Music composed by
Peter Sculthorpe
Lyrics written and sung by
Alan Dean

Music Composed and Conducted by
Stanley Myers
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1. Peter Sculthorpe:

Peter Sculthorpe was a Tasmanian-born composer whose first feature film was the low-budget 1962 children's feature *They Found a Cave*.

There were disagreements about the score he devised for *Age of Consent*, with it being dropped and replaced by a conventional outing from British composer Stanley Myers.

It was on the theatrical version originally screened in Australia and happily it is restored on the region 1 DVD 'director's cut' edition. It is a muted piece which Sculthorpe acknowledges was written under the influence of Balinese music, with Dunk island a kind of Bali substitute for him.

According to Sculthorpe, he was busy writing the *Sun music* ballet score in 1967-68, working with Robert Helpmann, but he always loved the notion of movies - he'd been aware of Powell since *Red Shoes* - and found working with Powell incredibly easy.
Sculthorpe, in the special edition DVD, recalls that Powell had read an interview in the London *Times* in which Sculthorpe had said that *Europe is dead*, and so thought he might be the right person to write music for a film about Australia.

According to film historian Kent Jones, the producers approached Malcolm Arnold, who after seeing the film said he didn't understand why Columbia wanted a new score, as the current one was fine, and they also approached Maurice Jarre, who proposed taking Sculthorpe's themes and re-orchestrating them, but who then dropped out.

Disgruntled Columbia executives aside, whom Sculthorpe said found the score "too sophisticated", Sculthorpe would go on to become an elder statesman of the Australian classical music scene, and his work for the movie is a gentle, beguiling and engaging work using instruments that clearly unnerved parochial American executives.

*(Below: Peter Sculthorpe)*

*(Below: Peter Sculthorpe meeting up with Michael Powell's son Kevin Powell to reminisce about Age of Consent in the extras on the special edition DVD, and below that, Sculthorpe)*
Sculthorpe has his own site [here](#), and there is a wiki [here](#), and he is also present at the Australian Music Centre site [here](#).

2. The songs and lyrics credited to Alan Dean:

Along with the sometimes dire over-acting of radio star Neva Carr-Glyn and the comedy of Jack MacGowran courting Andonia Katsaros, the weakest part of the movie isn't Sculthorpe's score, but the song over the end titles.

It was a convention at the time to end movies with a song which might take off in the charts, but this one had dire lyrics and an easy listening style at odds with the arthouse romantic tone established in the best parts of the film (and even though the song's orchestration attempts to make a little use of the tonal aspects of Sculthorpe's score).

_Cora, Cora, I love you so_  
_As I waited my Cora_  
_And watched you grow_
And now that you're reaching
The age of consent
Love me, my Cora, love me
How many times have I had to find
These words that I’m saying
For you tonight
But now that you’re reaching
The age of consent
The talking is over, just love me …
Cora …

In the commentary on the DVD, film historian Kent Jones is convinced that the song was a massive hit in Australia, but it is likely that he is confusing the song on the film with the Terry Britten/Ronnie Burns’ pop homage which they titled Age of Consent (see below).

The audience is given a first burst of this easy listening music around the 17'15" mark on Harold Hopkins' transistor radio, tuned to 4MK Mackay, "the voice of the Great Barrier Reef", as he takes James Mason to his new home:

I know an island,
A sunlit coral island,
So put your hand in my hand,
And follow me
Girl, we can make it,
(Lyric obscured by dialogue) make it
This … (FX obscures lyrics) is strong, don't break it
(FX) … follow me
My (FX) … will glide across the sea
I know an island
A sunlit coral island
So leave them all behind

The question of who wrote and sang these two songs is obscure.

Is it the same Alan Dean, who arranged and conducted the music for the films, Weekend of Shadows, and The Irishman, and who was active in the music industry in Australia around the same time?

Dean is described at the UK's National Jazz Archive as being born in London on 1924, a boy soprano who became a popular musical vocalist. His rise to fame in the UK saw him voted the country's most popular male singer in the Melody Maker 1949-50. He retained that position until 1952, leaving the vocal group The Keynotes for a solo career in 1950, and his discography and details of his group for this period of time are recorded here. He then emigrated to the United States in 1951 and began a successful career there.

He was living in Miami Florida when he received a three month contract from Melbourne's Channel Nine, and began working on In Melbourne Tonight with Graham Kennedy.

After returning to Miami, he received another three month contract, and then decided to settle in Sydney, Australia, where he composed and recorded for radio and commercials, and did club work. He also worked for the ABC, and did a series for the ABC Jazz Meets Folk.

There is an interview in three parts with him here, here, and here.

(Below: Alan Dean)
Or is it another Alan Dean altogether?

If anyone knows the answer, we would appreciate clarification. There is no clear reference on the internet.

Whichever Dean worked on Age of Consent, it is most likely that it was the same Dean who worked with Charles Marwood on the scores for Weekend of Shadows and The Irishman.

3. Stanley Myers' substitute score:

Stanley Myers, who did the substitute score used on some releases at the insistence of Columbia executives, was a prolific British composer, who has a wiki [here](#).

He is perhaps best known for writing a version of the Cavatina for guitarist John Williams, which later turned up in The Deer Hunter. He also wrote the theme tune for the BBC's Question Time TV show.

Editor Tony Buckley tells an amusing story on the special edition DVD involving the way projectionists of the time notoriously clipped frames out of hot scenes, which inevitably led to Age of Consent prints - by any accounting a hot film for its day - turning into a hodge podge of splices in key scenes.

Rather than replacing entire prints, economically minded distributors replaced damaged reels, and as a result, viewers were often left with prints that featured Peter Sculthorpe's score on one reel, followed by the Stanley Myers score on another.

(Below: Stanley Myers)

4. Terry Britten and Ronnie Burns:

In the usual way for the period, Ronnie Burns released a 45 which was a tribute to the film, but was written by Terry Britten.

None of this music actually appeared in the film or had anything to do with the film, except to trade on
its release:

Spin EK-2627 1968
*Age of Consent (2'31") (T. Britten) vocals: Ronnie Burns*

This was also released in EP form as the first track on side one
Spin EX-11,594

It also turned up as sheet music:
And it could be found on a few compilations of sixties music, as on the Festival LP L-25329, 20 Golden Greats of the 50's & 60's.

Norman Percival and his orchestra had a go at it for RCA/Reader's Digest on *Up, Up and Away Our Way*, LP SP 46, side two track 3 *Age of Consent (2'40")* (Britten) (Palings)