





# The Purpose of Music in Film

Film Music is a type of Descriptive Music that represents a mood, story, scene or character through music; it is designed to support the action and emotions of the film on screen.

To create or enhance a mood	To function as a Leitmotif	To emphasise a gesture	To provide unexpected juxtaposition/irony
<p>Frequent effects used by Film Music composers to create or enhance a mood include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A repeated <b>OSTINATO</b> pattern</li> <li>• Sustained notes of <b>LONG DURATION</b></li> <li>• <b>TREMOLO</b> strings</li> <li>• A <b>CRESCENDO</b> with the <b>DYNAMICS</b> gradually getting louder</li> <li>• Increasing <b>TEMPO</b> (<i>Accelerando</i>)</li> <li>• <b>PITCH</b> getting higher</li> <li>• The use of <b>SILENCE</b> before something dramatic (to make you jump!)</li> <li>• Unusual harmonies such as the use of minor and <b>DISSONANT</b> or <b>CHROMATIC CHORDS</b>, <b>DISCHORDS</b> and <b>DIMINISHED CHORDS</b></li> <li>• <b>IRREGULAR TIME SIGNATURES</b> (5/4, 7/8)</li> <li>• Rapid Scale Patterns help create a frantic mood and a feeling of unrest and urgency</li> <li>• <b>INTERRUPTED CADENCES</b> create a sense of tension and suspense</li> <li>• The use of the <b>TRITONE</b> (<i>Augmented 4<sup>th</sup></i>)</li> <li>• The use of low pitch brass and strings to provide a “dark sound”</li> <li>• The use of percussive metallic sounds</li> <li>• The use of <b>SUSPENSIONS</b> that don’t resolve to build tension and make you think danger is near</li> <li>• Frequent changes in <b>DYNAMICS</b> to hint an imminent danger</li> <li>• The use of electronic sounds and synthesisers</li> <li>• The use of <b>SAMPLED SOUNDS</b></li> <li>• The use of effects such as <b>REVERB</b> or <b>DISTORTION</b> applied to electronic, synthesised or sampled sounds to change and manipulate the sound</li> <li>• The use of unusual (often electronic) instruments <i>e.g. Rószka’s use of the Theremin</i> in his soundtrack to Alfred Hitchcock’s thriller ‘Spellbound’ (1945)</li> </ul>	<p>A frequently recurring short melodic or harmonic idea which is associated with a character, event, concept, idea, object or situation which be used directly or indirectly to remind us of one not actually present on screen. Leitmotifs can be changed (<i>sequencing, repetition, modulation</i>) giving a hint as to what will happen later in the film or may be heard in the background giving a “subtle hint” to the viewer/listener.</p> 	<p>This is known as <b>MICKEY-MOUSING</b> and is used especially in animated films, cartoons and comedy films and is where the music mimics every small movement reinforcing or illustrating the action <i>e.g. sliding trombones as characters journey up and down in a lift, a descending chromatic scale as a character goes down a set of stairs</i>. Timing is crucial when using Mickey-Mousing and Film Music composers often use <b>CLICK TRACKS</b> to help them time their music exactly.</p> 	<p>Using music which the listener/viewer wouldn’t normally expect to hear creating a sense of uneasiness, comparison or even humour <i>e.g. Tchaikovsky’s “Swan Lake” is heard in the ‘Dracula’ (1931) film</i>.</p>  <p><b>To influence the pacing of a scene making it appear faster/slower/more comprehensive</b></p> <p>Film Music composers often use fast, dramatic music in action sequences to “drive the action and pace forward”. In love or romantic scenes, a slow, sweeping theme on the Strings can be used to “slow the pace down”.</p>
	<p><b>To link one scene to another and smooth over visual cuts, providing continuity</b></p> <p>Repeated sections of music can be used to link different parts of the film together – it can remind you of something that happened earlier in the film. The style of music can also change within a film with different sections of the film having different moods – love, humour, battle/war. Film scores may be <b>MONOTHEMATIC</b> where the entire film score is based upon a single melody <i>e.g. David Raksin’s “Laura” (1944)</i> which is heard so often and in many different circumstances, that it comes to “haunt the listener”.</p>	<p><b>To give added commercial impetus</b></p> <p>The independent commercial ‘afterlife’ of the film score has become an increasingly important aspect of Film Music. “Hit” songs will help sell the film and are often used in the opening or closing credits. Songs may be used as title tracks but can return ‘in the background’ of the film soundtrack later. All of the James Bond films feature ‘big songs’ often released as popular music singles independently to help advertise the film and add commercial impetus.</p> 	<p><b>To illustrate geographic location or historical period</b></p> <p>Westerns often use music “from the time” to set the scene using ‘traditional’ instruments. Films set in a different country often combine traditional instruments “associated with a particular country” in their soundtracks to help the audience imagine the film’s setting and give a sense of “place” <i>e.g. the Sitar can help “place a film” in India or the Bagpipes help “place a film” in Scotland</i>. Films set in a particular historical period <i>e.g. the 1970’s or 1980’s</i>, may use pop songs from the time to set the scene with the audience recognising the songs and reminding them of that particular decade.</p>

# History of Film Music

## Early Film Soundtracks

Early films had no soundtrack (“Silent Cinema”), so music had to be provided live, usually **IMPROVED** by a pianist or organist. The first soundtracks appeared in the 1920’s and used existing music, particularly from operas and ballets (Wagner and Verdi) and libraries of “Mood Music” were formed.

## Film Music in the 1930’s and 40’s

Soundtracks first appeared at the end of the 1920’s and until the Second World War, Hollywood hired Classical composers to write huge Romantic-style film soundtracks.

## Film Music in the 1950’s and 60’s

In the 1950’s and 1960’s, film producers tried using contemporary popular and classical styles, including jazz and experimental music but from the 1970’s, there was a rise of post-Romantic Film Music.

## Film Music Today

Film music today often blends popular, electronic and classical music in a flexible way that suits the needs of the particular film. Nevertheless, Hollywood still creates superstar composers whose film music often takes on a life of its own away from its original context, on CDs, downloads and in the concert hall.

# How Film Music is Produced

## Music Spotting

The Film Music composer attends a ‘music-spotting’ session with the Director and decides where music is to feature in the finished film.



## Cue Sheets

Cue Sheets are then produced containing accurate timings (in seconds and fractions of seconds) of all dialogue and descriptions of the action.

MUSIC CUE SHEET						
Program: XYZ SHOW		Air Date: 9/9/97		Air Time: 8PM, EST		
Episode: #016						
TITLES OF MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS	TIMING OF MUSIC USED	TYPE OF USAGE	COMPOSERS/ LYRICISTS	PUBLISHER/ COPYRIGHT OWNER	AFFILIATION	
Rod Dress	1:32	B/I	Alan Smith	Rock Salad Music	ASCAP	
			John Brants		ASCAP	
XYZ Theme	:54	T	Comte Ray	Madras Soul Music	ASCAP	
			Jose Mustlov			
			Carol Sign			
			Felix Brown			
Fiesta Dance	:35	B/I	Keith Max	Magno Bullie-Bongie	ASCAP	
Stand Up For Me	1:23	VV	Len Voss	Gardens Publishing	ASCAP	
			Paul Gava	Wesley Music	ASCAP	
			Diane Quon		ASCAP	
			Ed Provost		ASCAP	

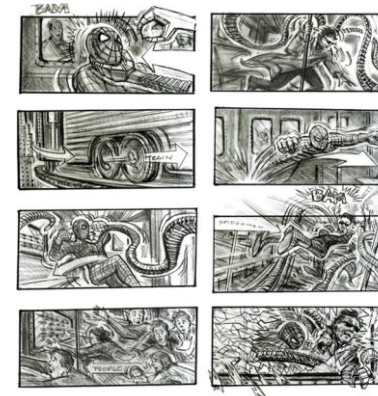
## Click Tracks

An electronic metronome which facilitates the accurate synchronisation of music to events exactly – used extensively in creating music for animated films and cartoons.



## Storyboards

A graphic organizer in the form of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualising a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or video game sequence.



## Diegetic and Non-Diegetic Film Music

**DIEGETIC FILM MUSIC** – music within the film for both the characters and audience to hear *e.g. a car radio, a band in a nightclub or sound effects such as guns in the distance or screeching car breaks*. Also known as **SOURCE MUSIC** or **IN-VISION MUSIC**.

**NON-DIEGETIC FILM MUSIC** – music which is “put over the top” of the action to increase the effect of the film and for the audience’s benefit and which the characters within the film can’t hear *e.g. music to accompany a car chase*. Also known as **UNDERScore** or **INCIDENTAL MUSIC**.

# Musical Features of Film Music



<u>Pitch &amp; Melody</u>	<u>Articulation</u>	<u>Dynamics</u>	<u>Texture</u>	<u>Harmony</u>
<p><b>LEAPS (DISJUNCT MELODIC MOVEMENT)</b> and <b>CHROMATICISM</b> for weirdness and “baddies” – <b>STEPWISE (CONJUNCT MELODIC MOVEMENT)</b> and <b>DIATONIC</b> melodies for happiness and “goodies”.</p> <p><b>RISING MELODIES</b> for increasing tension or increasing triumph – <b>FALLING MELODIES</b> for decreasing tension or hopelessness/defeat. Westerns often feature a “<b>BIG THEME</b>” played on sweeping Strings. <b>Q&amp;A</b> phrases can represent “Good vs. Evil”. The interval of a <b>FIFTH</b> is often used in Sci-Fi film soundtracks as its “bare, open and sparse” sound quality matches that of “outer space”.</p>	<p><b>LEGATO</b> or flowing for happier situations – <b>STACCATO</b> or spiky for more challenging ones or to represent ‘frozen’ or ‘brittle’.</p> <p><b>ACCENTS (&gt;)</b> for violence</p> <p><b>SFORZANDOS (sfz/sf)</b> for sudden emphasis and to create a ‘shock’.</p> <p><b>PIZZICATO</b> (strings) – plucking the strings to create short, detached notes.</p> <p><b>ARCO</b> (strings) – using the bow to play.</p>	<p><b>LOUDER</b> for bolder or more powerful (whether good or bad) – <b>SOFTER</b> for more timid/weak</p> <p><b>CRESCENDOS</b> used for increasing threat, triumph or proximity – <b>DECRESCENDOS</b> and <b>DIMINUENDOS</b> used for subsiding things and things ‘going away into the distance’.</p> <p>Horror Film soundtracks often use <b>EXTREME DYNAMICS</b> or <b>SUDDEN CHANGES IN DYNAMICS</b> to enhance sudden actions on-screen and to “shock” the listener.</p>	<p><b>THIN</b> or <b>SPARSE</b> textures used for bleak or lonely situations.</p> <p><b>THICKER</b> or <b>FULLER</b> textures used for warmer, more “normal” situations and <b>THICK, DENSE</b> orchestral sounds heard during battles and chases.</p> <p>Complex <b>POLYPHONIC</b> textures for confused or very active situations.</p> <p><b>HOMOPHONIC MELODY AND ACCOMPANIMENT</b> texture used for more straightforward or calm situations or for “love themes”.</p>	<p><b>DIATONIC</b> harmony for simpler situations and good characters.</p> <p><b>CHROMATIC</b> harmony for more complex situations or bad characters.</p> <p><b>CONSONANCE</b> for normal situations or “good” characters.</p> <p><b>DISSONANCE</b> for scary situations or “evil” characters often using notes which are a semitone apart.</p> <p><b>MAJOR</b> for happier – <b>MINOR</b> for sadder.</p> <p><b>SEVENTH CHORDS</b> (including the use of the flattened 7<sup>th</sup>) often used to create harmonic richness, especially in Westerns. Sudden changes of harmonies create unexpected moods. <b>ATONAL</b> and <b>BITONAL</b> harmonies used to create ambiguous atmospheres often in Sci-Fi or Supernatural Film soundtracks.</p>
<u>Rhythm</u>	<u>Metre</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Leitmotifs, Themes &amp; Motifs</u>	<u>Timbre &amp; Sonority</u>
<p><b>FAST</b> for chases and hectic situations. <b>SLOWER</b> can mean more hesitant. <b>IRREGULAR</b> rhythms for threatening or unusual situations and <b>REGULAR</b> rhythms for safety or more “normal” situations. <b>OSTINATO</b> rhythms for repeated sounds <i>e.g. horse’s hooves</i>. <b>SYNCOPIATION</b> and <b>CROSS-RHYTHMS</b> to create tension and unease. “Traditional” dance rhythms <i>e.g. American Square Dance, Tango and Bolero</i> often used in soundtracks to Westerns.</p>	<p>2/4 or 4/4 for Marches, 3/4 for Waltzes. Metre isn’t as important in Film Music as the importance is on the music directly matching and enhancing the on-screen action which sometimes doesn’t fall into the regular divisions of a time signature. “Big Themes” and songs used within films are often in 4/4 metre. <b>IRREGULAR TIME SIGNATURES</b> often used to create unease and tension with a lack of clear pulse.</p>	<p><b>LONG</b>, held notes are often used in Westerns to show the vast open spaces of the North-American plains or to help describe the vastness of open space in a Sci-Fi film soundtrack.</p> <p><b>SHORT</b> notes are often used to describe “busy”, chaotic or hectic situations <i>e.g. a bustling crowd, a chase scene or a battle</i>.</p> <p><b>PEDAL</b> notes are long held notes in the bass line above changing harmonies and melodies and can also create tension and suspense.</p>	<p>A frequently recurring short melodic or harmonic idea which is associated with a character, event, concept, idea, object or situation which be used directly or indirectly to remind us of one not actually present on screen. Leitmotifs are often <i>fragmented</i> <i>e.g. in Horror films to show the deteriorating state of the hero or heroine as the film progresses</i>.</p> <p>The <b>SIGH MOTIF</b> is often used – a short rising then falling melody in an arch shape. Animated films and cartoons use a range of <b>MUSICAL CLICHÉS</b> – short motifs <i>e.g. pedal notes, ‘calamity motif’, cluster chords etc.</i> which are used every time a character does a certain action or ends up in a certain situation.</p>	<p>Traditional orchestral instruments often combined with electronic instruments. Orchestral instruments played in different ways <i>e.g. slashing the bow across the strings of a violin</i></p> <p>Sound Effects combines with traditional and electronic instruments.</p> <p>Brass Fanfares often used in Space Film soundtracks and in films when there is a battle or warfare.</p> <p>“Traditional” musical instruments ‘of the time’ help <i>place</i> a film in a specific place or time period.</p> <p>Unusual instruments often used in Sci-Fi, Space or Horror films – <i>Theremin, Celesta</i>. Instruments such as a the glockenspiel used in Horror film soundtracks to create tension.</p>

# Video Game Music

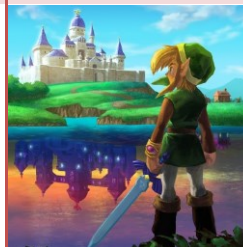


## Early Video Game Music



Early video game music consisted primarily of **SOUND EFFECTS**, **CHIPTUNES** (a style of music which used simple melodies) and early sound **SYNTHESISER** technology. **SAMPLING** began in the 1980's allowing sound to be played during the game, making it more realistic and less "synthetic-sounding".

## How Video Game Music is used within Video Games



Music within a video game is often used for **CUES** (knowing when a significant event was about to occur). Video game music is often heard over a game's title screen, options menu and bonus content as well as during the entire gameplay. Music can be used to increase tension and suspense e.g. during battles and chases and can change, depending on a player's actions or situation e.g. indicating missing actions or "pick-ups".

## How Video Game Music is Produced



Fully-orchestrated video game music scores are now popular – technology is used in their creation but less in their performance. The composer uses music technology to create the score, it is then played by an orchestra and then digitally converted and integrated into the game. Video game soundtracks have become popular and are now commercially sold and performed in concert with some radio stations featuring entire shows dedicated to video game music.

## Character Themes in Video Game Music



Characters within a video game can also have their own **THEMES** – like **LEITMOTIFS** within Film Music. These can be manipulated, altered and changed – adapting the elements of music – orchestration, timbre, sonority, texture, pitch, dynamics – depending on the character's situation or different places they travel to within the game.

## Famous Video Game Music Composers and their Soundtracks



**Koji Kondo**  
*Super Mario Bros.* (1985)  
*The Legend of Zelda* (1986)



**Michael Giacchino**  
*The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997)  
*Medal of Honour* (1999)  
*Call of Duty* (2003)



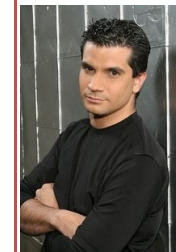
**Mieko Ishikawa**  
*Dragon Slayer* (1993)



**Martin O'Donnell and Michael Salvatori**  
*Halo* (2002)







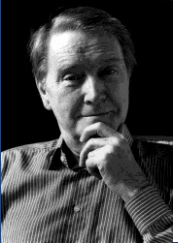


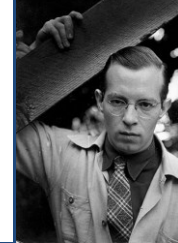







**Jesper Kyd**  
*Assassin's Creed* (2007)



**Tommy Tallarico**  
*Assassin's Creed* (2007)

# Film Music Composers and their Soundtracks

<p><b><u>Bernard Herrmann</u></b></p>  <p>Psycho Vertigo Taxi Driver</p>	<p><b><u>Jerry Goldsmith</u></b></p>  <p>Planet of the Apes Star Trek The Motion Picture The Omen Alien</p>	<p><b><u>John Williams</u></b></p>  <p>Star Wars Jaws Harry Potter Indiana Jones Superman E.T.</p>	<p><b><u>Hans Zimmer</u></b></p>  <p>The Lion King Gladiator Pearl Harbour Madagascar Dunkirk Blade Runner 2049</p>	<p><b><u>James Horner</u></b></p>  <p>Titanic Apollo 13 A Beautiful Mind Braveheart Star Trek II Aliens</p>
<p><b><u>John Carpenter</u></b></p>  <p>Halloween Halloween II Halloween III The Fog Season of the Witch</p>	<p><b><u>Harry Robinson</u></b></p>  <p>Twins of Evil Countess Dracula Demons of the Mind The Ghoul</p>	<p><b><u>Ennio Morricone</u></b></p>  <p>The Good, The Bad and The Ugly For a Few Dollars More The Mission Exorcist II</p>	<p><b><u>Elmer Bernstein</u></b></p>  <p>The Magnificent Seven</p>	<p><b><u>Jerome Moross</u></b></p>  <p>The Big Country</p>
<p><b><u>Carl Stalling</u></b></p>  <p>Many “Looney Tunes” and cartoon shorts.</p>	<p><b><u>John Barry</u></b></p>  <p>James Bond Films</p>	<p><b><u>Danny Elfman</u></b></p>  <p>Mission Impossible (adapted) Dick Tracy Batman Returns Men in Black Spider-Man</p>	<p><b><u>Wendy Carlos</u></b></p>  <p>Clockwork Orange The Shining</p>	<p><b><u>Rachel Portman</u></b></p>  <p>Chocolat</p>