

Tube Tunes

TELEVISION MAY BE the bastard stepchild of the movies—smaller picture, smaller stories, smaller stars—but it provides a unique challenge to composers. For regular series, major themes have to be instantly memorable yet not grow tiresome week after week. For miniseries, musical ideas must stretch to fill six hours of airtime—or more. Here are some scores that rise to the occasion.

Wild Palms (Capitol). Like the miniseries itself, Ryuichi Sakamoto's flamboyant, synthesizer-driven score sometimes falls flat, but it is nevertheless smart—even inspired (“Harry to Hospital”)—and makes good use of a few nifty pop hits (“Can’t Take My Eyes off You”).

Brideshead Revisited (Chrysalis). Elegant and elegiac, this is clear-eyed nostalgia for the upper crust. “Orphans of the Storm” and “Brideshead Theme” are some of the highlights of this beautiful reverie.

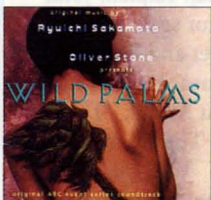
Masada (Varèse Sarabande). Jerry Goldsmith's majestic, mournful work is the perfect match for the tragic heroism of Judean rebels who commit mass suicide rather than surrender to the Romans. An essential piece. Also impressive is Craig Safan's score for *Son of the Morning Star* (Intrada), featuring an exceptionally complex final cue, “Little Big Horn.”

Inspector Morse

(Caroline). Barrington Pheloung provides low-key but memorable music for the British series featuring the brusque inspector, as well as conducting specially recorded selections from Mozart, Puccini, and others. More crime-fighting delights: Henry Mancini's *Peter Gunn* (RCA), which redefined hip (“Dreamsville,” “A Profound Gass”); and *Sherlock Holmes* (Varèse), for which Patrick Gower's marvelous score (showcasing the violin, naturally) reveals the cerebral sleuth's emotional heart.

The Outer Limits (GNP Crescendo). Dominic Frontiere's melodramatic music is the centerpiece of this lavish package, which includes the series's famous voice intro and a sound-effects library. Also check out *The Best of the Twilight Zone* (Varèse), which boasts such talented names as Herrmann, Steiner, and Goldsmith.

MICHAEL GILTZ



Strange interludes:

Sakamoto's Palms;
Frontiere's Limits.