

FILM SCORE

A romantic ideal

CAN YOU NAME THESE MOVIES?

- Try to guess where these scores come from.
- Technology has caused film score to become ubiquitous in modern society
 - *“All this ‘software’ has two things in common: it needs music and it pays money. I’m not saying that scoring the next game boy hit will buy you an estate in Bel Air, but there are now more opportunities than ever for composers.” –Christopher Brooks in Visual Music (Preface)*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FILM SCORE

- Noise Canceler
- Movie Enhancer
 - *“It was discovered that, acting in a catalytic way, music could alter viewer’s perception of the dramatic links between words and images; that it could stimulate feeling and reactions.” –Irwin Bazelon in *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music* (22)*

FILM SCORE IN THE MODERN ERA

- Film score began during the 20th century which is part of the Modern Era of music history.
- The Modern Era has affected film scoring.
 - Compositional techniques
 - Diversity

FILM SCORE AND THE MODER ERA

(Cont.)

- Advice from John Williams: (Forward to *On the Track*)
 - *“In the past, most composers approached the world of film music from a variety of backgrounds. They began by studying concert music or playing jazz, rock, or pop music, orchestrating for other composers, writing arrangements for vocalists and big bands, working on theatre productions, creating and producing television commercials, and in general, exploring all styles of music... The broad experience gained from this eclectic background was, and is, probably the best preparation for a film composer.”*

FILM SCORE AS A ROMANTIC IDEAL

- The Romantic Era defined:
 - *Writers and musicians promoted new artistic ideals for music that focused on individuality, originality, fantasy, expression of pure emotion, and transcending conventional limits in pursuit of deeper truths.” –Donald Jay Grout, J. Peter Burkholder, and Claude V. Palisca in A History of Western Music (586)*
- Three Romantic Ideals:
 - Individualism, Emotional Expression, Programmatic Themes

FILM SCORE AS A ROMANTIC IDEAL

(Cont.)

- Individualism
 - Marketing
 - Aural Identification
- Emotional Expression
 - Capture the Atmosphere of the Film
 - Elicit a Specific Emotional Response From Viewers

FILM SCORE AS A ROMANTIC IDEAL

(Cont.)

- Programmatic Music
 - Defined: Programmatic music represents something other than itself. Its purpose is to define, emote, or enhance something that is extra-musical.
 - "Film" Score is about the Film.

FILM SCORE AS A ROMANTIC IDEAL

(Cont.)

- Programmatic Music (cont.)
 - *“But, of course, a quick listen to most film-music cues, even for the title sequences reveals that, while they borrow forms and styles of classical music, they more often than not lack much of the narratological backbone of that music.”* - Royal S. Brown, “How Not to Think Film Music” (3)
 - In fact, without its movie, film score is often not worthy to be considered high-level composition. It’s what the film score does for the movie that makes it worthy of study.

FILM SCORE AS A ROMANTIC IDEAL

Though film scores bear the marks of modern music in many ways, they are, in themselves, a Romantic endeavor.