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Frankenstein Plus Live Music Equals Halloween Fun at BGSO

Published: 10/21/2014

Audiences will have a chance to celebrate Halloween in a uniquely scary way this year and experience the film "Frankenstein" as never before.

The Festival Series at Bowling Green State University will feature a screening of the 1931 Boris Karloff film with a new musical score played live by BGSU music faculty members. It begins at 8 p.m. Oct. 31 in the Thomas B. and Kathleen M. Donnell Theatre at the Wolfe Center for the Arts.

Cashbox Classical Music Editor Rob Tomaro said of a previous performance, "The audience was riveted to their seats. The power of the live music with the classic film was hypnotic."

Audience members are invited to dress up in costume. There will be a costume contest, with three winners selected before the concert and awarded prizes.

Conducted by Bruce Moss, director of BGSU band activities, the "Frankenstein" musical score was composed by Michael Shapiro, music director and conductor of the Chappaqua (New York) Orchestra.

"When the Film Society of Lincoln Center opened an adjunct theater in Westchester," Shapiro recalled, "I spoke to executive director Steve Apkon about doing a joint project during their opening season with my orchestra and the theater. During our discussion I offered to write a film score for 'Frankenstein' that would be played simultaneously with the 1931 film by live musicians," he said.

The original picture has spoken dialogue, qualifying it as a "talkie," but no musical score, Shapiro explained. The technology did not exist in 1931 to have a separate music track on the film, he said, adding that the first through-composed film score was Max Steiner's "King Kong" in 1933.

"Writing for a 'talkie' with a simultaneous live score is in many ways a new art form, so it's tremendously adaptable and exciting to do," Shapiro said." He also noted that live orchestral performance with film attracts a new audience to experience this hybrid medium.

"I love writing music that has a dramatic impulse," he said. "I thought of this Frankenstein score as almost a one-act opera ... but instead of writing music to move singers across a stage, I thought of moving actors through their dramatic action, commenting on what is being portrayed emotionally by (director) James Whale in his masterpiece."

"I try to write music in every form that gets under the listener's skin," Shapiro said.

There is no intermission for the performance. The audience is invited to a special after party at The Melt Shoppe in downtown Bowling Green.

Tickets are \$12 for the public and \$5 for BGSU students and can be purchased online at bgsu.edu/arts or by calling the Arts Box Office at 419-372-8171 - See more at: <http://www.toledo.com/news/2014/10/21/daily-dose/frankenstein-plus-live-music-equals-halloween-fun-at-bgsu/#sthash.n4u1uG4E.dpuf>