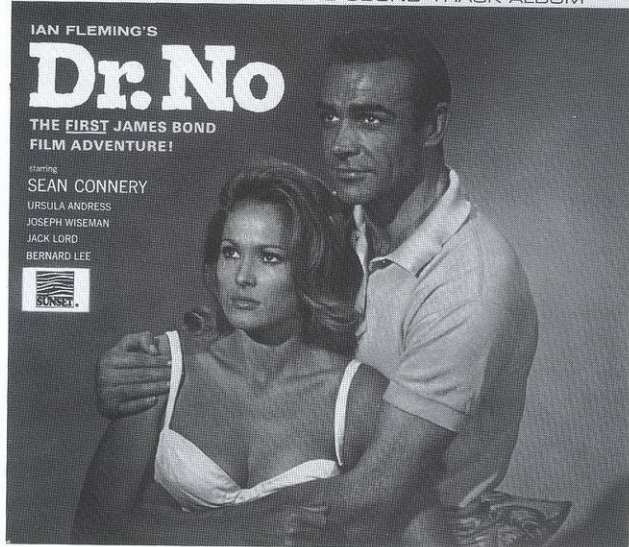


The Sound of Bond

DR. NO

ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUND TRACK ALBUM



The name James Bond conjures up many memories, emotions and images, but probably the most potent and enduring one is a sound — the sound of "The James Bond Theme." This one theme encapsulates all the glamour and excitement of Bond and its appearance over the opening series of shots of each movie as Bond strolls across the screen and then fires at the audience, acts as a prelude to the rollercoaster ride contained within. Bonds may come and go but this theme is forever. Its origins go back to the first in the series, *Dr No*, and the music reflects, as do all the Bond themes, contemporary trends in popular music at that time.

In order to attract as much attention to their first cinematic outing with Bond, Broccoli and Saltzman chose a very popular composer and songwriter of the late '50s and mid-'60s, Monty Norman. His contribution was to provide authentic songs and calypso music for the Jamaican locations as well as a dramatic score for the action highlights.

The fact that Norman was not usually required to write this latter type of music shows in many of the film's scenes, particularly so during the scene where a deadly spider is seen crawling across Bond's shoulder. As Bond flips it onto the floor and kills it with several blows of his shoe, so each strike is accompanied by a loud orchestral crash which makes the whole scene quite ludicrous.

A soundtrack album was released and contained mostly the calypso music plus the song "Under The Mango Tree," made famous by Ursula Andress since she sang it during her first bikini-clad appearance in the film. As well as getting Norman to do the score, the producers hit upon the idea of getting one of the top recording artists of the '60s to do a version of the main theme. They

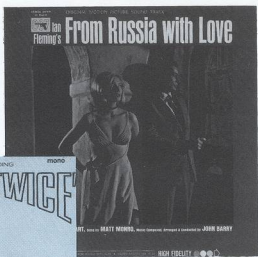
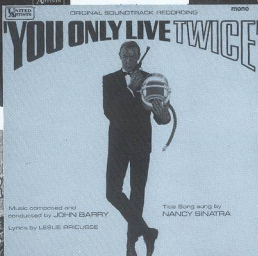
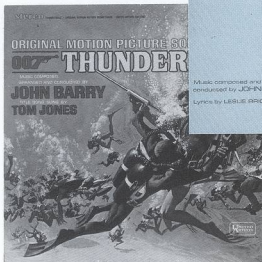
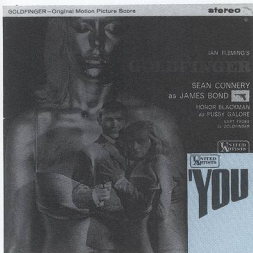
chose The John Barry Seven who, under the direction of Yorkshire composer/arranger John Barry, had had many chart successes. Barry's punchy arrangement of The James Bond Theme proved very popular and the single reached No. 13 in the UK charts. The musical character of Bond was successfully launched.

Since his recording of the Bond theme had become such an integral part of *Dr No's* success, Barry was asked to score *From Russia With Love*. The title song was written by another noted songwriter, Lionel Bart, and was performed by Matt Monro. Unusually, the song wasn't used over the main titles and isn't heard until Bond himself appears on the screen, where it is used as source music from a radio.

Two of the film's action set-pieces were scored with Barry's own attempt at a Bond theme, called simply "007". The most complete version is used during the gypsy camp-fight where Bond effortlessly glides through the conflagration, immobilising sundry villains en route. All in all, a good score but with the next, Barry struck musical gold.

First, there is the title song "Goldfinger." A magnificent number and one of Shirley Bassey's greatest performances. The song and opening credits form a set-piece of their own, and her delivery of Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley's lyrics is pulsating. Barry's theme is superb but Bassey makes it a classic. It's no wonder she so often uses the music to introduce her concerts, nearly twenty years after it was written. In terms of capturing the exact mood and flavour of the Bond films, *Goldfinger* possesses the best theme and score of them all.

With the powerhouse song from *Goldfinger* proving a



success, another strong recording voice was sought for the next film, *Thunderball*. With chart hits such as "What's New, Pussycat?", Tom Jones seemed an ideal choice although the song failed to make any impact commercially. However, the rest of the score contains some extremely good atmospheric music from the ever-improving John Barry. In this film, the music has to carry the action since so much of it takes place underwater, but Barry was able to push the story forward, creating tension and musically enhancing the aquatic surroundings of the battles that form the latter half of the film.

Flavour of the month in 1967 was Nancy Sinatra and a softer approach was adopted for the theme song from *You Only Live Twice*. For much of the score, Barry seems to have been inspired by the film's locations since there are passages that are quite beautiful and really enhance the opulent settings of the story. Among the action highlights that are well scored are the pre-credits sequence with its eerily sinister space march, the helicopter fight (backed up by the tried and trusted James Bond theme) and Bond's escape from a car-load of villains who are summarily dumped into the ocean.

Although Connery was missing from *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, Barry was still in the musical hot-seat and provided an excellent action score with a tragic-romantic song "We Have All The Time In The World." If Connery had done this one, it would have been the best of the series.

Diamonds Are Forever saw the return of Shirley Bassey as vocalist and the very relaxed style of the film is reflected in the song. Although the main theme was weaker than most, the score

contains many fine examples of Barry working at his best; the entire pre-credits sequence, the fight in the lift with Peter Franks, the moon-buggy chase, Bond's attempted cremation, the Las Vegas circus, the night time assault on the Whyte House and the attack on the oil rig where Barry's old 007 theme is used to good effect.

A particular highpoint of this score is Barry's treatment of the laser satellite launch. A highly sinister theme is used which suddenly blossoms into something of great beauty as the satellite unfolds to reveal a sparkling but lethal array of diamonds. With this music, Barry underlines something that the Bond films have pointed out all along — that there can be great beauty in evil.

Soundtrack albums and singles have been issued and re-issued from all the Bond films with varying degrees of success and there have been countless compilations featuring original material and cover versions while many major recording artists have included at least one Bond theme in their repertoire.

With *Never Say Never Again*, scored by Michel Legrand, a composer of considerable talent, it is unfortunate that the composer who has served Connery so well in the past will not be scoring his more than welcome return to the role. Both Barry and Connery have risen to their current prominence through the success of the Bond films and the producers can think themselves particularly lucky in having secured the services of John Barry for the majority of Connery's films, for his music has helped sharpen and define Connery's interpretation of the role and make it into such a memorable one.

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