

IIFILM-362-01 Listening to Movies: Film Soundtracks



Fall Semester 2022

4 credits

Thursday 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Parker Hall - Drenan Auditorium

Dr. Martin Roberts

Office hours: Thursday 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Office location: Media Arts 124

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Description

Since the arrival of sound in cinema in the late 1920s, musical soundtracks have been a key aesthetic element in the history of cinema. This course explores the rich history of cinematic soundtracks, from the pianists that accompanied early silent cinema to the recent popularity of live soundtrack performances at screenings of silent classics such as **The Black Pirate**. Topics include the symphonic music of the "Hollywood Sound"; cartoon music, from **Merrie Melodies** to Walt Disney's **Fantasia**; jazz and **film noir**; electronic music in 1950s sci-fi movies; Bernard Herrmann's collaborations with Alfred Hitchcock; the French New Wave soundtracks of Georges Delerue and Michel Legrand; the psychedelic movies of The Beatles and The Monkees; the soundtracks of Ennio Morricone and Lalo Schiffrin; the progressive rock soundtracks of the art cinema of Michelangelo Antonioni and Werner Herzog; and the Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu's collaboration with Akira Kurosawa.

Reading Assignments

Kathryn Kalinak, **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

This text is available as an e-book via Mason Library.

Other reading assignments will be available for download from Canvas or either individually or collectively as a zip file from the course GitHub repository.

Viewing Assignments

Laura (Otto Preminger, 1944)

Fantasia (Walt Disney, 1940)

Forbidden Planet (Fred M. Wilcox, 1956)

Rashomon (Akira Kurosawa, 1950)

The Connection (Shirley Clarke, 1963)

A Fistful of Dollars (Sergio Leone, 1964)

Bullitt (Peter Yates, 1968) **Aguirre, The Wrath of God** (Werner Herzog, 1972)

Under the Skin (Jonathan Glazer, 2013)

The Witch (Robert Eggers, 2015)

Dunkirk (Christopher Nolan, 2017)

Annihilation (Alex Garland, 2018)

Documentaries

Music for the Movies: Bernard Herrmann (Joshua Waletzky, 1992)

Music for the Movies: Toru Takemitsu (Charlotte Zwerin, 1994)

Music for the Movies: Georges Delerue (Jean-Louis Comolli, 1995)

Music for the Movies: The Hollywood Sound (Joshua Waletzky, 1995)

Ryuichi Sakamoto: CODA (Stephen Nomura Schible, 2017)

Theremin: An Electronic Odyssey (Stephen M. Martin, 1993)

Deconstructing Dad: The Music, Machines, and Mystery of Raymond Scott (Stan Warnow, 2010)

Ennio: The Maestro (Giuseppe Tornatore, 2021)

Assignments

Final Research Paper Essay_

2,000 words. A study of at least three films scored by one composer.

Synchronicity Project

5-10 minute film or video sequence set to an alternative soundtrack of your choice, on the model of the **Wizard of Oz/Dark Side of the Moon** model. Shared on Canvas and in class.

Screening Reports

2 in-class presentations of 15-20 minutes on the soundtrack of a film (or other audiovisual text) assigned in any given week. Slides are not required but relevant clips should be selected, screened, and discussed. Presentations in pairs, with students meeting with me during my Thursday office hours to plan their presentation the following week. There is a follow-up essay assignment (see below).

Screening Report Essay

2 short essays approximately 750-1,000 words (3-4 pages double-spaced) in length, based on the in-class presentation.

Evaluation

Audiovisual Essay: 25%

Synchronicity Project: 15%

Screening Reports (in-class): 20%

Screening Report Essay: 20%

Schedule of classes

Week 1 (Thur 09/01)

Introduction: Listening to Film

Kathryn Kalinak, **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**, chs. 1-3 ("What does film music do?," "How does film music work?," "Why does film music work?")

In-class: **Laura**

Week 2 (Thur 09/08)

Overture: The Symphonic Soundtrack

Kathryn Kalinak, "A History of Film Music I" in **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**, ch. 4.

Andrew Ford, "The Role of Music" (in **The Sound of Pictures**)

Royal Brown, "How To Hear A Movie: An Outline"

Stephen Deutsch, "Editorial" (**The Soundtrack**, vol. 1, no. 1 (2007))

In-class: **Music for the Movies: The Hollywood Sound**

Week 3 (Thur 09/15)**Visual Music: Animation**

Kathryn Kalinak, "A History of Film Music II" in **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**, ch. 5.

Charles Granata, "Disney, Stokowski, and the Genius of **Fantasia**"

Edward H. Plumb, "The Future of Fantasound" (1942)

Neil Strauss, "Tunes for Toons: A Cartoon Music Primer"

In-class: **Silly Symphonies**, **Fantasia** (excerpts)

Week 4 (Thur 09/22)**Strange Sounds: Early Electronic**

Kathryn Kalinak, "A History of Film Music III" in **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**, ch. 6.

Susan Stone, "The Barrons: Forgotten Pioneers of Electronic Music" (NPR)

Ted Greenwald, "The Self-Destructing Modules Behind Revolutionary 1956 Soundtrack of 'Forbidden Planet'"

Bells of Atlantis (Ian Hugo, 1952)

Forbidden Planet (1956)

Amazing! Exploring the Far Reaches of 'Forbidden Planet' (2006)

See also: **The Day The Earth Stood Still** (1951); **The Birds** (1963); **Sorcerer** (1977) (Tangerine Dream); **Drive** (2011)

In-class: **Theremin: An Electronic Odyssey** (1993) or **Deconstructing Dad: The Music, Machines, and Mystery of Raymond Scott**

Week 5 (Thur 09/29)**Hitchcock/Herrmann**

Kathryn Kalinak, "Composers and their craft" in **Film Music: A Very Short Introduction**, ch. 7.

Stephen Deutsch, "Psycho and the Orchestration of Anxiety"

Watch: **Vertigo**, **Psycho**

In-class: **Music for the Movies: Bernard Herrmann**

Week 6 (Thur 10/06)**Kurosawa/Takemitsu**

Donald Richie, "Notes on the Film Music of Takemitsu Tōru"

Watch: **Rashomon**

In-class: **Music for the Movies: Toru Takemitsu**

Deadline: Midterm exam

Week 7 (Thur 10/13)

Cine-Jazz

Ross Lipman, "Mingus, Cassavetes, and the Birth of a Jazz Cinema"

Jean-Baptiste Thoret, "Jazz and Cinema: An Interview With Gilles Mouëllic"

Watch: **Shadows, The Cry of Jazz**

In-class: **The Connection**

Week 8 (Thur 10/20)

Morricone/Schiffrin

"Ennio Morricone," "Lalo Schiffrin" (in Andrew Ford, **The Sound of Pictures**)

Mission Impossible (CBS, 1966-68), opening credits

Bullitt (Peter Yates, 1968)

In-class: **A Fistful of Dollars** (Sergio Leone, 1964), opening credits

The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly (Sergio Leone, 1967), final duel scene

Le Casse (The Burglars) (Henri Verneuil, 1971), opening credits

Watch: **Ennio: The Maestro** (Giuseppe Tornatore, 2021)

Movie Music Man: A Portrait of Lalo Schiffrin (Rodney Greenberg, 1993)

Week 9 (Thur 10/27)

World Music: Popol Vuh

David Stubbs, "'Too Much The Darkness': The Werner Herzog Soundtracks of Popol Vuh" (**The Quietus**, 29 August 2014)

Watch: **Aguirre or the Wrath of God**

Week 10 (Thur 11/03)

Alien Sounds: Micah Levi

Ned Beaman, "Mica Levi's Intensely Unconventional Film Scores" (**New Yorker**, 23 Feb 2017)

Watch: **Under The Skin**

See also: **Jackie**

Week 11 (Thur 11/10)

Apprehension Engines: Mark Korven

Watch: **The Witch**

Week 12 (Thur 11/17)

The Weird and the Eerie: Ben Salisbury & Geoff Barrow

Watch: **Annihilation**

NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Week)

Week 14 (Thur 12/01)

Shepherd Tones: Hans Zimmer

"How Hans Zimmer Creates Sound Worlds"

"Hans Zimmer Revealed" (2014)

Hans Zimmer Spitfire Audio page (digital sample libraries of Hans Zimmer's film music)

Inside Hans Zimmer's Studio (Spitfire Audio)

Christopher Hauerin, "The Sound Illusion That Makes **Dunkirk** So Intense" (**Vox**)

Watch: **Dunkirk** (Christopher Nolan, 2017)

See also: **Inception**; (2010); **Interstellar** (2014)

Week 15 (Thur 12/08)

Presentations (alt soundtracks?)

12/09 Classes end

Reading Day (Mon 12/12) Exam period (Tues-Fri 12/13-16)

Online Sources

The Soundtrack (academic journal)

Art of the Title (web portal about title sequences)

Chris Willman, "Quentin Tarantino's 'Once Upon A Time... In Hollywood': Deconstructing the Soundtrack"

Select Bibliography

Rose Bridges (2017), **Yōko Kanno's 'Cowboy Bebop' Soundtrack**, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Philip Brophy (2004), **100 Modern Soundtracks**, London: British Film Institute.

James Buhler, Caryl Finn, and David Neumeyer (2000), **Music and Cinema**, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

Michel Chion, **Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen**. Second English edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017 [1990].

John Culhane, (1983), *Walt Disney's Fantasia*, New York: Abradale Press/Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

Andrew Ford (2009), *The Sound of Pictures: Listening to the Movies*, Cullingwood, Victoria: Black, Inc.

Krin Gabbard (1996), *Jammin' at the Margins: Jazz and the American Cinema*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard D. Leppert, eds. (2007), *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Graeme Harper, Ruth Doughty, and Jochen Eisentraut, eds. (2009), *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media*, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Winifred Philips (2017), *A Composer's Guide to Game Music*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Andrew Schartmann (2015), *Koji Kondo's Super Mario Bros. Soundtrack*, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Policies & Protocol

Attendance Since this class meets only weekly, attendance is particularly important. Students are allowed one absence per semester. Two absences will lower your final grade half a letter grade. Three absences will lower your grade a whole letter grade. Any more than **three absences**, regardless of the reason, and students will have to withdraw from the course (in accordance with Keene State College student handbook). Come and talk to me if you have any problem in attending the class.

Keene State policy: A student who misses more than 3 weeks in the first 10 weeks of the semester (regardless of the reason, including excused absences and emergencies) must withdraw from the course. The student must follow the regular withdrawal procedure. The complete KSC attendance policy can be viewed at <http://www.keene.edu/registrar/policy/policy.cfm#6>

Readings & assignments

Readings assigned for each week should be completed **prior to** the class meeting. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class unless stated otherwise. **Please do not email submissions.**

Discussion & participation

Class discussion (i.e. your participation) is one of the most essential parts of this class. Please come to class fully prepared—both intellectually and

physically. Also keep in mind that we always need to work together in order to create a productive and inspiring academic environment by being polite and respectful toward other students' comments and ideas. In order to ensure your full participation and engagement in class, the use of laptops and/or mobile devices during lectures, discussion, and screenings is not permitted.

Academic honesty

We understand and agree that we are participating in higher education. We respect this process and will act as mature and responsible individuals in it. To ensure that, all students are expected to hand in original written work. Using other people's words without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism and any other forms of cheating will result in an F for the assignment and may include further College sanctions. In this class, every student must be aware of and adhere to the college's policy on academic honesty. Detailed procedures and processes pertaining to the Policy on Academic Honesty can be viewed at <http://www.keene.edu/policy/academic-honesty.cfm> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
