

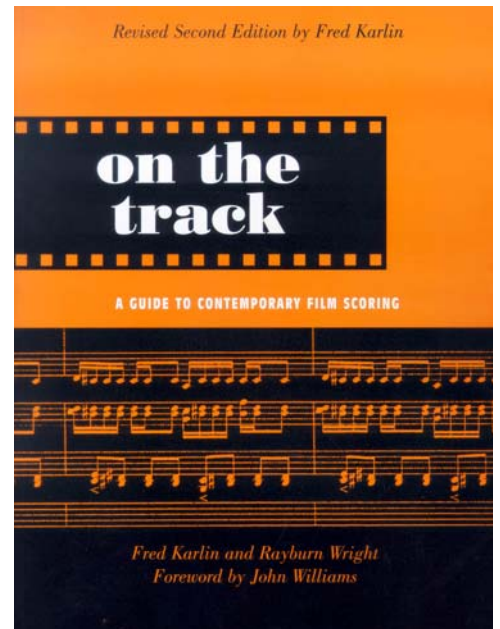
Excerpted From  
***On The Track:***  
***A Guide To Contemporary Film Scoring***  
*Revised Second Edition*  
Fred Karlin & Rayburn Wright (2004)  
Forward By John Williams

In an era of rapidly developing computer technology, several computer programs for solving music-timing problems in films and television received attention and praise from Hollywood composers and music editors as far back as 1987 and 1988. One of them has now become the standard in the industry. The Auricle: The Film Composers' Time Processor (known also as the Auricle Time Processor, or simply Auricle), developed by composer Ron Grant and his brother, software writer Richard Grant, and released in 1984, is a system set up to deal with the composer's need to quickly find the best tempos and the best options for hitting cues, and to provide a programmed, variable click for the musicians to hear when recording. This click can have programmed ritards and accelerandos as well as subtler, undetectable tempo changes that allow the film hits to come in more natural and acceptable places in the music. It can provide 7/8, 5/8, and other odd meters by combining different building-block units. Corrections can be made quickly on the scoring stage and the Auricle allows instantaneous pickups at any given point in a cue for rehearsing or recording to picture from an internal start in the cue.

Data for the film hits are entered into the computer, where they are displayed on the computer screen against a grid representing the position of the clicks at any chosen tempo (but not limited to the eighth-frame calibrations of the Knudson click system). This time map gives a visual display of the way the film hits and music beats relate. Trial runs of different tempos indicate quickly and graphically which tempos provide the best "hit" opportunities. You can

feed your MIDI information into it from another program and Auricle will work with it. The program runs on any PC (it is not Macintosh compatible). Mac users have a separate PC dedicated to Auricle.

Richard Grant explains how a composer will work with the system: "You tell the Auricle the music starts here, I think I'm going to be in 7/8, so re-meter bars to 2+2+1+1+1, it actually clicks subdivided meters, and then he looks at his notes and he looks at the picture, he goes, 'Well, let's see, my tempo is about here,' and he tells it click equals 13-1, plays it against the picture, that sounds about right, then he takes a look at where his obligations



are, and he goes, 'Oh, I'm a little late here, let me speed it up, let me slow it down, let me add a beat, let me subtract a beat,' and he maps it all out. And then that becomes the master map and then he's doing this all through the score. He's got note paper there. If you don't want to use click on a cue, you simply type in the streamer locations, turn the click off, and conduct to streamers and clock only."

"There's no underestimating what those guys have done," says composer/orchestrator Mark McKenzie. "When we're on the scoring stage it is so easy, 'You want to start in bar 72? Okay, and one. . .' and you're there. That fast." Cueline Aps of Denmark developed a streamer, click, and character generator that is compatible with Auricle, which has further revolutionized this technology. Richard Grant explains what it can do. "The conductor will say, 'Well, let's do a pickup from bar 40,' so you click cue on SMPTE from bar 40 and boom, on all the monitors it says, '4 free into bar 40.' And then at the bottom of the monitor it gives you the cue name, like IM1, and then it gives you the SMPTE address of the downbeat of bar 40." It can be used now to drive the entire scoring session, everything in sync. For more information about Auricle, see [www.auricle.com](http://www.auricle.com) and Cueline Aps of Denmark at [www.cueline.com](http://www.cueline.com). The Auricle Time Processor [designers earned EMMYs in 1985 and were] awarded an Oscar for technical achievement in 1987.

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