

Magic of Movie Music



"Ah music... a magic beyond all we do here"

Albus Dumbledore

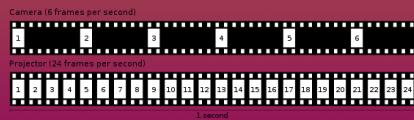
Our Class

- Instructor
 - Dr. Roger Hickman
 - roger.hickman@csulb.edu
- Textbook: *Reel Music: Exploring 100 Years of Film Music*, 2nd edition by Roger Hickman, W.W. Norton, 2017
 - D1DA through Canvas
 - Organization: 8 Parts, each with 4 Chapters
- Assignments
 - Reading from the textbook
 - Attend lectures (lecture notes posted on Canvas Homepage)
 - Watch Clips of text Viewer Guide excerpts



Movie Magic

- Flat screen can suggest 3 dimensions
- Actors can bring us into a fictional world
- A series of still photos can be made to look like continuous motion
 - Still images alternate with black to avoid blurriness
 - Slow number of frames per second (FPS) = flickering
 - Standard FPS in sound era: 24



Music Magic

- Emotions
 - Not governed by the verbal mind
 - Emotions are "contagious"
- Music
 - Appeals directly to our emotions, bypassing verbal mind
 - Hence, we can "think" of something else while hearing music
 - Satisfies emotional needs; used at virtually every major function in society
 - In movies, music is the invisible art; not noticed, but a powerful tool in shaping our emotions and attitudes



Assessments

- Quizzes
 - DO NOT take any exam without the proper edition of our textbook
 - All exams are online with Canvas: either Homepage or Quizzes page
 - Due dates are indicated, but they are flexible; the exams will not close
- Essays
 - 8 essays, each 20 points
 - Should contain 3 full paragraphs
 - Final project: role of music in a film of your choice (60 points): 3-5 pages
- Discussions
 - 8 discussion forums, most with multiple topics: choose 1 or more
 - Need a statement (6 points) and 2 responses to others (2 points each)



Canvas

- Homepage
- Helpful hints
- Important textbook notification
- Modules organized around the 8 Parts of the textbook
- Modules
 - Opening overview
 - Assignments
 - Assessments with links
- Read the Syllabus for grading criteria
- Assignments, Quizzes, Discussions another source to find your work
- Gradebook



Chapters 1-4

- Part 1
 - Chapter 1: Drama and Film
 - Chapter 2: Elements of Music
 - Chapter 3: Listening to Film Music
 - Chapter 4: Forerunners of Film Music
 - Basic terminology and concepts
 - This should constantly be used for reference
 - Also note the Glossary at the end of the book



Drama and Film

- Part 1
 - Chapter 1: Drama and Film
 - Chapter 2: Elements of Music
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Drama and Film

- Causal plot
 - Exposition
 - Complications
 - Climax
 - Resolution/Denouement
- Episodic plot
 - Exposition
 - Episodes
 - Climax
 - Resolution
- Nonlinear plot
 - Story does not follow chronological order
 - *Memento/Kill Bill*



Chapter 2: Film

- Stages of creation
 - Preproduction
 - Production
 - Postproduction
- Editing
 - Shot
 - Cut
 - Crosscutting
 - Montage



Music and Emotions

- Western music has a long tradition of assigning certain gestures and colors to specific emotions
- For the history of film music, the most important era is the 19th century—the “Romantic” era
- Dominant figure in early 19th century: Beethoven
 - Instrumental music evokes great emotions
 - Best known for his dark moods
 - But also joyful, humorous, and haunting moods
- Chopin: leading piano composer after Beethoven
 - Most quoted composer in all of film history
 - Works are intimate, often a sense of sadness



Remaining Lecture Topics

- Descriptive Music
 - Instrumental: Programmatic music
 - Theatrical
 - Opera
 - Ballet
 - Melodrama and light entertainments
- Music in film
 - Roles of music; terms
 - 2 clips on music and mood



Program Music

- Program Symphony
 - Beethoven Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral"
 - Largely creates moods about the joy of nature
 - Some mimicking of natural sounds



Program Music

- Program Symphony
 - Beethoven Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral"
 - Largely creates moods about nature
 - Some mimicking of natural sounds
- Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*
 - Also uses general moods, but more emphasis on sounds
 - One theme represents a woman—Leitmotif
 - Also uses *Dies irae*, most frequently quoted melody in film history



Program Music

- Symphonic Poem
 - Like program symphony, but only one movement
 - Spectacular opening: Richard Strauss, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*
 - Spectacular ending: Tchaikovsky, *1812 Overture*



Opera: Wagner

- Most significant opera composer of 19th century
 - Revolutionized opera, music, theater, and philosophy
 - Landmark: Ring cycle
- Innovations
 - Continuous music supports story
 - Heavy reliance on the full orchestra
 - Unified through leitmotifs



Ballet

- Like silent film, ballet has no spoken dialogue; the story is told through movement and music
- Most significant composer: Tchaikovsky
- "Character" dances can suggest ethnic origins
- Supports action in pantomimes
- Themes can denote character



Other Types of Drama

- Melodrama
 - Major theater type of 19th century
 - Closest in spirit to film; music used extensively
 - Some were grand spectacles
- Lighter forms: pantomime; tableau vivant; dramatic readings—generally had music



Film Music Basics

- Musical frames
 - Opening credits
 - Closing credits
- Music in the narrative
 - Source music (diegetic)
 - Underscoring/Scoring (non-diegetic) - cues
 - Soundtrack: not a good term for this class
- Amount of music: wall-to-wall/none
- Unity through Leitmotifs: association of a theme with some portion of the story, such as a character, place, or emotion (love)



Roles of Music

- Setting a mood
- Supporting the plot
 - Help establish time and place
 - Reflects physical movement—Mickey Mousing
- Supporting the characters
 - Depict personality
 - Reveal emotions



Excalibur, 1981

- Retelling of the King Arthur tale
- Signals turn back to romanticism
- Much of the music is borrowed from Wagner
- Adaptation: taking a fully composed work and adapting it (make it shorter, change instrumentation...) for a film



Clips

- <http://www.ebaumsworld.com/video/watch/83192019>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dr1pFnJj6H0>