

# DAILY VARIETY

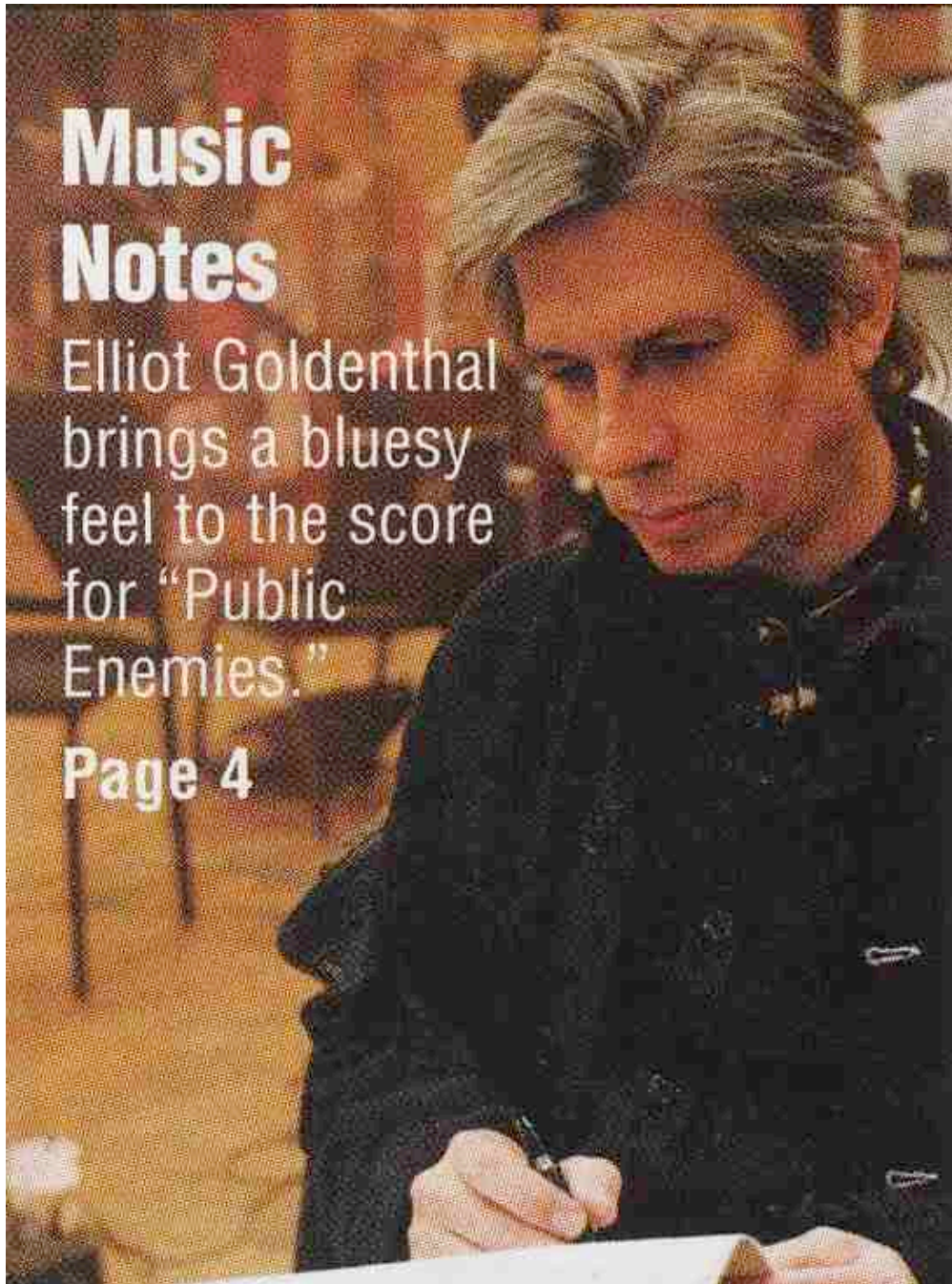
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## Music Notes

Elliot Goldenthal  
brings a bluesy  
feel to the score  
for "Public  
Enemies."

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# Composer arranges for vintage feel

Any new Michael Mann film automatically draws attention for its music.

Twenty-five years ago, he revolutionized television scoring with a groundbreaking mix of popular songs and synthesized music on "Miami Vice," and his films have offered surprising composer choices (Tangerine Dream for "Thief," Lisa Gerrard on "Ali") or generated hit albums ("Last of the Mohicans").

Thirteen years after their collaboration on "Heat," the perfectionist filmmaker was reunited with New York composer Elliot Goldenthal for the score of "Public Enemies," which chronicles John Dillinger's bank-robbing rampage in the Depression-era Midwest and the efforts of G-Man Melvin Purvis to track him down.

Mann "has a propensity to change his mind through the whole experience," Goldenthal said. "For some people it can be frustrating, even Kafkaesque. Knowing that's the way he is, I realized what the job would entail."

As on "Heat," in which the composer was recruited during pre-production "to experiment and create alternative ways of exploring a caper movie," Goldenthal was again brought in early on "Enemies," this time to arrange and produce Diana Krall's sultry take on the standard "Bye Bye Blackbird." The popular jazz artist sings the song, which assumes added dimension in the film's coda, on camera as Dillinger (Johnny Depp) dances with Billie Frechette (Marion Cotillard) in a Chicago nightclub.

As for underscore, Goldenthal decided to let the film's songs — including several by Billie Holiday and the film's unofficial anthem, "Ten Million Slaves," by Chicago bluesman Otis Taylor — set up the period. "That freed me up to approach the score purely in dramatic terms," he said. "The challenge was to create a musical fabric (in which the audience) could accept Dillinger as an icon."

Key moments for the composer's big Dillinger theme, played by a 90-piece orchestra, occurred during the airplane trip on which a captured Dillinger awaits his fate and later when his girlfriend is arrested. "The first time, it's triumphant; the second time it's almost smotheringly claustrophobic," Goldenthal said.

What was out of Goldenthal's hands were Mann's choices of unrelated film music to play at various other moments in "Public Enemies" — including snippets of Gustavo Santaolalla's "Things We Lost in the Fire," Hans Zimmer's "The Thin Red Line" and even Goldenthal's own music for "Heat."

"I haven't seen the movie, so I have no idea what he put on," Goldenthal said. "But when directors find something perfect, they just license it. There's nothing wrong with that."

— Jon Burlingame

