

# The Pride and the Passion Kings Go Forth

*The Pride and the Passion*, a United Artists film made in 1957 by producer and director Stanley Kramer, not only had pride and passion on the screen, but plenty of pride and passion involving stars Frank Sinatra, Cary Grant and Sophia Loren behind the scenes, as well. A huge production, with thousands of extras, the film was given the lavish treatment by Kramer, shooting in VistaVision and Technicolor. The off-stage drama sometimes equaled that being filmed – both Sinatra and Grant had marriages ending, Grant fell in love with Loren, and Sinatra couldn't wait for the film to finish shooting so he could leave and asked Kramer to consolidate his scenes so he could do just that.

Adapted from the C.S. Forester novel, *The Gun, The Pride and the Passion* takes place in Spain during the Napoleonic wars. A British captain (played by Grant) is ordered to find and bring back to the British lines a large cannon, which will then be used to attack the French garrison at Avila. Guerrilla leader Miguel (played by Sinatra) agrees to help the captain transport the gun on its long and difficult journey – temperaments rise when Juana, Miguel's mistress, takes a fancy to the captain. General Jouvet, the sadistic French commander in Avila will do anything to find out information about the cannon and its whereabouts. Along the way, there are trials and tribulations, romance, adventure, excitement, and a rousing climactic battle scene in which some survive and some don't.

The film opened to mixed reviews, although most of them praised the production itself. *Variety* said, "Top credit must go to the production. The panoramic, long range views of the marching and terribly burdened army, the painful fight to keep the gun mobile through ravine and over waterway – these are major pluses." However, with star power like Grant, Sinatra, and Loren, the reviews didn't matter and the film had a healthy box-office and was one of the twenty highest-grossing films of its year. While the film didn't receive any Oscar nominations, Kramer did receive a Directors Guild of America nomination. Despite the lackluster reviews, there was nothing lackluster about the look of the film; it was gorgeous to look at, thanks to the stunning photography by Franz Planer, and it also boasted a dynamic title sequence by the king of the dynamic titles sequences, Saul Bass. The film production's behind-the-scenes problems became the subject of a BBC Radio 4 play entitled *The Gun Goes To Hollywood*, told from the viewpoint of script doctor Earl Felton, who was called in to do surgery to Edna and Edward Anhalt's screenplay. Steven Weber played Felton, Greg Itzin played Grant, Jonathan Silverman played Sinatra, and Kate Steele played Loren. Helping the film immeasurably was the colorful and dramatic score by George Antheil. Antheil was born in Trenton, New Jersey on July 8, 1900. The self-described "bad boy of music"

took the concert world by storm in 1926 with his *Ballet Mecanique*, which, in addition to its odd instrumentation, included a siren and three airplane propellers. Its premiere in Paris was scandalous, enraging some concertgoers and resulting in a riot in the street outside the concert hall. Ultimately, Antheil ended up in Hollywood, where he began scoring films in 1935. While never achieving the sort of success that other Hollywood film composers did, Antheil's output was quite varied and he wrote some terrific scores for such films as *The Plainsman*, *Knock On Any Door*, *We Were Strangers*, *The Fighting Kentuckian*, *Tokyo Joe*, *House By The River*, *In A Lonely Place*, *The Sniper*, *Not As A Stranger*, and many others. He also wrote six symphonies and a ballet called *Capital Of The World*, which has similarities in feel to his score for *The Pride and the Passion*.

*The Pride and the Passion* is at the top of Antheil's film work. Symphonic, suffused with Spanish color, and containing a couple of beautiful choral cues, the music is glorious and works wonderfully in the film. For those not familiar with the less outrageous side of the "bad boy of music," this score will show that he was someone who understood how film and music work, was an expert melodist, and was able to keep his rather individual musical voice while serving the films he was scoring.

A year later, United Artists released *Kings Go Forth*, which takes place in the final years of World War II in Southern France. Adapted from the novel by Harry Joe Brown (who had two other excellent films adapted from his books – *Stars In My Crown* and *Addie Pray*, which became *Paper Moon*), and directed by the wonderful and very underrated Delmer Daves (*Broken Arrow*, *3:10 To Yuma*, *Cowboy*, *A Summer Place*, and many others), the film starred Frank Sinatra, Tony Curtis and Natalie Wood. Briefly, the plot involves two Army officers from different backgrounds, Sam (Sinatra) and Britt (Curtis). While on leave in Nice, Sam meets Monique (Wood), an American girl who's lived in France since she was young. He's very taken with her, but she doesn't seem interested in continuing and he can't understand why. Finally, she and her mother tell him the truth – her father was a black man. After much thinking, he decides that isn't important and they continue seeing each other. This was daring stuff for 1958. One night in a jazz club, she meets Britt, who is also taken with her and she him. Sam steps aside, even though he's wary of Britt's motives, and he informs Britt that she's of mixed parentage. He seems fine with it, too, and in time he proposes to Monique. But Britt is a cad (as much of a cad as Curtis's character in *Sweet Smell of Success*), and it's revealed that he was never going to marry her. The film then moves to its climax, with a dangerous mission, loss of life and limb, and a moving final scene.

Sinatra gave one of his best performances in this film, and Curtis and Wood are equally terrific, along with a touching supporting performance by Leora Dana. Tying all these plot threads together is a great score by the great Elmer Bernstein.

1958 was an incredible year for Elmer Bernstein, writing scores for such disparate films as *Desire Under The Elms*, *Saddle The Wind*, *God's Little Acre*, *Anna Lucasta*, *The Buccaneer*, *Some Came Running*, and *Kings Go Forth* (not to mention his TV work that year). Despite the prodigious output for that year, he provided one of his best scores *Kings Go Forth*. The music begins with a classic Bernstein flourish and war motif, which then introduces the three-note theme that will morph into one of his most lustrous melodies, the theme for Monique. In fact, it was such a beautiful theme that Sammy Cahn wrote a lyric for it and Sinatra recorded it, although the song was never part of the film or its soundtrack. The score then runs the Bernstein gamut – from action music, to scene-setting music, to romantic music, to a couple of jazz sequences (featuring Red Norvo, Pete Condoli, and others). It's Elmer Bernstein from his early period and there's just nothing like his music from that era.

Both *The Pride and the Passion* and *Kings Go Forth* were originally issued on Capitol Records. They were issued on CD in the United Kingdom by Cloud Nine Records (but not coupled together) – those issues have been out of print for many, many years. For this release, we have gone back to the original album masters housed in the Capitol vaults. For those who have the LP issues you will note two changes: On *The Pride and the Passion* we have omitted the track "Juana's Flamenco" as it was not composed by Antheil and is basically lifted from the actual film track and consists of loud guitar strumming, loud singing, and loud flamenco stomping and yelling; it interrupts the flow of the score and its presentation and not in a good way. On *Kings Go Forth*, side one and two of the LP both contained a track entitled "Monique's Theme." One listen to each track easily confirmed that it was simply the exact same track repeated – we have removed its second use as it is redundant and exactly the same track as the earlier one. Additionally, we have reinstated the track "Britt's Blues," which was left off the Cloud Nine release. Both scores are presented in their original mono sound.

So, we hope you'll enjoy this jam-packed double bill – since these were both United Artists pictures, perhaps they even played together back then on a double bill somewhere. That would have been a lot of musical nirvana – two great scores back to back.

— Bruce Kimmel