

Lecture 1

January 5, 2017 7:40 PM

Actively listening to the music is not how the music producers want people to do in movies. They want you to listen together to "fool" the viewer. Viewer believes the movie is "real". Not bringing to the surface that you are watching a film.

To show how powerful music in film can be - watching a clip from 1987 - directed by Steven Spielberg (you should memorize). called "empire of the sun". Music was written by John Williams

Two names of music writers you would know - John Williams and Hans Zimmer

Week 1: What to listen for in film:

The musical accompaniment of Narrative Film

Example: Apollo 13 (1995) Composer: James Horner

Took all the cleverness to save the astronauts in the malfunctioning spacecraft
Composer for the film: James Warner (another big name) - has passed away recently in a plane crash
best known for James Cameron film scores - Avatar, Titanic

*watched a clip with sound off then on
may be quite considerably different with sound/music

No Music during shower scene. Why?

- shower scene is a moment where music would take away. it is an intimate scene... compared to the remarkable moment. Loses her wedding ring (what represents her life) in the shower while worrying for her husband. Music would have cheapened the moment.
- Small, intimate scene. Music would risk over-dramatizing
- leave "space" for what follows. After this scene, music continues for several minutes during the next scene.

Where music "isn't" can be as important as where it is.

Music fades under shower scene - smoothes transitions. It structures the film, sets up for what's next (something is going to happen)

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Instruments: Brass - Military - Heroism - Sacrifice

Primarily Brass - associated with military - Convention (means the way we usually relate to military as a convention.)

Sacrifice - the brave ones doing a dangerous thing

Style: Chorale - Protestant Hymn - faith - sacrifice

there is a sense of spiritual sacrifice. All three stood up and put their arms up. The s actually meant to be able to do up the zipper)

Tempo: Slow - restrained - controlled - professional

slow but steady pulse. Carries idea of calm and restrained. Precision, professionalism

Star Wars - was originally just called Star Wars

What is a movie?

Narrative - tells a story

We will be exclusively focusing on narratives

"Suspension of Disbelief"

Film is a discontinuous medium - not a real time continuation (has cuts to different times of time compressed into a small frame

Film conventions attempt to minimize anything that threatens "Suspension of Disbelief" Except for the use of music. We have music in film but not in real life.

The Four Functions

1. Music can create a more convincing atmosphere of time and place
 - historical, cultural , geographical - BUT based on western conventions
 - example: in a car, radio turns on and the music could be from a specific time or place
 - will hear that stereo typical asian/chinese music in older films. filmmakers want to necessarily care about accuracy
2. Music can underline or create psychological refinements.
 - the unspoken thoughts of a character or the unseen implications of a situation
 - music telling you something that may not be apparent on the screen at the moment
 - can help signal things that aren't clear or not on screen
3. Music can provide a sense of continuity in a film
 - structure of music less than overall the discontinuous, chaotic nature of film

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- structure of music smoothes over the discontinuous, chaotic nature of film
 - ex. montage - scenes cutting around but music is continuous
 - montage is the most extreme example. Film is overall discontinuous and music helps
4. Music can provide the underpinning for the theatrical buildup of a scene and then round off finality
- music can affect the "pacing" of a scene

Examples:

Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981) Composer: John Williams

Functions 1, 3, and 4

Scene:

Trumpet for Indiana Jones theme - often a solo trumpet to represent lone hero - heroism brass

Love theme on violin - strings are often used for love scenes

set of notes change when you get to Egypt. then we will hear the oboe, a woodwind instrument
very different style of music once you get to Egypt

Alien Resurrection (1997) Composer: John Frizzell

Functions 2, 3, and 4

Basketball fight scene (scientists and pirates):

music starts very slow

more just rhythm and noise rather than music - ambient during the fight scene

music goes right back down to a stand still once the guy is knocked down

Pacing is very good, going very slow and creepy to very fast then drops to almost a stand still.
One moment of foreshadowing. indicating that there is more going on with a character

Evaluating a Score:

How do we talk about what we hear?

Key Terms and Concepts:

Diegesis:

- The world of the narrative. All characters, events, etc depicted, suggested or described
- heard both by the characters within the narrative and the film audience
 - diegetic music - heard both by characters in the film and the audience
- also known as "source music", "direct music," or "foreground music".
 - source music has a source within the film (could be a band, a radio, a record player, singing to child, etc). makes world seem more real. can also imply the time period from.

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from when the music was

- Functions include: establishing time and place, creating a sense of "realism and immediacy" and providing ironic comment. (eg. record player playing some song saying something ironic while something else is happening)

Nondiegetic Music:

- heard by the film audience only
- Referred to as the "score," "underscore," or "background music"
- Normally originally composed for the specific film (original score)
- May also include preexisting music "adapted" for the film.
- Scores can come in different flavours. Sometimes scores can be made up of preexisting music that is altered to work as nondiegetic music in a film.

Example: The Sting (1973) Music of Scott Joplin, adapted by Marvin Hamlisch. "The Entertainer" was considered contemporary in the 1920s. It wasn't used as Joplin wrote it. Hamlisch adapted it for the film. Hamlisch made some sections longer or cutting out different sections to fit the scene. Referred to as an adapted score

- May also include preexisting music used without adaptation
 - Example: **Platoon (1986)** Composer: George Delure, also includes Samuel Barber's **Adagio for Strings** used in **The Elephant Man (1980)** and **Sicko (2007)**
- All preexisting music, "Compiled Score". Example: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968), compiled by Alex North, Richard Strauss, J Strauss, etc...
 - Stanley Kubrick best known for compiled scores. some films deliberately cut to match the music

Describing the Music:

Style:

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music that has been

entainer" - ragtime music,
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