a really nice catch of four or five “really fun” songs:

“[Fathoms Below](#),” “Part of Your World,” “Under the Sea,” and “Kiss the Girl” are all memorable songs. Ariel’s longing ballad “Part of Your World” was the equivalent of “Belle” in **Beauty and the Beast**, and has an undeniable charm. “[Under the Sea](#)”... well, 99% of the population on the planet can recognize it, so enough said. ... “Kiss the Girl” is along the same lines as “Under the Sea”...it’s a lot of fun without much substance—its Caribbean flavor...replaced the need for a pop song in the film.



1985 – Cocoon (James Horner)



[James Horner](#)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9BSsIX2j7M>

Tagline: It is everything you’ve dreamed of. It is nothing you expect.



Posters

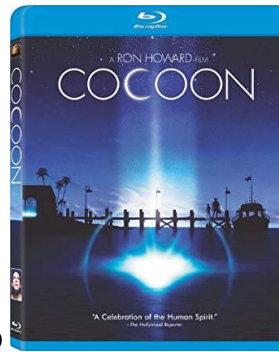
Plot Summary: A group of aliens return to earth to take back some cocoons of their people they left behind from an earlier trip. On recovering the cocoons that were resting at the bottom of the ocean, they keep the recovered cocoons in the swimming pool of a house they've rented in a small Florida town. Their mission is hampered by a number of old people from an elderly home nearby, who have been secretly using the pool and discovering the unusual power of these cocoons (www.imdb.com).



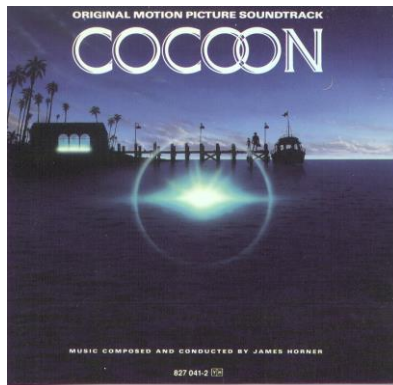
VHS



DVD



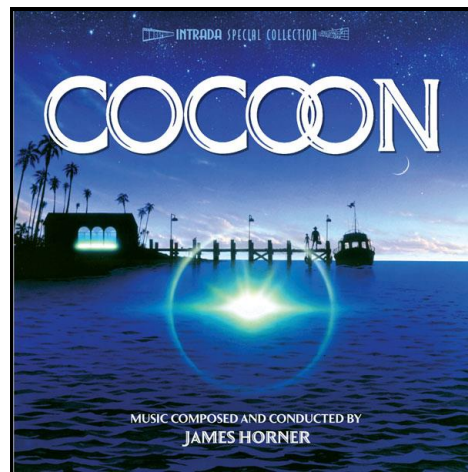
Blu Ray



CD 1



CD 2



CD 3

CD 1: Polydor 827 041-2

CD 2: Pendulum PEG013

CD 3: Intrada Special Collection Volume 260

Aqua Cues:

The Lovemaking - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPAyShqi3VA&list=PLC384406D38DA250C>

Returning to the Sea - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xghmIOzXLY&index=6&list=PLC384406D38DA250C>

Just one year after filming **Splash**, director Ron Howard made **Cocoon**, a film also featuring a partially underwater-themed plot about human-like aliens who can breathe underwater and senior citizens in a Florida retirement home who become young again after a miraculous swim. Two of the film's main scenes take place underwater—one at the retirement home's swimming pool and the other in the ocean. One reviewer described much of the film's score, penned by James Horner, as simply a reworking of his main title for **Star Trek III**, especially the cue "[Returning to the Sea](#)" (Ford A. Thaxton, *CinemaScore*, No. 13/14, Winter 84/Summer 85).

In 2013 Intrada issued an expanded CD of James Horner's score for **Cocoon**, the liner notes for which by Julie Kirgo provide further score analysis:

The composer begins his score with mere hints of what is to come ("Through the Window")—but such hints! Delicate, mysterious, utterly magical, this is Horner setting the stage, offering glimpses of poetic sensibility and fabulously varied orchestral color, from shivering strings and airy harp to the majestic swell of an organ and the echoing shimmer of cymbals. . . . And then there is "[The Lovemaking](#)" . . . In keeping with the film story, which suggests a potent kind of mystical unification between species rather than a strictly sensual one, the music here begins with a shimmering beauty that progresses to mystery—those searching bird calls again—and then to blaring if exciting dissonance that resolves into dazed gentleness. (Julie Kirgo, liner notes of Intrada Special Collection Volume 260)



1995 – Ocean Girl (Garry McDonald & Laurie Stone)



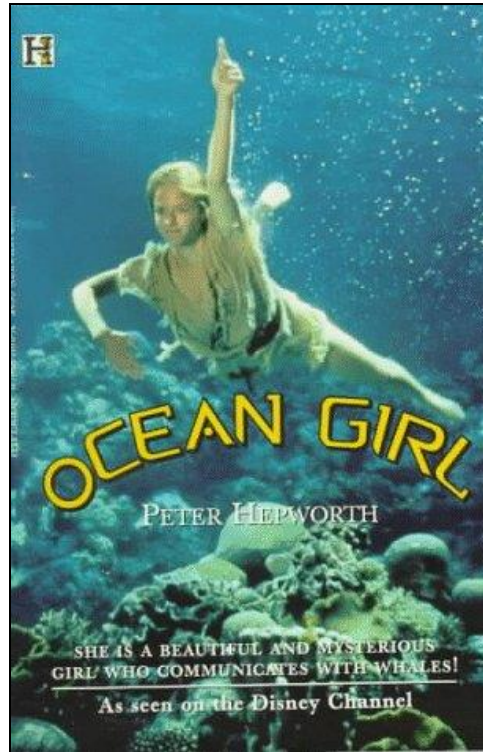
[Garry McDonald](#)

Season 1 Promo Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmUqk11U14E>

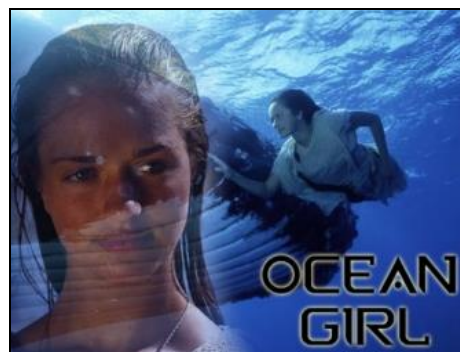
Season 4 Promo Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdWoy4Ke068>

Ocean Girl Intro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd9YD5B5ks>

Tagline: She is a beautiful and mysterious girl who communicates with whales!



Poster



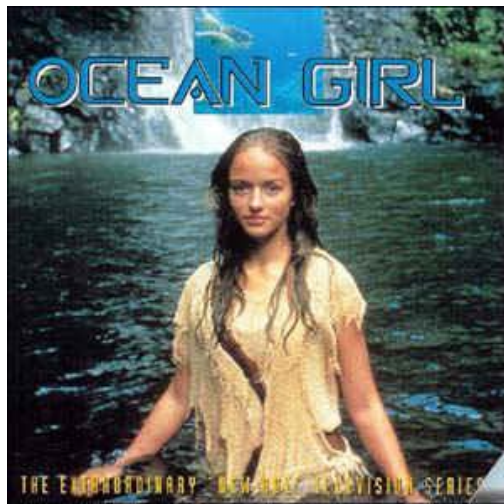
Plot Summary: Set in the near future, the young inhabitants of an underwater research colony discover Neri, a mysterious young girl from the ocean who has a special gift: the ability to telepathically communicate with a 40-ton humpback whale companion. Neri befriends humans in distress at sea, evades and escapes relentless potential captors, and awaits rescue for a voyage home to her native planet. An animated sequel, **The New Adventures of Ocean Girl**, followed in 2000 (<http://www.technovision.dk/fanpages/OceanGirl/> & http://www.jonathan-m-shiff.com.au/og/og_frm.htm).

Ocean Girl - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROGKUjZ9ZLY>

Episode 1: "The Girl in the Sea" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiuYg2TZCQI>



DVDs



CD

CD: Australia - Ocean Music OM8988D

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROGKUJZ9ZLY&list=PL46BFE279F3F800C6>

Opening Theme (Season 1) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68luqSiABSS>

Opening & Ending Credits (Season 2) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FHEptdIZLg&feature=related>

Aqua Cues:

Underwater Dreamworld - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDzahDicaMM>

Welcome to ORCA - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZTHWRJAiIs>

The Deep - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvcJzWiIKSI>

As in 1985's **Cocoon**, the plot motif of a human-like extraterrestrial alien who can breathe underwater was revisited a decade later in the Australian TV series **Ocean Girl** that ran for three seasons in the United States on the Disney Channel. The **Ocean Girl** score was composed by Garry McDonald and Laurie Stone in a "new age" style not lost on the producers of the score's Australian-released soundtrack CD that bills **Ocean Girl** as "The Extraordinary 'New Age' Television Series."

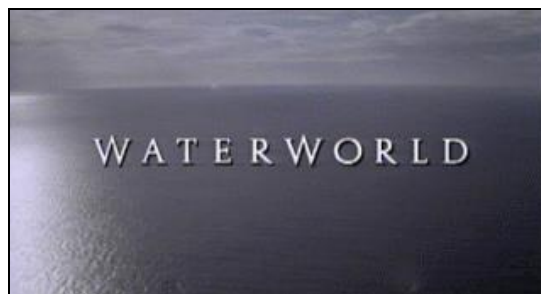
While the CD had a very limited distribution and is now a hard-to-find collector's item, tracking it down would be well worth the effort as the CD features the sparkling cues that McDonald composed for the show's underwater scenes. Such tracks include "[Underwater Dreamworld](#)," "[Welcome to ORCA](#)," and "[The Deep](#)."



1995 – **Waterworld** (James Newton Howard)



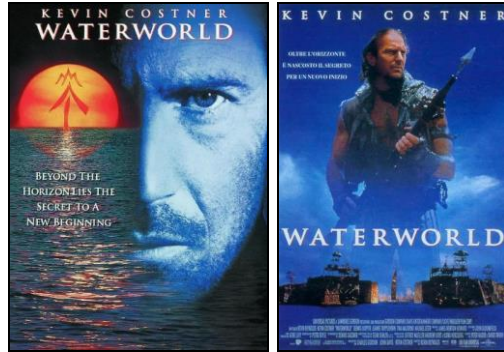
James Newton Howard



Trailer 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEp382HIisE>

Trailer 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oh6_6uSYpw&feature=related

Tagline: Beyond the horizon lies the secret to a new beginning.

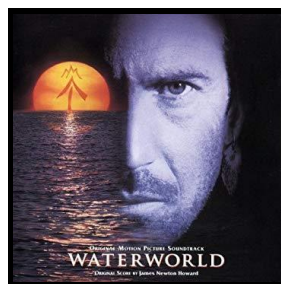


Posters

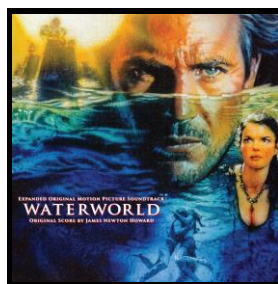
Plot Summary: The polar ice caps have melted, and the earth is covered by water. Civilization is lost under the sea. The remaining people travel the seas, in search of survival. People are few and far between, living in small communities at sea or sailing from one to another as traders. All the people seek dry land, something nobody has seen. The Mariner—a mutant with gills—sails a trimoran over the seas but falls from his customary and solitary existence to rescue a woman and a young girl, the latter supposedly having a map to get to dry land tattooed on her back. But the evil forces of the Deacon and his gang are in hot pursuit of the map (www.imdb.com).



DVD - Blu Ray



CD 1



CD 2

CD:

CD 1 - MCA MCAD-11282

CD 2 - La-La Land Records LLLCD 142 (2 CD)

Complete Soundtrack - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpJVUxIDbsfeWG8kUrIyAAfzrWDOP5sq>

Aqua Cues:

Half An Hour (“Main Titles” - **Waterworld** Theme) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNbXjk4CXTQ>

Swimming - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpTtYph_krA

The Bubble - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k35gvIms7Os&list=PLpJVUxIDbsfeWG8kUrIyAAfzrWDOP5sq&index=30>

For this aquatic adventure, filmed above—and below—the waves, Howard’s score called for symphony orchestra, electronic percussion, and chorus to mix heroic, action, and suspense themes into a score that ranges from “new age-styled synthesizers” to “rousing, Korngold-inspired action cues” (Andy Dursin, *musicHound Soundtracks*, 2000, p. 632). One water-related action cue, “[Half an Hour](#),” is heard as the “gill-man” Mariner uses himself as bait to catch a shark.

Reviewer Jeff Bond found Howard’s score “more successful during the film’s lyrical moments, particularly the delicate ‘[Swimming](#),’ and the conventional, Horneresque swelling chords” in “[The Bubble](#)” that accompanies the descent of the Mariner and the film’s female protagonist to the drowned city (*FSM*, 7-8/95, #59/60, p. 28). Lukas Kendall noted the score for the scene of the underwater city as having “apocalyptic Batman-like chords” (*FSM*, 7-8/95, #59-60, p. 44).

Howard “captures the ‘water’ in an impressionistic setting,” giving the music “an ethereal quality which makes the watery dance between the Mariner and little Enoa that much more effective” (Brian M. Satterwhite, *FSM*, 7-8/95, #59-60, p. 30). The story’s “supernatural elements are enhanced by a haunting choir-and-strings line, a sweeping and impressive melody” that is “given prominence in ‘[The Bubble](#),’ where it emerges in all its awe-inspiring splendor from a tentative string introduction” (Kjell Neckebroek, *Soundtrack*, 9/95, Vol. 14, No. 55, p. 19).



2001 – She Creature (TV) (David Reynolds)



[David Reynolds](#)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVMKLpZFqv8>

Full Movie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2VaAoM_gXQ

She Creature Music Video (featuring “Devil’s Water” (Reprise) by Rennie Foster):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWKvaPUEDBg>

She Creature Femslash –A Thousand Years - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAoxrzExrp0>

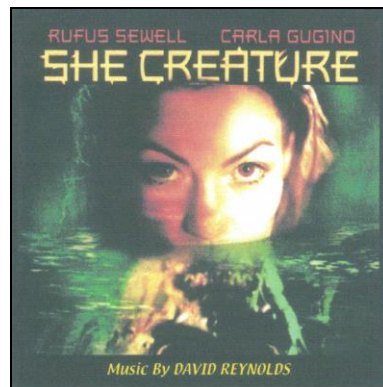
Tagline: Beautiful, Seductive and Totally Deadly



Plot Summary: Rufus Sewell and Carla Gugino play a couple of small-time circus people in Ireland, circa 1900. They discover that an eccentric old man keeps a genuine mermaid in a water-filled tank. Sewell steals the mermaid and loads her on a ship for America. But in the middle of the Atlantic the ship loses its way and heads toward the mythical Forbidden Islands, with the hungry mermaid beginning to display her darker side (adapted from www.imdb.com).



DVD



CD

CD: “For Promotion Only” release

Aqua Cues: Mermaid Theme / Queen of the Lair

About the only underwater aspect of **She Creature** is the footage showing the real mermaid (Rya Kihlstedt) in her tank. Mikael Carlsson (<http://www.musicfromthemovies.com/feature.asp?ID=14>) notes that David Reynolds’ “highly atmospheric” score for this film is based on “strings, harp and choir” as heard in the “Mermaid Theme” (a track “created using samples!”). The score also has a haunting or alluring quality especially prominent in the “Mermaid Theme”.



2006 – **Aquamarine** (David Hirschfelder)

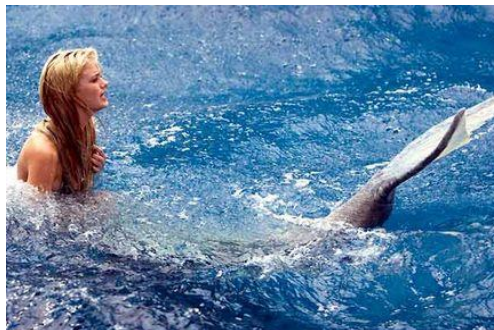


[David Hirschfelder](#)

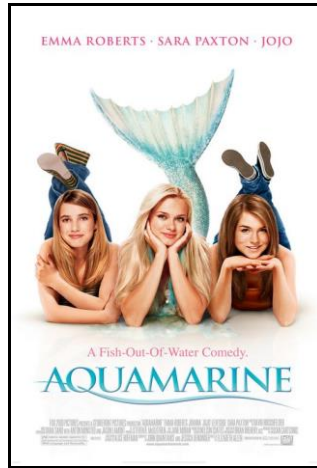
Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClavKkromVc>

I’m Guessing It Was a Mermaid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-bd3H4113M>

Tagline: A Fish-Out-Of-Water Comedy.



Photo



Poster

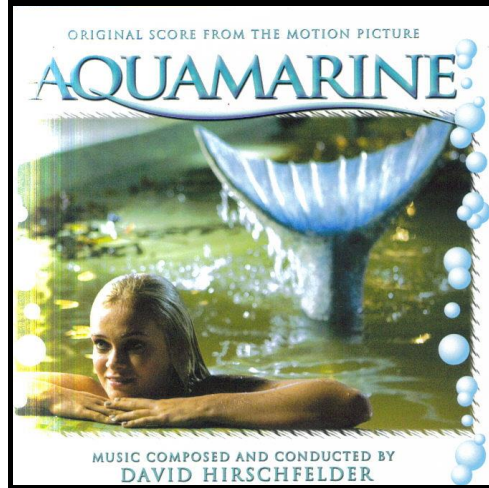
Plot Summary: Two twelve-year old girls are in love with a dilapidated beach club near their home. After a huge storm, they discover Aquamarine, a mermaid, in the pool of the club. Aquamarine then falls in love with the cute, young boy who runs the food bar and begs the girls to help her set up a date with him (www.imdb.com).



DVD – Blu Ray




CD 1



CD 2

CD 1 (songs): Epic/Sony 8-2876-77949-2 (only songs from the soundtrack)

CD 2 (score): La-La Land Records LLLCD 1069 (score / limited edition)

Aqua Cues/Notes:  (Opening Titles from DVD; not on CD 1)

Aquamarine (suite) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGRQ06qK2vA&list=PLvG2CZ2i3S19u7qsU9y1fcaF0RrPuqgxx>

The original CD soundtrack of **Aquamarine** was comprised of rock songs and, unfortunately, none of David Hirschfelder's original score was included. Fortunately, his score for this film was finally released in 2008 (see CD 2). The one truly underwater cue heard on CD 2 is the track titled "Main Titles" that accompanies an underwater camera "pov shot" maneuvering "through sea life and coral formations" (CD 2 liner notes). The liner notes go on to note the use of "piccolo (with a hint of Celtic music for the mermaid themes)."

In fact it was David's inspired idea to sample the voice of the actress [Sara Paxton] who played Aquamarine and weave her mermaid-like singing, humming and giggling into the opening music cues. . . .

David's idea gave the mermaid a presence much earlier on in the story than was written; it's as if she is calling out from the rocks in order to lead our two heroines to her. David then weaves these themes throughout the score, richening and deepening them as they progress. (CD 2 liner notes).

The composer's website provides the following comments on the score:

AQUAMARINE blends warmth, wit and other-worldliness into an entertaining narrative that has inspired David to combine a wide range of moods and musical instruments into a sparkling tapestry of classical sensibility with a little retro humour, a lot of contemporary attitude and a twist of ancient Celtic roots. Early in the film, before we even catch a glimpse of her, we are introduced to the sound of the mermaid's voice via David's score, courtesy of out-takes gathered from the humming and giggling of actor **Sara Paxton**, which were then sampled and sculpted into melody (<http://www.davidhirschfelder.com/news.html>).



David Hirschfelder conducts the orchestra during an **Aquamarine** recording session at Trackdown Scoring Stage in Sydney (<http://www.davidhirschfelder.com/news.html>).



2017 – **The Shape of Water** (Alexandre Desplat)



[Alexandre Desplat](#)

Alexandre Desplat – **The Shape of Water** Premiere Interview – London Film Festival 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2P3-up3kjA>

Alexandre Desplat interview at the Shape of Water premiere for London Film Festival on film score:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU1ewUmhXk8>

Tagline: A Fairy Tale for Troubled Times



Poster

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFYWazblaUA> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiA4B5Y63IQ>

Plot Summary: Elisa, a mute, isolated woman, works as a cleaning lady in a hidden, high-security government laboratory in 1962 Baltimore. Her life changes forever when she discovers the lab's classified secret – a mysterious but highly intelligent amphibious humanoid creature from South America that lives in a water tank. As Elisa develops a unique bond with her new friend, she soon learns that its fate and very survival lies in the hands of a hostile government agent and a marine biologist.



DVD & Blu-Ray



CD: Decca DCAB002767402.2

Aqua Cues/Notes: The Shape of Water / The Creature / Underwater Kiss

Full Soundtrack: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMH0V_DEIZg2BBTDQJMt8yn-TOUfEY4BX

Insights into the approach that Desplat took in scoring **The Shape of Water** surfaced in an interview that Sean Wilson (SW) did with Desplat (AD):

SW: *The Shape of Water*, itself, is a wondrous experience that involves elements of science fiction, monster movies, comedy, romance and horror. When you watched the movie for the first time, what were your initial impressions?

AD: The impression was that despite all those elements you mentioned, it was one object, one boat floating on water. For example, the way the camera never stops—it's always in motion. It makes a huge difference for a composer because you can feel the flow, and the music becomes part of the flow. When I first saw the movie, I thought it was like a piece of music, and many movies don't have that quality. As well as being driven by danger and the needs of espionage, the score for this film had to be driven by love and by water.

SW: Given that the score is centrally based on love, then, was the theme for Sally Hawkins' character, Elisa, the first piece that emerged? Was everything built around that?

AD: Well, actually it was built into what I called the "Love Theme," heard in the opening and closing of the movie. Elisa's theme isn't necessarily derivative of that piece, but merged with it. They become one theme at some point. The second section of the love theme becomes the second section of Elisa's theme. They can be switched one for the other. So I started by working on the opening, this beautiful sequence with every object in the room floating in water and Richard Jenkins narrating. That's what gave me the key to the film.

SW: Threaded throughout that sequence and the rest of the score is the lovely use of the accordion, which gives off a magical air. Was that a decision made early on to include that?

AD: Well, it was a strange combination of hazards. As I was discussing with Guillermo, at the beginning

of the film we see Elisa whistling and we thought we could expand that, and maybe the theme could be whistled. Then, I wondered what instrument could represent the sound of the creature. Guillermo then said he would love the accordion as it's joyful and I said, "But if it's a traditional French accordion, it will sound too French. I will need to find another way."

Then I thought I could use the Argentinian version, the bandoneon, which hails from South America where the creature himself comes from. Intellectually, it made sense. What I wrote for the accordion is mostly tango phrases, little flourishes that come from my love of tango, which hails from great players like Dino Saluzzi, a master of modern tango. So by combining these two elements, I already had the two voices. I just needed to add to that the water, so for that I used the piano, both a standard piano and electric piano, and also 12 flutes to play the melody and the bridge. When they come in, the sound of these 12 flutes sound like water: It's warm, it's soft, it's fluid and that was it. ([Source](#))

A more detailed analysis of Desplat's score for **The Shape of Water** appears in the following score analysis by Jonathan Broxton:

Desplat understood exactly what sort of tone the film required...he scored it with a sense of child-like fantasy, whimsy, and hesitant romance, while incorporating some outstanding action and thriller suspense music during the scenes which call for it. The score is built around three main themes—one for Elisa, one for the Amphibious Man, and one for the relationship that develops between them, the latter of which appears to be an amalgamation of the melodies of the first two themes into a third, new piece.

The opening cue, "[The Shape of Water](#)," introduces much of the melodic content immediately, but it's a cue which will likely take people by surprise, upending their preconceptions of what the score would sound like. Instrumentally it's a combination of eerie, moody textures – harp, waterphone, glass harmonica, and a piano – which gradually grows to encompass a lush orchestra. One interesting thing to note about the orchestra is that the woodwind section is comprised entirely of flutes – 12 of them, to be exact, across the entire sonic range – but no oboes, no bassoons, no clarinets, and so on. This was a conscious choice that Desplat made to give his woodwind section a specific timbre that, to him, represents the sound of water.

The main melodies are often carried, somewhat unexpectedly, by an accordion, and by Desplat himself whistling. Desplat intended for the accordion to represent the soul of the Amphibious Man, and it often plays in a style similar to an Argentinean tango, an intentional reference to South America, from where the creature originates. The whistling, on the other hand, represents Elisa and her worldview: it's light, airy, pretty, whimsical, carefree, a depiction of an old soul trapped in a contemporary body and yearning for love. The combination of accordion and whistling often gives the music a sound that some people will interpret as being stereotypically 'French,' but there are no references to France in the story.

The subsequent "[The Creature](#)" introduces the theme for the Amphibious Man, a 5-note staccato motif that sounds aggressive but loses its initial sense of apprehension and danger as the score progresses. There is a possibly intentional reference to **Jaws** in the slow, bassy string writing that opens the cue – Desplat is a huge John Williams fan – while the rattling bass flutes in combination with bright brass is reminiscent of the Ragnar Sturlusson material from *The Golden Compass*. Then, the concert performance of "[Elisa's Theme](#)" brings her individual motif to the fore; it's full of pretty flute writing reminiscent of *Birth* albeit

without that score's sinister undercurrent. The array of delicate orchestrations, including harps and a glockenspiel, further enhance the character's charming innocence and wonderment, while the accordion writing again represents her predestined relationship with the Amphibious Man.

Most of the rest of the score presents these three core thematic ideas in a multitude of variations in terms of tone, key, orchestration, tempo, and intent. "[Fingers](#)," for example, contains an almost comedic variation on Amphibious Man's theme, with ungainly lurching rhythmic ideas and ticking percussion underscoring the first tentative encounters between him and Elisa, although it becomes darker in the second half with bass flutes picking up the motif and giving it a sinister edge. "[Elisa and Zelda](#)" is a waltz arrangement of Elisa's theme with more accordions and more whistling, and a slightly curious and quirky edge that speaks to their warm collegial relationship.

The increasing romantic bond between Elisa and the Amphibious Man is voiced through cues like "[The Silence of Love](#)" and "[Underwater Kiss](#)," which use all the core instrumental textures – piano, harp, strings, accordion, whistling – and intertwines their themes in ways that are effortlessly elegant and gentle. Neither character has been involved in any sort of loving relationship before this, and the way they discover themselves, their feelings, and each other's bodies is conveyed with hesitance and nervousness, but also kindness. Later, Elisa's determination to do whatever it takes to rescue the Amphibious Man comes through in "[Decency](#)," a militaristic variation of the main theme for searching strings and snare drums which has a real sense of resolve and forthrightness.

The action and suspense elements of the score relate mostly to the actions of the merciless Colonel Strickland, and Michael Stulharg's character Robert Hoffstetler, a kindly doctor with a hidden agenda. Cues like "[Spy Meeting](#)," "[Five Stars General](#)," parts of "[Egg](#)," and "[That Isn't Good](#)" tend to be much darker in tone, making use of rattling bass flutes, wooden percussion, and tension-filled tremolo strings. Even here, Desplat still finds ways to work in his themes; the little hints of the accordion in "Spy Meeting" represent the subject of the meeting, the darkly tragic version of Elisa's Theme in the violins at the end of "Five Stars General" give it an emotional heart, while "Egg" uses deconstructed parts of the Amphibious Man motif all the way through, moving around from bass flutes to low-end pianos.

"[The Escape](#)" is the score's longest cue, and it underscores the film's main action set piece, wherein Elisa arranges and executes her escape plan to break the Amphibious Man out of the research facility with the help of her friends. It's a superb piece of writing from Desplat that contains many of the compositional trademarks that have typified much of his action and suspense writing over the years. It starts nervously, with rhythmic cello pulses overlaid with high-end violin textures, and includes numerous allusions to both the Amphibious Man theme and Elisa's theme, both via the rhythmic structure of the themes, and also through clever deconstructions of the chord progressions that re-orchestrate them for brass and low woodwinds. The cue becomes more and more agitated and action-packed as it develops over the course of more than ten minutes, depicting the high stakes of the entire enterprise. . . .

The final four cues represent the emotional zenith of the score, and should finally – *finally* – put to rest all those ridiculous statements about Desplat's music being cold and emotionally restrained. This sequence of music is just superb, beginning with the gorgeously tender rendering of the main theme for piano, strings, flutes, and accordion in "[Overflow of Love](#)". "[Without You](#)" continues the increasing emotional content with a palpable sense of longing and passion in the intertwining of Elisa's theme and the Amphibious Man

theme. The stunning “[Rainy Day](#)” underscores the climax of the film and begins starkly, with a sense of desperation and palpable horror achieved through dissonant brass and woodwind textures, and a bed of tremolo strings. As it progresses it slowly builds towards its heartbreaking conclusion, which swells with sentimental pathos, crescendos of brass, and a dark rendering of the main theme on bass flutes. Finally, “[A Princess Without a Voice](#)” presents a conclusive version of Elisa’s theme for pretty pianos, lilting flutes, and harp glissandi, magical and emotional. This is a fairy tale indeed, because we all know what happens at the end of them.

The Shape of Water . . . is, to be completely blunt about it, an inter-species love story, and there was tremendous potential for this aspect of the film to come across as all sorts of wrong if anyone had misjudged the tone of it, even slightly. Thankfully, Desplat’s music enhances the humanity inherent in the two main characters, and allows us to empathize with and root for these mis-matched lovers who yearn for understanding, compassion, and tenderness in a world that provides very little. ([Source](#))

In his review of Desplat’s score for **The Shape of Water**, Mihnea Manduteanu noted that the theme for “The Creature” “keeps the momentum going with a dark tip toed symphonic sound where the instruments sound as if they are hiding and are barely touched” ([Source](#)).



Todd Williamson/JanuaryImages/REX/Shutterstock

More light on Desplat’s approach to scoring **The Shape of Water** emerged in Matt Grobar’s interview with Desplat for [Deadline](#). Water, Desplat explained, “takes the shape of everything. It goes through the air, it’s invisible, it’s transparent, but it still has a lot of power” ([Source](#)). While the film’s director, Guillermo del Toro,

was examining water’s shape in this love story between a mute janitor and a fish-man, the French composer turned his attention to the way water sounds, and the way it feels. Spending time in the Caribbean in his teens, Desplat is well acquainted with the sensation of immersing oneself in warm water—a feeling that feels like love.

So immersed was Desplat in his pursuit of water’s sonic representation that ideas manifested within him without conscious thought, resulting in an opening, arpeggiated melody that rolls forward in waves.

Buoyant and oozing with affection, Desplat’s score speaks powerfully to the metaphor at the crux of del Toro’s film.



At what point did Guillermo del Toro approach you about *The Shape of Water*? What compelled you about this project?

Three or four years ago we had sushi together, and he mentioned this story of a fish-man and a mute—a love story. That of course left me perplexed, and at the same time impatient, because I believe Guillermo is a true artist. He showed me the film last January, and I was in total shock by the beauty of the film. He's made something, which I think is the most difficult thing, interweaving reality and imagination and bringing the audience into that world with no effort. It effortlessly takes you into his world, and that's very rare.

Sometimes, it takes a while to accept what you see on screen, or it's pure fantasy, but to mix both is really tricky. The way he directed the film is so flawless, with the camera always in motion, the presence of all these classic standards of American musicals. Actually, I was thinking that he had directed a musical, but I still had the music to write.

What was it like to watch the film without music? Having seen the final product, I can't imagine the film without your score.

That's where conversations with Guillermo, and my world of sound and music and imagination, came to life. I tried to capture the sound of water—or the feeling of water, more importantly. What does it feel like to be surrounded by warm water? I lived in the Caribbean, actually, when I was in my teens; I went to school there, and the sensation that you have when you put your body into this lukewarm water is something very special.

The way love and water play in the film gives you that sensation, because love also has this warm feeling. When you fall in love, when you see the person you love, there's something warm that [emerges] inside you. Also, when you miss somebody you love, there's a longing—there's a little pain that mixes with that warmth, so it's all these sensations that come from my experience that I tried to transpose to music.

How did you find your principal melodies for *The Shape of Water*?

I always say that to compose is to think. Playing is good, it's useful, but it's how your intellect puts the ideas together that will bring hands to write or to play. So, it's really a combination of many things; hearing sounds, hearing layers of counterpoints, of chords.

We were talking about water...I must admit—it was completely unconscious, but the melody I wrote for the opening scene is actually made of waves. I did not do that on purpose, but by being completely immersed in this love and these water elements, I wrote a melody that plays arpeggios like waves.

I could have written another melody that's not playing waves. That's why it's important, before you compose, that your intellect work, and combine with your instinctive emotions that come from watching the film. ([Source](#)).



SEA DECOMPRESSION

In the **SEA MUTANTS** genre, a film's human protagonists confront a variety of "feature creatures" varying in their natural or man-made evolution toward something not quite fish or not quite human, encompassing everything from mermaids (1984's **Splash** and 2001's **She Creature**), "mermachos" (1995's **Waterworld** Mariner), and extraterrestrials (1985's **Cocoon** and 1995's **Ocean Girl**) to the more fish-like than human-like "creatures" in 1954's **Revenge of the Creature** (and its sequels), the "gillmen" of 1965's **War-Gods of the Deep**, and the amphibious humanoid creature of 2017's **The Shape of Water**. But which **SEA MUTANT** film has the best score?

Reviewing the candidates, some of the standouts would have to include Luciano Michelini's "Descent to Atlantis" cue from **Screamers (L'Isola degli uomini pesce)**, Lee Holdridge's "Love Came to Me" theme from **Splash**, the Gary McDonald and Laurie Stone "new age" score composed for **Ocean Girl**, and David Hirschfelder's atmospheric and haunting score accompanying the **She Creature** mermaid.

But my vote, drum roll please, is a tie between, on the one hand, the score for the most classic **Sea Mutant** film – **Creature from the Black Lagoon** with Herman Stein's "ascending, three-note, shouting brass motif" for the Gill-Man (**BAH-BAH-BAHHH!**) as well as "many beautiful melodies and atmospheric cues" (contributed by several composers) such as heard in the scenes where Kay is swimming underwater; and, on the other, Alexandre Desplat's score for the most contemporary **SEA MUTANT** film – **The Shape of Water**.

At the next port of call on our **Sea Genre** voyage, our protagonists are confronted by denizens of the deep having no human traits other than, possibly, the will to kill those who would stray into their watery worlds. We now set sail for our **SEA BATTLES** chapter.

[Click here to access the Table of Contents page where you can click on the link to the – **SEA BATTLES** – chapter.](#)

