



Hanns Eisler and Helen van Dongen collaborating on the stop-motion puppet film *PETE ROLEUM AND HIS COUSINS*, Joseph Losey's first screen venture, in 1939 © JIA/ESJ

the opening credits and the end title) the MoMA version of *RAIN* running at 24 frames per second (fps). However, this seemingly overlong duration could have shown that a fundamental point was mistaken from the start. When adding up the durations that either are given in the autograph score or can be calculated from the respective metronome marks, the total duration of the score numbers 2-14 (i.e. of the music that, according to Heller, solely corresponds to the actual film excluding opening credits and end title) is about one and a quarter minutes briefer than it is according to Heller's conception. So this conception is largely based on slower tempi than stipulated by Eisler and realised on the rediscovered recording.

However in the last 20 years, no one has checked the arithmetic and timings in the above manner. Therefore the rediscovered 1941 recording had a surprise in store: it could not be adapted to the MoMA version of *RAIN*, i.e. to the probable montage of the original silent film of 1929. Even at a debatable film speed of 24 fps, the film (excluding the opening credits and the end title) lasts half a minute longer than all the music of the *Fourteen Ways* on the 1941 recording. Adding to this discrepancy is that the first seven measures (no. 1 in the score) are to be played over the opening credits beyond the actual film. This is reflected among the remarks that Eisler specifically made on the film and later crossed out for the publication as concert music; he wrote 'Titel' [sic] for number 1 and 'Sequenze [sic] I' for the subsequent number.

While the MoMA version of *RAIN* creates insuperable difficulties in synchronising it to the soundtrack of the *Fourteen Ways*, the audiovisual puzzle can be solved by means of the revised montage of the Lichtveld sound version – providing the speed of projection is kept at 24 fps as essential for optical sound. What is more, the 1932 montage of the Lichtveld version is plausible as a suitable film component of Eisler's new sound version in so far as Helen van Dongen had edited it, and it was van Dongen again who prepared the film material for Eisler to score in 1941.

One possible solution to this 'audio-visual puzzle' is as follows: In the appendix to *Composing for the Films*, Eisler explicates with a music example his score of the second sequence, which 'shows the wind at the

beginning of the rain.' As Eisler explains: 'The dramatic concept of the sequence is extremely simple – precise and synchronised imitation of the picture events – but the musical resources are quite differentiated.'<sup>12</sup> Based on Eisler's detailed analysis, film and music therefore can easily be synchronised in this sequence. No wonder all the divergent attempts at reconstruction are here more or less the same. More difficult, however, is the preceding sequence. It has to be synchronised to number 2 in the music of the *Fourteen Ways* since number 1 is, as mentioned above, reserved for the opening credits. For this number 2, Eisler stipulated a duration of 1'02 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>, which is obeyed on the 1941 recording. However, on the MoMA copy the film events prior to the wind sequence explained in *Composing for the Films* last 17 seconds longer. This makes a synchronisation attempt to the neglected Lichtveld version of *RAIN* appear advisable. It is the only one of the three versions identified and compared by Heller where during the introductory impressions of sunlit Amsterdam, it omits the bridge view of a boat crossing the screen vertically downwards (shot no. 5 in the MoMA version) – albeit without the shadow play that is so characteristic for analogue shots at the beginning.<sup>13</sup> Other shots in the Lichtveld version are trimmed compared to their equivalent in the MoMA version, particularly the fourth shot with a steamship in the docks and bustling activity on the embankment including a funeral carriage. Thus the beginning of the Lichtveld version, which also differs from the silent version in a different montage (MoMA shot nos. 1-4, 6-9, 11-13, 10, 14-15), offers the brevity required to synchronise to Eisler's music. The other timings, which Eisler specifies for music number 2 of the *Fourteen Ways* and which Kolisch has kept more or less exactly, also have a plausible link to the syntax of the Lichtveld version: The marked piano entry in measure 13 is supposed to correspond to a long shot over houses and roofs in Amsterdam following 13 seconds of sparkling light on the water surface. Against his wont, Eisler even refers directly to the correlation to the film by remarking 'Amsterdam 1929' in the autograph score. At 33 seconds, Eisler has a motive emerged in the cello from measure 27 obviously aiming to create a parallel with a bridge view of a moving boat. At 50 seconds, the end of the eloquent flute cadence at measure 38, beat 1, is to coincide with the cut to the shot of houses along the canal, the laundry drying outside the windows (no. 12 in the Lichtveld and no. 10 in the MoMA version).

Similarly the relationship between film and music can be deciphered by synchronising the Kolisch recording of the *Fourteen Ways* to the Lichtveld version of *RAIN* according to the specific film remarks in the autograph score. The result is particularly striking for music numbers 4-7, which were recorded by means of a click track at a steady tempo of 144 beats per minute (bpm), i.e. 1 beat for every 10 frames. The music closely follows the form and content of the film without being discordant with its own construction principles.

Also consistent, albeit surprising from the perspective of Heller's model, is the synchronisation of the Kolisch recording to the Lichtveld version at the very end: The last two last piano arpeggios of the *Fourteen Ways* set in during the end title – 'Fin' in the French Lichtveld versions held by European archives. So music and film are supposed to end at about the same time. In contrast, Heller has argued for playing all of the last

number 15 of Eisler's *Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain* subsequent to the end of the actual film, as a kind of melancholically lingering coda over potential final credits. However, this is not really supported by the specific film remarks in the autograph score – Eisler writes 'Sequenz [sic] 16 (END Sequenze [sic])' and it does not appear very likely that Eisler called the end title or even lengthier credits a 'sequence' and counted them among the previous sequences. Nor does the title of Eisler's experimental sound version of Ivens' film seem to make sense in Heller's conception: Why would it be *FOURTEEN Ways to Describe Rain* when the score is divided into 15 numbers, but only 13 of them would accompany the actual film? In reality, there are *Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain* the perception of which the music numbers 2-15, 'some loosely juxtaposed, and some structurally knit together'<sup>14</sup>, are supposed to support during the showing of the film. For this structure, Eisler has combined in one single 'way' two of the 16 sequences into which, according to his analysis, the Lichtveld version of *RAIN* can be divided up. The following table will illustrate this:

Film Sequence	Music Number	Way to describe rain
opening credits	1	∅
1	2	1
2	3	2
3	4	3
4	5	4
5	6	5
6, 7a, 7b	7	6
8	8	7
9	9	8
10, 10a	10	9
11,12	11	10
13	12	11
14	13	12
15	14	13
16	15	14

Of these *Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain*, only two and a half ways have been known from Heller's conception – namely the second way described in the appendix to *Composing for the Films*, the subsequent third way, as well as the first three shots of the first way and the first shot of the fourth way. For the rest, it has indeed held true what Kees Bakker saw as the essence of Eisler's film score: 'a beautiful piece of music [albeit clearly modified in character due to the partly slowed-down tempi], and a beautiful film, however, together it is not the best match.'

The rediscovered way of the *Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain* allows a reassessment of Eisler's experimental sound version. It is not the purpose of this article to anticipate such a study. Some notes must do.

No. 1) Opening credits: Obviously Eisler had new opening credits made for his new sound version of *RAIN* and number 1 of his score played over them. Given its duration of 29 seconds on the Kolisch recording of 1941, these opening credits evidently lasted longer than those in the Lichtveld sound version of 1932. In addition, Eisler changed the film title according to the title and structure of his score into '*Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain*', as the programmes of the two farewell concerts in Los Angeles (14<sup>th</sup> December 1947) and New York (28<sup>th</sup> February 1948) demonstrate.