

2. Film soundtracks

Music and films

SECTION 1 MUSICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS. LISTENING



1. PURPOSE OF THE SOUNDTRACK

1. Composers of soundtracks create their own music for each film with certain basic functions. Complete the following text.

- ✓ Detail or **amplify** the meaning of a **image**.
- ✓ Describe a character, **state of mind**, someone's **character** etc.
- ✓ Suggest an atmosphere of a **a place** a **a period**.
- ✓ Transmit emotions beyond the **images**.
- ✓ Provide a setting for scenes, films **credits**, joining **sequences**, provide **continuity**.

2. Film soundtracks are closely connected to the characters and the plot. Here you will listen to four exercises pertaining to different film genres (animation, romance, action and horror). Indicate which genre is which below.



Listening 20 Genre: **Psycho // thriller**

Listening 21 Genre: **Ghost // romantic**

Listening 22 Genre: **Walt Disney // cartoon**

Listening 23 Genre: **Superman // action**



3



2



4



1



3. Music does not always have the same importance in a scene. Explain the following kinds of music used in scenes:

- ✓ Foreground music: *The music is the most relevant and stands out over all other sounds.*
- ✓ Background music: *The music only accompanies a scene but is not of primary importance. It is used under dialogues or other sounds to make the scene more believable.*
- ✓ Underscore music: *The music is even less important than in a secondary plane, and is sometimes almost inaudible*
- ✓ Silence: *Silence. It is not always necessary to have music in every scene.*

4. The following fragments belong to sequences of the film *Life Is Beautiful* by Roberto Benigni. Say what musical plane you can hear in each exercise:

Listening 24 Kind of music: *background music*

Listening 25 Kind of music: *inaudible*

Listening 26 Kind of music: *foreground music*

Listening 27 Kind of music: *underscore music*



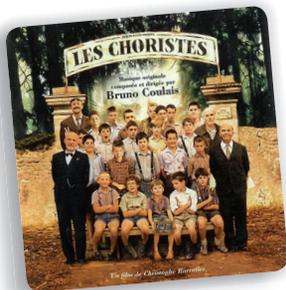
2. THE RELATION BETWEEN MUSIC AND IMAGES

5. Explain what is meant by diegetic music and incidental music.

DIEGETIC MUSIC. *Diegetic music refers to the music being a part of the narrative of the film, meaning the characters in the film can hear it when it is playing. This music is actually part of the scene, such as a radio, TV or dance band, or someone playing an instrument. For instance, if the characters in a film are in a disco dancing, the music you can hear is diegetic.*

INCIDENTAL MUSIC (NON-DIEGETIC). *This is music that only the spectators can hear. The characters in the film can't hear it. Its purpose is to create a special atmosphere and transmit something about the characters, using either words or sounds that the actors or actresses themselves cannot convey.*

6. Say which of these fragments are examples of diegetic music or of incidental music.



The main character is a musician who goes into a bar and starts playing the piano.

Listening 28 Shine

Diegetic



The group touring in the car cannot hide their surprise at seeing the dinosaurs alive.

Listening 29 Jurassic Park

Incidental



The boys in the choir are rehearsing with their teacher.

Listening 30 Les Choristes

Diegetic



Final scene on the battlefield, and the music recreates the feelings of the characters.

Listening 31 Braveheart

Incidental



3. COMPOSING A SOUNDTRACK

7. Explain what music adapted for a film is and give an example.

Music already existing before the film was made is incorporated into the track, and this kind of music is not composed especially for a given soundtrack. On many occasions works by the “classical” composers are chosen, whereas other films require more “commercial” songs from pop, rock or electronic music. Some examples are: Platoon, The Godfather, Excalibur, The Shining, Kramer vs. Kramer, Memories of Africa, 2001 A Space Odyssey, Apocalypse Now or The Great Dictator.

8. Explain what an original soundtrack for a film is and give an example.

These types of compositions are called Original Soundtracks (OST). This is music created especially for a given film. The writers of these soundtracks are usually very highly paid. Some examples are: Pirates of the Caribbean, The Last of the Mohicans, The Pink Panther, Titanic, Indiana Jones...

9. Say which of these fragments are examples of adapted music or of original music.

Music by the group AC/DC was used for the soundtrack.

Listening 32 Iron Man

Adapted



Music composed by Bill Conti. *Gonna Fly Now* is a song representing the main character’s urge to succeed in this film.

Listening 33 Rocky

Original





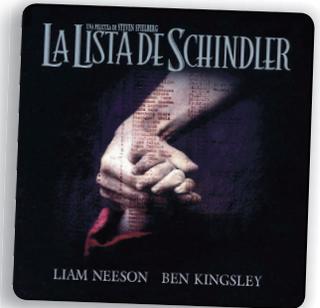
Listening 34 2001, *A Space Odyssey*

Johann Strauss's *Blue Danube* waltz composed in the 19th century can be heard in a part of this film. Adapted



Listening 35 *Schindler's List*

This film describes part of the Holocaust, so John Williams composed music referring to horror and despair. Original



4. THE EVOLUTION OF FILM MUSIC

10. Cross out the wrong answer.

- The first public screening of a film at which admission was charged was by the **Lightman brothers** / **Lumière brothers**.
- The first film was a series of images **from daily life** / **from a horror story**.
- One of the first film directors who began creating fictional stories and not just scenes from daily life was **Charlie Chaplin** / **Georges Méliès**.
- Silent comedy movies **often included social criticism** / **never included social criticism**.
- Among the most first comedy directors were **Charles Chaplin, Harold Lewis and Beater Keaton** / **Charles Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton**.

4.1. THE BEGINNING OF MUSIC IN FILMS

11. Explain briefly why music was included in silent movies, giving two reasons.



1st. Projecting silent movies always made a noise that came from the projector itself. So as not to bother the spectators, background music was used to cover up the noise and make the film more interesting.

2nd. Films obviously have different scenes - comic, dramatic, emotional, etc. To give the film more intensity, the visual scenes need to be reinforced and music was the appropriate device to do this

4.2. THE FIRST SOUNDTRACKS

12. We can say that a series of musical “topics” are used for certain scenes in a film, even today. Say which of these listening exercises could be used for scenes of wedding, a man sleeping or a funeral:

Listening 36 Scene: Brahms’s “Lullaby” when a character was sleeping.

Listening 37 Scene: Mendelssohn’s “Wedding March”.

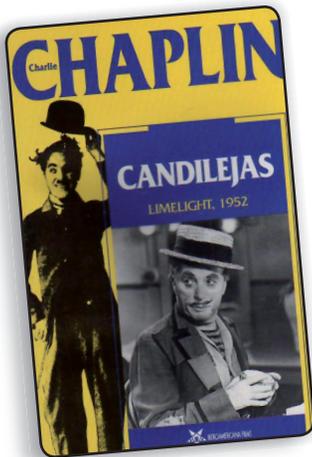
Listening 38 Scene: Chopin’s “Funeral March”.



4.3. THE STAR OF SILENT FILMS

13. After watching this scene from *Modern Times*, you can see how the music perfectly describes each of the movements, sensations and actions of the characters. Do you think the music is an underscore, and therefore could be excluded from the film? Give reasons for your answer. _____

The music is in the foreground, as it helps to describe the situations in each of the scenes. For example, the music in the first scene describes the situation: rapid speed, ascending scales at great speed and short notes (sounding like the movement of the wrench used to tighten the nuts). When the actors falls into the machine, the music sounds like a clock. The music even changes suddenly to represent the terrifying role of the factory owner. When Chaplin is coming up out of the machine, the notes go higher and higher (ascending progressions). There is even music with a dance-like character, perfectly representing the movements of the actor.



Listening 39



Limelight by Charlie Chaplin

You must have heard this music at some time. This is the main theme from the film *Limelight*, by Charlie Chaplin, a sad but beautiful love story. Chaplin was the composer of this music, because he created most of the music for his films.

14. This listening exercise is the main theme of the film. Do you think the character of this music matches the plot of the film? Yes. What sensations does this music transmit to you?

The music has a sad, half-romantic feeling, representing the main character of this Chaplin film

4.5. THE BIRTH OF SOUND FILMS

15. Answer the questions about the birth of sound films.

- a. What was the name of the first sound system for films? Vitaphone.
- b. What did this system include? Sound was not yet included on the film itself, so a separate disc was used for the sound track of films, which was also recorded separately. The disc was played with a phonograph and was synchronised with the film images.
- c. What was the name of the first film in which sound was used in parts of the production? The "Jazz Singer" in 1927.
- d. Give the name of one of the first films to use sound throughout the entire film. The first complete sound films appeared in 1928: "Lights of New York", and with a pre-recorded soundtrack "White Shadows in the South Seas".

4.6. THE 30s

16. Choose the right answer.

- a. In 1931 a new sound system for films was invented.:
- VITAPHONE MOVIE TONE MICROPHONE
- b. A great number of musicians from all over Europe started to work in the big film studios of:
- SPAIN JAPAN USA
- c. To create their sound tracks, the very first musicians were inspired by the composers of:
- FOLK MUSIC SYMPHONIC MUSIC ROCK MUSIC
- d. One of the first composers of soundtracks for films was:
- BEETHOVEN MAX STEINER TCHAIKOVSKY

17. After watching the video fragment from *Gone With the Wind*, answer these questions. (Video 14)

- a. This is the age of the so-called great symphonic composers for film productions, so what was their source of inspiration? These were inspired by the big composers from classical music, especially the Romantic period (Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Puccini, etc.), giving rise to compositions that were highly expressive and opulent in true symphonic style.
- b. Do you think the music in this fragment of the film is derived from this source of inspiration? Yes. Explain your answer. The scores for these soundtracks were like a symphony conceived for an entire orchestra, and composers highlight one musical theme that will be remembered.



18. Answer the following questions.

- a. What is the name of the big film studio that was founded in the early 40s in southern California?
The Hollywood studios.
- b. Films in the former decade had only one section on the film with all the sounds, but what technical advances came to solve this problem, for example, to enable dubbing into other languages?
They used three separate tracks for sound: ambient noise, music and dialogues. So when a film was dubbed into another language only the dialogues track was modified.
- c. In the 50s, in view of the increasing importance of television, a system is invented to make better use of colour and enable sound to be recorded in stereo. What is the name of this system?
Cinemascope.

The screen has a special look in this kind of projection. How would you describe it? _____

They are wider, and there are black strips on the upper and lower parts of the cinema screen.

19. After watching the video fragment from *Ben-Hur*, answer these questions. (Video 17)

The scene is from when Jesus Christ is condemned to death, and you will recognise the famous sequence of Pontius Pilate washing his hands. Note that the music transmits a sensation of affliction, sadness, even a macabre character, sounding something like a funeral march at times. Let's describe the musical resources the composer has used to create these sensation:

- a. What tempo does this music have? *Slow tempo.*
- b. Do you think a different tempo could have created the same atmosphere in this sequence? _____
No, because it is a very sad, macabre part of the film.
- c. Say whether the predominant musical notes are long or short. *Long duration.*
- d. As regards pitch, do you think there is a predominance of high or low notes? *Low sounds.*

20. In *Psycho*, the composer shows his skill in recreating an atmosphere of tension and calm using different sound effects. (Video 18)



In the scene given in this video we can differentiate two parts clearly:

- 1st. When the murderer is coming to the shower and stabs the woman.
- 2nd. The murderer leaves and the woman dies slowly in the bathtub.

- a. Note that you can differentiate the two parts clearly by the use of different kinds of music. What sounds predominate in the first part of the scene? Cross out the wrong answer.

LONG / ~~H~~IGHSHORT / ~~L~~OWREPETITIVE / MEL~~D~~IC

- b. What sensations are produced by this type of sound? _____

Sensation of anguish, anxiety or terror.

- c. As regards the sounds predominating in the second part of the scene, cross out the wrong answer/s.

LONG / ~~H~~IGHSH~~O~~RT / LOWDESCENDING / ASCEN~~D~~ING

- d. What sensations are produced by this type of sound? _____

Sensation of ending or conclusion, death...

- 21.a. In the 50s soundtracks were created with a style of music that had never been used by musicians before. What style was it? Jazz

- b. Write the name of a composer who used this style of music in his soundtracks.

Alex North and Elmer Bernstein.

- c. From the following soundtracks, circle the one that belongs to this new style.

Listening 40 *The Ten Commandments*

Listening 41 *The Man with the Golden Arm*

Listening 42 *Citizen Kane*



4.8. THE 60s

22. Answer true (T) or false (F):

- (T) Soundtracks present a few innovations, such as incorporating songs throughout the film for commercial reasons.
- (T) Sometimes a musical theme occurs various times during the film, even without any relation to the scenes being presented.
- (F) One of the first composers to use this style of music in his films was Max Steiner.
- (F) The soundtrack for *Moon River* was composed by Henry Mancini.
- (T) The soundtrack for *The Pink Panther* was composed by Henry Mancini.
- (T) During the 60s young people in the USA idolised pop and rock stars.

- F** Among the idols of the 60s were The Beatles and Mozart.
- T** Rock and roll songs, pop songs, singer-songwriter music, etc. were all included in many of the films in this decade.
- T** *The Graduate* is a film that contains songs written by Simon and Garfunkel.
- F** *A Hard Day's Night* is a film starring Elvis Presley.

4.9. THE 70s

23. Answer the following questions.

- a. What is the name of the most outstanding composer not only of this decade, but also of later decades as well? John Williams.
- b. With what film director did he collaborate most often? With Steven Spielberg.
- c. Write the name of at least three films that he did the music for.
Schindler's List, Jaws, Superman, Indiana Jones, Jurassic Park, Saving Private Ryan, War of the Worlds, Harry Potter, among others.
- d. Can you connect the title of each of these films with its soundtrack?

Star Wars - Jaws - Indiana Jones - Harry Potter

TÍTULO DE LA PELÍCULA

- Listening 43 Soundtrack 1 Indiana Jones
- Listening 44 Soundtrack 2 Star Wars
- Listening 45 Soundtrack 3 Jaws
- Listening 46 Soundtrack 4 Harry Potter



- e. Write the name of another composer. Bill Conti ("Rocky"), John Morris and David Shire.

4.10. THE 80s

24. Answer the following questions.

- a. Write the name of the two musical movements used most frequently in this period for composing soundtracks and explain what features they have.
1. Symphonic rock uses real symphonic orchestras and even electronic instruments imitating them. 2. The rise of electronic music in commercial songs brings about the creation of soundtracks using synthesizers.

b. Write the names of some of the most notable composers in each movement.

Symphonic music: John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, Hans Zimmer, James Newton Howard and Alan Silvestri. Electronic music: Vangelis, Maurice Jarre (Gorillas in the Mist), R. Sakamoto (The Last Emperor).

c. Relate each composer to the right soundtrack.

- Jerry Goldsmith → • *Chariots of Fire*
- Vangelis → • *Planet of the Apes*
- Hans Zimmer → • *Gorillas in the Mist*
- Maurice Jarre → • *Rain man*



4.11. THE 90s

25. Mark the right answers.

- a. What themes were introduced by certain films that gave rise to a certain amount of controversy?
 Horror and religion Science fiction and comedy Violence and eroticism
- b. In the early 90s there was a recovery of music from songs that were not exclusively written for films. They were intended to...
 improve the scenes. obtain more profit. give a more realistic sensation to the scene.
- c. Among the films using hit songs that were not necessarily written for its soundtrack are...
 Batman *Pulp Fiction* *Braveheart*
- d. Among the composer using the symphonic style in this period are...
 David Arnold Celine Dion John Barry
- e. The soundtrack that attained the greatest success in the 90s was for the film...
 Independence Day *Basic Instinct* *Titanic*

26. Can you recognise the film to which these soundtracks belong?

Batman - Pulp Fiction - Braveheart - Stargate

FILM TITLE

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Listening 47 | Soundtrack 1 | <i>Batman</i> |
| Listening 48 | Soundtrack 2 | <i>Braveheart</i> |
| Listening 49 | Soundtrack 3 | <i>Pulp Fiction</i> |
| Listening 50 | Soundtrack 4 | <i>Stargate</i> |



4.12. THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

27. Answer the following questions.

a. What tools are used in this new millennium to create 3-D characters who look absolutely real?

Harry Potter

b. Write the names of a few films using these resources to create fictional beings that look like real.

Avatar, War of the Worlds, Star Trek, The Lord of the Rings, and most current-day science fiction films.

c. Relate each film to the composer of its music.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| • <i>War of the Worlds</i> | → | • Hans Zimmer |
| • <i>Gladiator</i> | → | • Michael Giacchino |
| • <i>Star Trek</i> | → | • Howard Shore |
| • <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> | → | • John Williams |

5. FILM MUSIC IN EUROPE

28. Give the right answer using the consonants provided.

• **With an R.** Composer of post-war music pertaining the cultural movement called Neo-Realism.

R. Rossellini

• **With an N.** Composer of the soundtrack for *The Godfather*. Nino Rota

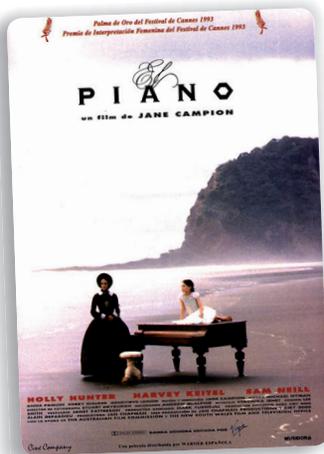
• **With an E.** He composed many of the soundtracks for the film genre known as the Spaghetti-Western. Ennio Morricone

• **With an F.** Composer who used synthesisers to compose his soundtracks.

Francis Lai

• **With an M.** He composed the music for the film *Lawrence of Arabia*. Maurice Jarré

29. After watching the video on the film *The Piano*, answer the questions below. (Video 33)



a. Practically all the music in this video is “foreground music”, but there is a moment when it becomes secondary to the scene. Say when.

At the end of the first scene, in the transition to the second, when they are walking over the mud.

b. Sometimes the music in a film can also be heard by the characters, that is, it is not just an accompaniment to the scene, but forms part of the sequence. This is known as diegetic music. Do you think the music in this video is of this kind?

Yes. It comes in the second scene, when the main character is playing the melody we can hear on the piano, and which another character is listening to and enjoying.

30. In this letter soup, try to find the names of the three Spanish composers described below.



a. Surname of one of the first composers of music for films in Spain.

Quintero

b. Surname of one of the leading composers of the 50s.

Maiztegui

c. Surname of one of the most important composers soundtrack music in the classical style.

Bernaola

d. Surname of the composer of the soundtrack for *Torrente*. Baños

e. Surname of the composer of the music for the Spanish film *Lo imposible*. Velázquez

31. Soundtracks are not the only means of identifying a film. There are voices of the characters who have become famous, basically for their timbre and form of expression.

a. Write the name of the film to which the voice belongs.

b. Say which order the voices appear in.



Listening 51 Voice 1

Listening 52 Voice 2

Listening 53 Voice 3

Listening 54 Voice 4

Listening 55 Voice 5



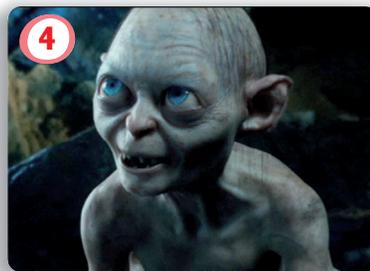
Puss in Boots



The Lion King



The Simpsons



The Lord of the Rings



E.T.

SECTION 3 MUSICAL CREATION

The **time signature** is indicated by a fraction:

- The **numerator** of the fraction tells us two things: The number of beats in the bar and the number of note signs that can fall within the bar (time value).
- The **denominator** of the fraction indicates the note sign represented by the beat (breve, semibreve, minim, crochet, quaver, semiquaver) (note value).

There are two types of time signatures:

a) Simple time signatures, or **binary subdivisions** (each beat can be divided into 2 parts or halves).

The most frequently used are:

2/4 time. Indicates that the bar has 2 beats and that each beat corresponds to a crochet. It is therefore duple time.



3/4 time. Indicates that the bar has 3 beats and that each beat corresponds to a crochet. It is therefore triple time.



4/4 time. Indicates that the bar has 4 beats and that each beat corresponds to a crochet. It is therefore quadruple time.



b) Compound time signatures, or **ternary subdivisions** (each beat can be divided into 3 parts or halves). The most frequently used compound time signatures are:

6/8 time. Represented like this, it has 2 beats, and the numerator indicates that 6 quavers fall within the bar, so each beat has 3 quavers, which is the same as one dotted crochet.



9/8 time. Represented like this, it has 3 beats, and the numerator indicates that 9 quavers fall within the bar, so each beat has 3 quavers, which is the same as one dotted crochet.



12/8 time. Represented like this, it has 4 beats, and the numerator indicates that 12 quavers fall within the bar, so each beat has 3 quavers, which is the same as one dotted crochet.



1. The following statements refer to time signatures. Complete them.

a. The numerator tells us two things:

1. *The number of beats to a bar.*

2. *The number of note signs that can fall within the bar (time value).*

b. The denominator tells us: *The note sign represented by the beat (breve, semibreve, minim, crochet, quaver, semiquaver) (note value).*

c. In simple time signatures, or _____ *binary* _____, subdivisions, each beat can be divided into *two parts or halves.*

d. In compound time signatures, or _____ *ternary form* _____, subdivisions, each beat can be divided into *three parts or thirds.*

e. The numbers in the numerators of simple time signatures can be *2, 3 and 4.*

f. The numbers in the numerators of compound time signatures can be *6, 9 and 12.*

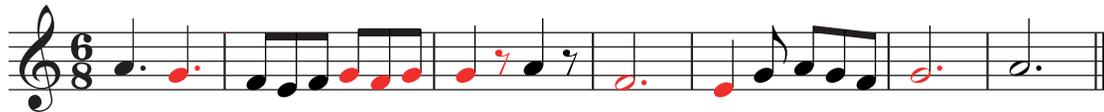
2. Complete the bars with the notes you think are appropriate.

**These answers are for guidance only, as there are various possibilities.*

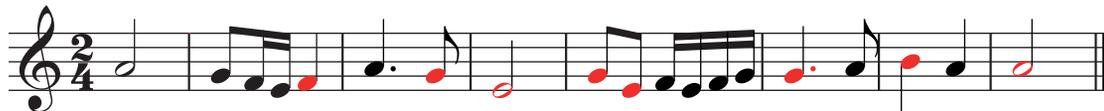
a.



b.



c.



d.

