Scoring The Body:
Psychoanalysis, Image Schemata,
and the Syntax of the Narrative Film Score.

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Abstract

Despite centuries of debate, the issue of meaning in music remains one of the most important and contested issues in the discourse of musicology. The integration of music and narrative film would seem to provide a rich source of material for those interested in this argument; however, despite the extraordinary success the medium has enjoyed, clearly suggesting that the musical/narrative associations constructed within a large number of films resonate within the consciousness of the general public, the film score has received little attention from world of musical scholarship.

Through an application of the theories of post-Freudien French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and American philosopher Mark Johnson's theory of "image schemata," this thesis will construct a methodology for the analysis of narrative film music. An overview of the relevant theoretical concepts is followed by illustrative musical examples. The views of film music composers, followed by a discussion of the interaction of visual and musical stimuli, will then serve as a foundation for the consideration of the role of a culturally dependent system of musical syntax in the construction of meaning within a film score. Finally, the interaction of these three concepts (psychoanalysis, image schemata and cultural syntax), is demonstrated in an analysis of the musical scores of two films: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (music by James Horner) and *The Piano* (music by Michael Nyman).

These analyses will support conclusions which position the various approaches to film scoring on a continuum located between the extremes of integration based on psychoanalysis and cultural syntax, both of which operate in a process informed by the structure of image schemata. This continuum offers a system by which a variety of film scores may be analyzed and discussed in a rigorous and consistent manner, as well as offering a methodology by which the construction of meaning in music as a whole may be better understood.

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Contents

Introduction: A long time ago in a theatre far, far away....

If you take a stroll along Toronto's Bloor Street west, just east of University Avenue, you will find the facade of the old University Theatre. The theater itself has long since been torn down and the grounds are currently covered by a parking lot. However, I cannot walk past the old doors, and the now deserted ticket booths, both waiting in silence to become the entrance of a shopping mall or condominium without thinking of the many films I saw there. Without doubt, my first visit to the University was the most important; when I was seven or eight years-old my father took me to see *2001: A Space Odyssey*. I remember not having the vaguest idea of what was going on, but I knew it was fantastic! So excited was I by the film that my parents purchased a copy of the soundtrack for my birthday. Time and time again I listened to that record, the music of Richard Strauss, Johanne Strauss, Aram Khachaturian, and Györy Ligeti accompanying my imaginary flights to the moon, and then on to Jupiter.[1] Although none of this music was composed for the film, in my memory the works have become indelibly linked to the wonder and epic adventure of *2001*. This was the first time I remember sensing the profound experience provided by the combination of music and film, or the way in which film music allowed me to re-engage with the narrative experience: how it allowed me to return to the moon in my spaceship of the imagination.

The purpose of this work is to explore the processes informing my experience. It will probe the nature of meaning in music through the form and function of film music (in particular, the practice of the Hollywood orchestral film score), producing an

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[1] In the heady days of early 1969, only months from the Apollo 11 landing, every eight-year-old I knew wanted to go to the moon!

analytical model with which we may examine any number of distinct films in a consistent, rigorous manner. As such, it is structured around one primary question: How is film music perceptually processed by the spectator? It is important to note that this question implicitly reveals an assumption which should be made clear from the outset. Based on my own experience, and the experience of everyone with whom I have spoken, I believe that music *is* capable of generating a variety of emotional conditions in the listener, a capability which continues to makes it so appealing to the producers and directors of motion pictures. Indeed, the search for this process is the goal of this paper. To that end, I will put forward a model which will describe the function of film music in terms of a continuum, the ends of which are defined by two distinct approaches to film scoring. At one end I locate a style dependent on the ability of a culturally competent audience to decode a culturally dependent syntax which functions as a set of musical subtitles commenting on the narrative events. At the other end I locate what I describe as a psychoanalytic style which engages the audience at a personal level, drawing them into the narrative and encouraging a close level of bonding with the filmic characters. The mechanism informing both ends of this scale is related to our understanding of the world, and how that understanding is structured by somatic experience.

To construct a theoretical model with which we may examine any film score, I will argue that to understand the mechanisms at work in musical perception (and the fusion of music and film), we must move beyond music to a discussion of the nature of understanding itself. How do we make sense of our experience of the world? In Chapter One I will offer a discussion drawing on the theories of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. Lacan's thoughts on the development of the child as it becomes self-aware, passing into the realm of language, as well as his theories of linguistic structure itself, suggest an origin for the raw materials of music - an origin common to us all. To explain how these .materials are structured in a meaningful way, I will offer a discussion derived from the

work of Mark Johnson, who proposes that the mechanism of understanding is based on the somatic nature of our existence, and our physical experience of the world.

In Chapter Two I will move beyond the theoretical to examine the views of film composers and the results of research into the field of music perception to see if the experience of the practitioner and the findings of science offer any support or opposition to my proposed model. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the role of a culturally dependent system of musical syntax in the creation and perception of meaning framed by an application of the work of Lacan and Johnson. Chapter Three will then demonstrate how these theories may be applied in a discussion of music from the films *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* and *The Piano*. A brief conclusion will summarize the application of the continuum model in relation to the two example films.

While I believe the analytical model presented in this thesis could be applied to any work of music, film music offers a particular opportunity for those interested in a discussion of meaning in music. Film music is either selected or composed on the basis of an assumed connection between it and the narrative image it is to accompany. Any attempt at generating an understanding of the meaning projected by a passage of film music must make sense within the wider context of the film narrative. As such, the visual narrative of film offers us a mirror in which we may check our discussion of a perceived meaning within the soundtrack to see if it generates some kind of coherent reflection. In this manner, I hope to reveal the cultural codes implicit in the two example film scores, while also offering an explanation of their content and operation in terms of our fundamental understanding of the world and of ourselves proposed by the theories of Lacan and Johnson.

Throughout this text, I have used the term "western tonal music" as a concise way of referencing a group of related concepts such as the system of major/minor tonality and - the tuning system of twelve-tone equal temperament. More importantly, the term refers to the ideologies of patriarchy and colonialism which continue to locate western tonal

music (in particular, the "art music" of western Europe), in a position of aesthetic and technical superiority to all other forms of music. It is not the purpose of this thesis to interrogate the role of these ideologies in detail; however, as many of the film music conventions we will encounter in this work are based on the European orchestral practices of the Nineteenth Century, and developed within the industrial systems of Hollywood, they cannot help but carry the traces of their ideological past, traces which continue to inform the conventions' deployment and interpretation.

A work on the subject of film music must also contend with the problem of primary sources. Despite the availability of soundtrack recordings and adaptations of scores in notated versions, I feel that the primary text must be the music found in the film. Even the composer's score can be misleading as edits and cuts frequently occur after the music has been recorded; at the discretion of the film's music editor and/or director, cues may even be relocated from one scene to another. What is most important in terms of examining the effect of film music is the final combination of visual and audio presented by the film. As such, all of the notated examples in this work are transcribed by the author from video copies of the various films. The examples are labeled with the following conventions: titles derived for the purposes of this work have no special punctuation; titles of specific cues taken from soundtrack recordings appear in quotation marks; film titles appear in italics. Although the transcribing of examples may mean a difference in how I have chosen to notate passages over the composer's original intent, I feel that this has minimal impact on the conclusions reached, as the examples are provided only as a guide. To understand the experience fully, films must be seen ...

... and heard.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Perspectives

At the heart of any inquiry into the function of film music is the question of music and meaning: Is music a language, and if so, is it a language capable of generating meaning outside itself? Is it a language capable of *representation*? Its continued use in the narrative film suggests that this may well be the case. Royal S. Brown states that music helps "narrativize" cinema which, because of its iconic medium, generates a higher degree of one-to-one correspondence between signifier and signified than that found in "natural" (verbal or written) language.[1] "Even though a photograph of a tree is not a tree, it produces in the observer of the photograph the impulse to say, 'That's a tree.'"[2] Music guides the viewer through a succession of these apparently objective images by suggesting how a particular image should be interpreted. It is this chain of interpretation which constitutes the narrative. Brown also suggests that music "heighten[s] the emotional impact of the significant moments of a given display, thereby distancing audiences even further from their own thoughts and fears [...] by involving them more deeply in the movie."[3] It is this particular belief in the ability of music to heighten emotional response which continues to inform the majority of discussion of the narrative film score; however, while I feel safe in the assumption that everyone reading this text have experienced a sense of heightened emotional response from the use of music in film, the acceptance of such a belief does nothing to explain the mechanisms at work.

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[1]Royal S. Brown, *Overtones And Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 16.
[2]ibid.
[3]ibid, 15.

Robert Walker states that "one of the most highly developed and universally acknowledged attributes of Western music is its capacity to represent in sound various moods, emotions, or dramatic events."[4] In his work, *Musical Beliefs*, Walker argues that, in the west, the history of musical discourse has been guided by this belief in music's "capacity to represent," resulting in the general acceptance on the part of society that music is constructed on a foundation of science and/or spirituality, both of which position music in terms of either a natural or supernatural force. An examination of the history of musical discourse reveals that this belief, whose origins may be traced back to the work of the ancient Greeks, consistently defines music as something beyond the realm of culture; a language capable of expressing that which is inexpressible. However, there can be little doubt that spoken or written languages are cultural constructs. They are systems of signs that through the general agreement of a particular social group can come to represent that which they are not. As well as acting as a vehicle for communication, language - because of its socially constructed nature - carries with it the ideological traces of its source. These traces are permeated with the biases and values of the culture of origin. The way in which a given language evolves over time, changing with its particular culture, demonstrates how dependent linguistic structure and content are on their social environment.

Within a given culture, language may be considered incapable of expressing fundamental concepts of existence as these are often seen as unchanging, constant, self-evident truths, that one may recognize and experience yet lack the words to express. It may be considered impossible to express that which is felt to be constant or unchanging with that which is transitory. Music, however, is attributed with the power to circumvent this limitation of language. When positioned as a force of nature, whose very structure is

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[4]Robert Walker, *Musical Beliefs: Psychoacoustic, Mythical, Educational Perspectives* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 97.

perceived to be linked to the underlying structure of the universe, it is believed that music may act as a bridge allowing the listener to grasp some sense of the fundamental concepts of existence which are beyond the reach of language. Yet, this belief is once again undermined by the obvious cultural influence on musical history. Like the verbal language it is thought to transcend, music has not been immune to cultural change. Similar to spoken or written language, musical systems have grown and evolved over time, changing in response to the ebb and flow of national boundaries and political systems, the developments in instrument technology, and the changes in European class structures such as the fall of the aristocracy and the rise of the middle class in association with the Industrial Revolution. How is it that a system that has undergone as many changes as any spoken language has consistently been credited with the ability to evoke and depict that which is timeless? By keeping the foundation of music in the timeless realms of science, the fundamental structure of the universe, or in the power of a gift of God bestowed upon man, it was possible to assert that what is in fact the culturally generated language of music is really the result of a scientific, natural, or divine process. It seems far more likely that meaning in music, like that of language, is a cultural construct.

If so, we may suggest that musical significance (including that of narrative film music) is transmitted through a collection of signs whose general meaning is the result of a tacit agreement between listener and composer. This line of reasoning is capable of explaining the vast diversity of musical systems developed around the world - systems as numerous and unique as spoken language itself. If there were some fundamental natural significance to the western system of music, why did it not develop independently in other cultures? It also explains the incompatibility of musical systems from different cultures, and in the inability of a member of one culture to "understand" the music of

another. Joseph Swain compares the experience of listening to another culture's music to that of hearing a "foreigner speak. [H]ow continuous the speech seems, how impossible it is to isolate single words. The experience of hearing a foreign music is much the same; we aren't sure what counts as a 'note.'"[5] While I find Swain's observation to be somewhat overzealous, I would agree that when one listens to the music of another culture the process of discerning patterns and relationships is informed by the listener's own cultural context, patterns and relationships which may be very different from those intended by the composer/performer. This is not to suggest that either interpretation is incorrect, only that as listeners we hear what our culture has "taught" us to hear. We hear what is familiar.

Music as cultural sign is also a key assumption in much of the recent literature of film music. In her book, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*, Claudia Gorbman claims that music produced for the Hollywood narrative film is a culturally encoded mode of discourse used in the creation and exercise of social or economic power: "Music remains in the dramatic film as the hypnotic voice bidding the spectator to believe, focus, behold, identify, consume."[6] In *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* Caryl Flinn draws on Marxist, feminist, and psychoanalytic theory to suggest that film music's codes evoke in the spectator the sense of an idealized past, a lost utopian vision which the viewer may revisit through the narrative film.[7] The cultural argument may explain our ability to decode the content or the specific structure of a musical language more convincingly than any claim of a natural or spiritual origin, and in turn, offer an explanation for the continued use of film music; however, it is still

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[5]Joseph P. Swain, *Musical Languages* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 8.
[6]Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 69.
[7]Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

unsatisfactory in its explanation of how we process meaning from what is, relatively speaking, a highly abstract acoustic system, and why this process may have such a powerful emotional effect.

Compare the abstract nature of music to that of spoken or written language. Ferdinand de Saussure felt that language is constructed on the basis of a one-to-one correspondence between the sign and the signifier. There is nothing inherent in the sign that links it to the signifier; the sign is distinguished only in terms of its difference from other signs. This allows words in different languages to mean the same thing.[8] He was not interested in spoken language which he thought too chaotic for profitable study, but in what he believed was language in its objective written state. If we grant that language is a dynamic system undergoing constant change, this notion of an objective state is difficult to accept: however, within a given social context it is necessary for the majority of the society's members to agree (for the enactment of everyday matters, at least) on what the signs of their collective language signify. It is quite possible to imagine a society which communicates in a similar manner through the use of instrumental music. Collections of pitches, or the organization of intervals, rather than letters, would form words, while tempo, dynamics, and timbre would clarify meaning in the way we associate with tone of voice.[9] That such a system already exists has been the subject of several scholarly studies, most notably Cooke's *The Language of Music*, which attempts to generate a catalogue of links between music and extra musical meaning in the works of composers from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.[10] However, such a project will only result in a list of cultural (or even individual) musical codes, without

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[8]Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 84.

[9]Indeed, the use of letter designations in the naming of pitches has led numerous composers, the most notable being J.S. Bach, to include musical signatures or acronyms in their works.

[10]Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957).

any real understanding of how these codes function: a dictionary of meaning without any understanding of origin.

In his work on the theory of Semiotics, C. S. Peirce expanded Saussure's thought by suggesting that signs may be divided into three distinct types: "'iconic,' where the sign somehow resembled what it stood for (a photograph of a person, for example); the 'indexical,' in which the sign is somehow associated with what it is a sign of (smoke with fire, spots with measles), and the 'symbolic,' as where with Saussure the sign is only arbitrarily or conventionally linked with its referent."[11] Unlike the photograph, or the smoke, music (at least in terms of the composer's intent) may be categorized as any one of Peirce's three types. Some examples of program music attempt to represent a character or event in an "iconic," or literal way, often by reproducing the associated sound. Listen for example to the symphonic poems of Richard Strauss (in particular, the sounds of the sheep in *Don Quixote*) or the pizzicato strings reproducing the sound of a head tumbling from the guillotine at the conclusion of *Marche au supplice* from Hector Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*. Richard Wagner's style of the *leitmotive* may be described as an "indexical" sign: a musical theme or texture used to evoke the feeling or memory of a character, object, or event. "Symbolic" relationships exist between numerous musical signs and non-musical signifieds, such as a well-known jingle and the related product or company; there is nothing the least bit fizzy about the melody which accompanies the jingle "Always Coca-Cola" yet the melody is now a clear signifier of the beverage.

However, while the composer may have a very clear idea of the extramusical meaning, does the listener automatically discern the composer's intent? Such a question extends our discussion of music and signs to include the more recent linguistic theories

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[11]Eagleton, 87.

of Jacques Derrida, in which meaning of signs becomes dependent not on the signified but on the relationship between signs themselves, or Roland Barthes, in which meaning becomes a dialectical process between the reader (listener) and the writer (composer).[12] If the listener is unaware of the associated meaning for a given passage of music, will s/he hear the sound of a decapitated head falling into a basket, the musical evocation of a sword, a staff or a ring, or experience the lifestyle associated with a particular drink? Experience suggests that the answer is probably no. The work of Derrida and Barthes proposes that the question itself may be misleading. Meaning becomes a transitory, evanescent phenomenon produced by the perception and experience of the listener; it means what the listener hears it to mean.

In the case of narrative film music the spectator is presented with both audio and visual stimuli. Meaning, whether a product of the listener/viewer or the composer/director, is now generated by the interaction of two filmic elements. As Gorbman suggests: "Whatever music is applied to a film segment will *do something*, will have an effect - just as whatever two words one puts together will produce a meaning different from that of each word separately, because the reader/spectator automatically imposes meaning on such combinations."[13] This supports the contention of Derrida and Barthes. In the case of film music, meaning becomes dependent on the visual signifiers, which in turn are dependent on the musical sign for their own meaning. The way these two components interact to produce meaning is dependent on the perception of the spectator. Furthermore, as one's experience accrues, the perceptions of how the filmic elements combine to signify will also change; one can never see the same film twice, or

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[12]See Jacques Derrida, "Différance," from *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds,* ed. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991) 63-65; Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text,* trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142-148.
[13]Gorbman, 15.

perhaps, more accurately, the same subject can never see the same film in the same way twice.

So is music's "representational ability" a cultural phenomenon or is it a natural process? I would suggest that it is both. While all meaning is to some extent under negotiation, and all languages are in a constant state of change, experience tells us that at any given time there exists a set of codes, guidelines, or stylistic norms which collectively combine to create what we describe as film scoring practice. A result of cultural influence, these syntactic codes provide the "how" for the question of musical representation;[14] however, if we wish to understand "why" it is necessary to move beyond the cultural basis of linguistic structure, to examine the very materials of music - sound and silence, motion and rest - and how these materials interact with the filmic image. In a sense we return to the fundamental nature of music, espoused by the Greeks. But now, rather than looking outward into the structure of the universe for the site of meaning in music, I propose that we look inward. It is within ourselves - in the way our understanding of the world is generated - that we may find the underlying structures which inform the processes of decoding meaning in music. These are structures generated by our bodily experience of the world, and by our transition from the realm of sensation into the realm of language.

The Mirror of Jacques Lacan

As one of the central figures in postmodern thought, Jacques Lacan has provided a theoretical framework in which a vast cross section of cultural artifacts and practices may be examined (or reexamined), in the light of psychoanalytic theory. Lacan is credited with the revision of the theories of Sigmund Freud, and the extension of

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[14]See Chapter 2 for a discussion of syntax in film music.

psychoanalysis into the realm of language, resulting in a revision of the theories of Saussure. Of central importance to the current discussion is Lacan's theory of the *mirror stage*, in which he outlines the progress of the human infant as s/he enters into the world of language.[15]

Lacan begins by proposing the existence of a pre-linguistic period in human development which he names the *imaginary*. This period is one of purely somatic experience. The child has no concept of self, unable to distinguish between its own body and that of the mother. Lasting up to six months, the imaginary is followed by the *mirror stage*, a period of approximately eighteen months, during which the child becomes self-aware, both of its own physical boundaries and of its separation from the mother. The child also develops the ability to process language, a mediating system that further distances the infant from the purely sensual nature of the imaginary. This transition is generally complete by the child's second birthday, which marks the entrance into the realm of the *symbolic* - the realm of language.

The imaginary is a world of "plenitude, with no lacks or exclusions of any kind."[16] It is a "realm of images in which we make identifications, but in the very act of doing so are led to misperceive and misrecognize ourselves."[17] Existing within the imaginary is to see all things as self. This contrasts with the symbolic in which the subject learns to distinguish the self through difference. The child must acknowledge the Freudian derived *name-of-the-father* in which s/he accepts predetermined sexual and social roles, becoming a responsible member of society.

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[15]See Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I," in *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977); Jonathan Scott Lee, *Jacques Lacan* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1990); and Madan Sarup, "Lacan and Psychoanalysis," in *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism*, 2nd ed. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993).
[16]Eagleton, 144.
[17]ibid, 143

Lacan's symbolic is the domain of language: it is the ability to process language that allows the child to distinguish the difference between self and other. However, this is not the stable linguistic relationships of Saussure. The work of Lacan (and Derrida), states that language is a system in which meanings shift and change. Words are definable only in terms of other words. The meaning of a sentence is incomplete until the sentence is complete. The meaning of any completed sentence may be altered by the sentence which follows it - and so on.[18] Lacan believed this dependence on a system in which meaning is infinitely deferred through an endless chain of signifiers is the source of desire, which is ultimately a longing for the unified self of the imaginary.

Theorists have extended the imaginary phase back into the womb, drawing on recent research demonstrating that hearing is fully developed in the human fetus by the twenty-eighth week of pregnancy.[19] This contrasts with the development of vision which is often not complete until three months *after* birth, suggesting that the imaginary is a period in which the hierarchy of vision over hearing (a hierarchy which informs much of the discourse on the subject of music perception) is reversed. This image of a prelinguistic period - a world of physical sensation dominated even in the womb by sound - has proven irresistible to theorists such as Guy Rosolato who writes romantically of the "sonorous womb" or Didier Anzieu's description of the "'sonorous envelope' in which the infant exists, 'bathed in sounds,' and as of yet unaware of distinctions between self and other or inside/outside the body."[20]

The parallel between music and the "sonorous womb" is obvious. The unborn child is bombarded with the raw materials of music such as pitch, rhythm, and timbre

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[18]Sarup, 11.
[19]Fergus P. Hughes et al, *Early Child Development* (New York: West Publishing Company, 1988), 150.
[20]Guy Rosolato, "La Voix: Entre corps et langage," *Revue française de psychanalyse* 38, 1 (Jan. 1974), 75-94; Didier Anzieu, "L'enveloppe sonore du soi," *Nouvelle revue de psychanalyse* 13, (Spring, 1976), 161-179. Translated and quoted in Gorbman, 62.

produced both within the mother's body and without. Babies are born with the ability to recognize the voice of the mother. If Lacan is correct, the child has no idea who or what a mother is; however, by recognizing the voice of the mother s/he demonstrates the ability to process, organize, and distinguish a particular audio pattern from among any number of other similar patterns - patterns which may be considered, for all intents and purposes, musical structures. This would suggest that the very environment in which we develop prepares us for the business of listening to music. We are born, equipped with the skill to detect and recognize aural patterns. We are, as it were, "hardwired" for music.

This application of Lacan's theories is, however, not without problems. The association between music and the womb has led to the suggestion that music has the power to manifest or inspire the prelinguistic realm of the imaginary, linking the listening subject with their imaginary self, one in which the "boundaries between self and other does not exist."[21] However, what few theorists seem to take note of is that while music uses the raw materials of the imaginary (sound, timbre, rhythm, dynamics), it is organized in a culturally dependent system similar to that of linguistics (as was noted earlier), a system that can only be understood if one "speaks the language." Since to understand music is to make distinctions similar to those made in spoken language, the concept of music can only exist within the framework of the symbolic.

Without the mediation of language the subject has no conception of difference within the realm of the imaginary. It is only once s/he enters the symbolic that they become aware of difference - presence and absence - and are therefore able to give meaning to the imaginary. This creates something of a paradox, further complicating the notion of music as a manifestation of the imaginary. While entry into the symbolic and the acquisition of language makes it possible to understand the imaginary, that same

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[21]Trans. and quoted in Gorbman, 61.

transition blocks any attempt to return to the earlier state, as we cannot "unlearn" what we know about our condition in the world: that of a separate, embodied, autonomous being. The two states of existence are mutually exclusive. However, there is a solution to the paradox put forward by Julia Kristeva.

Kristeva is one of a small group of female, French, feminist theorists who have been profoundly influenced by the work of Lacan.[22] One of her contributions to this discussion is her expansion of the imaginary to include all sensory impulses - as opposed to Lacan who emphasized visual stimuli - thus allowing for the discussion of music in relation to Lacanian thought. Moreover, she states that the conditions of the imaginary and the symbolic (what she describes as the *semiotic* and the *symbolic*) are not the discrete, mutually exclusive states of existence described by Lacan. They are, instead, parallel states of being which exist simultaneously throughout the duration of our lives. The symbolic is order superimposed on the semiotic, and it is the symbolic which dominates our daily experience, an experience governed by the structure of language. The semiotic, however, is always present threatening to break the control of the symbolic in moments Kristeva describes as "rupture." Moments of rupture may be classified by what Kristeva describes as "her triad of subversive forces: madness, holiness and poetry."[23]

Kristeva links these three forces with aspects of the artistic avant-garde including that of music. Musics evanescent nature sidesteps the "objective" function of vision, seemingly escaping any attempt at capture and confinement.[24] David Schwarz describes

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[22]This group is also thought to include Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray. See T. Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Methuen, 1985).

[23]Sarup, 124.

[24]My use of the term "objective" is based on the western cultural values assigned to the senses of vision and hearing. In the West, vision is considered the most "honest" of the senses illustrated by expressions such as "seeing is believing," or "a picture is worth a thousand words." Reactions to sight and sound are affected by this subconscious cultural hierarchy of the senses.

music as an "oceanic" experience in which "the boundary separating the body from the external world seems dissolved or crossed in some way."[25] Music facilitates this dissolving or crossing of the physical limitations of our body through its apparent nature: that of a self-contained unity, or a set of ephemeral, self-referential signifiers. It is a medium composed of the materials of the imaginary, and may be described as a *representation* of the imaginary, within the confinement imposed by the awareness of difference, an awareness triggered by entry into the symbolic. The oceanic, enveloping universe provided by music breaks down the constraints of the symbolic, allowing the listener to experience something of the unity of the imaginary.

If music facilitates this rupture of the semiotic or the imaginary into the realm of the symbolic, what is the effect when it is combined with the visual component of a narrative film? I would argue that film music acts as a rupture from the imaginary of the diegetic world (the world depicted by the film) into the symbolic of the nondiegetic realm (the world of the spectator).[26] This projection of the diegetic imaginary allows the spectator to enter into a unity with the diegesis and its characters. This fusion of self and other at the most fundamental experiential level leads the audience to identify with or, according to Lacan, to misperceive and misrecognize oneself in the narrative characters. At the level of the imaginary, we become the characters; their experience is our experience. This leads to a higher level of spectator integration within the symbolic: the realm of the narrative.

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[25]David Schwarz, *Listening Subjects: Music, Psychoanalysis, Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 7.
[26]Please see the "Definitions" section for a complete explanation of 'diegesis' and its variations.

Roland Barthes and "The Grain of the Voice"

The intensity of this integration is influenced by the perceivable absence or presence of the human body engaged in the production of the musical score. It is the liberating effect of the sounding body within the limits of understanding imposed by language. That such a phenomenon is audible finds support in the work of Roland Barthes, who writes of an audible physical presence which he termed the "Grain of the Voice."[27] In his 1972 essay of the same name, Barthes contrasts two vocal performances in an effort to determine what (beyond the obvious superficial differences) sets one apart from the other. He named this quality the *grain*. Far from simply elaborating on the notion of timbre, Barthes is attempting to formulate an aesthetics of musical production in terms of the body. The distinction is of paramount importance: the traditional view involves only the physical characteristics of the resonating body, reducing musical sound to the mathematics and acoustics of materials and space, while Barthes seems to suggest that our understanding of music is based on our ability to hear the body in the sound.

In a demonstration of the nature of the grain, Barthes compares the performance of two trained singers: Charles Panzera and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. He feels that Panzera's performance is rich with grain, while that of Fischer-Dieskau, although considered technically superior, lacks the grain.[28] Barthes' comparison of the two clearly locates the grain as a physical process with its locus in the throat, the "place where the phonic metal hardens and is segmented."[29] According to Barthes, the grain is located in the "voluptuous" realm of physical sensation. Fischer-Dieskau's performance (devoid of grain) is explained as a result of social and cultural constructions; it is what

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[27]Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image-Music-Text*, 179-189.
[28]Charles Panzera (1896-1976), Swiss baritone best known for his performances of French songs; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b. 1925), German baritone. Considered one of the foremost baritones of the twentieth-century. Best known for his performance of German *lieder*.
[29]Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," 183.

we expect to hear based on our past experience centered in a socially constructed intellect. In other words, it could be said that the grain resides in the Lacanian imaginary, while performances which lack the grain are a product of the Lacanian symbolic.

Like the violin, the physical construction of the body is audible in the sound it makes. However, unlike the violin the human body possesses an intelligence - a Nietzschian will - a motivating force which is the will-to-sound. Perhaps sensing this limited application of grain to the human voice, Barthes states that "[t]he grain is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs."[30] He exponentially expands the concept of grain to include all music, literature, dance, and visual art. The inclusion of instrumental music clearly locates the grain in the performing body. For example, the violin possesses a literal 'grain' but no will-to-sound; it is inanimate. It requires an inner-voice, the mediation of the human body: Barthes' "limb as it performs." Ideally, the musician wishes to integrate the instrument into their body, to reach a point of synthesis with the instrument so that the technical details of performance cease to matter. At such a point the instrument itself becomes a figurative "limb" and the sound of the "grain of the wood" becomes fused with the will of the "grain of the voice." As such, an instrumental performance, whether live or recorded, may also be seen as a projection of the imaginary, supporting the contention that film music is a manifestation of the diegetic imaginary.

Barthes' discussion is not without problems. Caryl Flinn points out that Panzera was once Barthes' music instructor.[31] She suggests that Barthes associated his memories of his former instructor with those of his mother. Barthes' preoccupation with his mother, revealed in his *Camera Lucida* (a work triggered by her death), was well known. It was also his mother who introduced him to music. Flinn feels that this musical link between

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[30]ibid, 188.
[31]See Flinn, 60-69.

Barthes' mother and Panzera is the source of much of the praise heaped upon the singer.

She also points out Barthes' claim that Panzera's recordings were all on older 78 r.p.m.

disks, of substantially inferior quality to the newer recordings by Fischer-Dieskau.

Barthes argues that the quality of Panzera's voice transcends the limitations of the inferior

recordings, however, Flinn suggests that Barthes in fact associates the older recordings

with his youth, and again, with his mother. Applying psychoanalysis to Barthes' writings,

Flinn suggests that Panzera "stands in for a lost and *absented* mother. His voice thus

represents a pleasure that for Barthes is bound to the past [revealing a] yearning for the

maternal [which] extends well beyond this lecture."[32] There is also the influence of

nationalism.. The Germanic Fischer-Dieskau, known as a master of the *lied*, may have

been less attractive to the Frenchman Barthes than the Swiss Panzera, remembered as a

champion of the French song.

While Flinn does identify a problem with Barthes' choice of singers, I feel that the

argument put forward in "The Grain of the Voice" is still sound. Indeed, Flinn's

comments suggest that for Barthes, Panzera's voice was an evocation of his desire for the

unity of the imaginary. While concluding that to hear the grain is to yearn for the lost

maternal object may be overstating the case, Barthes' (unconscious) link between the

grain and the maternal clearly connects the perception of the human body in sound with

the arousal of the imaginary. Furthermore, his choice of singers is no longer problematic

if we consider how the structure of music is based in culture. The materials of music

may be derived from the imaginary or the semiotic; however, at moments of rupture we

will attempt to organize the materials into some kind of order which will render them

comprehensible. Barthes may indeed have heard the grain in the voice of Panzera, while

a different listener may hear the grain in the voice of Fischer-Dieskau. It would all

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[32]ibid, 61.

depend on how the particular listener organizes the musical elements. In short: it would

depend on the listener's experience.

This was Lawrence Kramer's argument when he wrote of his experience of the

"foregrounding" of the body in a performance of a Mozart string trio:

> The instrumental voices seemed to be entwining and disengaging with
> something like physical friction - or so I thought until I realized that this
> figurative idea was close to being literal. The friction *was* physical, or,
> more exactly, corporeal. By emphasizing both the linearity of each
> instrumental voice and the textural differentiation among the voices, and
> by doing so in the spare, exposed medium of the string trio, Mozart was
> foregrounding the effort required to produce the music in performance.
> This effort was specifically bodily, conveyed by the bodies of the
> performers through the bodies of their instruments, so that the music
> became a tangible projection or articulation of bodily energy.[33]

Based on his description, I propose that Kramer was hearing the grain of this

performance. He was aware of the sound of the "body" in the music which became a

"tangible projection [...] of bodily energy." Kramer was hearing the sound of the

Lacanian imaginary made manifest in the world of the symbolic. This link between

Barthes' grain and the Lacanian imaginary does not imply a mind/body split. The very

nature of the grain suggests that the production of music demands a synthesis of body and

mind to the point that attempt at distinguishing between the two is impossible; however,

what is initially heard in the perception of music is the sound of a body engaged in

labour.

The Imaginary Film Score

But how, as I suggested earlier, does this perceived presence of the human body

engaged in the production of the narrative film score affect the intensity with which one

is integrated into the diegesis? Claudia Gorbman states that music helps to disguise the

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[33]Lawrence Kramer, "Prospects: Postmodernism and Musicology," in *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 26-27.

constructed nature of the narrative film by "bonding" the spectator to the diegesis,

producing "a greater predisposition for the subject to accept the film's pseudo-perceptions

as his/her own."[34] According to Gorbman, there are two distinct types of musical

bonding: "identification" and "spectacle."[35] In moments of "identification," music

counters the inability of language to express great emotion during scenes of intimacy,

such as a declaration of love. In moments of "spectacle," however, music "evokes a

larger-than-life dimension which, rather than involving us in the narrative, places us in

contemplation of it."[36] "Identification" bonds the spectator to the narrative character;

"spectacle" bonds the spectator with the rest of the audience. Although Gorbman does

discuss the connections between music and the imaginary found in the work of Rosolato

and Anzieu, she suggests that musical bonding is related to the assumed power of music

in ritual and group identity. It is a result of shared experience rather than a rousing of

presymbolic longings.

While I agree with Gorbman's division of "identification" and "spectacle," I would

suggest that the mechanism at work is linked to the perception of the human body within

the film score. Recall how Barthes' grain may be detected within instrumental as well as

vocal performance. If a scene is scored with a solo instrument or small ensemble, the

labour required to produce the music will be audible to the listener, as it was for

Lawrence Kramer in the Mozart string quartet. This sounding body heard within the

context of the film score (itself an evocation of the imaginary) will only further the link

between the sensual realm of the spectator and that of the diegesis. The spectator

experiences the sense of lost unity offered by the music which bonds him/her to the

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[34]Gorbman, 64.
[35]ibid, 65-68.
[36]ibid, 68.

performers and, in turn, to the narrative characters they accompany, generating a moment of Gorbman's "identification."

If the scene is scored with a larger ensemble, individual labour becomes difficult to discern; indeed, large ensembles can function efficiently only if the individual members are willing to suppress individuality in favour of a group character or personality. As music, it still offers the spectator a sense of the Lacanian imaginary; however, without the audible presence of the body, the level of physical integration with the diegesis is reduced. This is important in moments of spectacle where the viewer is presented with something far beyond their own experience of the world, such as futuristic space ships involved in spectacular battles or the extraordinary splendor of ancient Rome. A discrete space between audience and diegesis, generated by the suppression of detectable physical labour in the film score, allows the viewer to contemplate the narrative from a safe distance without the need to question the "reality" of the presented images - questions the viewer may ask if they are drawn too close to the diegesis.

However, if such a contention is to have any credibility it must address the contradiction engendered by one of narrative film music's main conventions: the general avoidance of small ensembles and the human voice within the nondiegetic score. Royal S. Brown suggests that this convention is based on the idea that the "musical material" must remain as abstract as possible if it is to assist in the suspension of disbelief. "Essentially, the very human presence felt through the performance of a vocalist tends to move the musical symbol one step closer towards consummation, [a state of one-to-one correspondence between signifier and signified]. And by moving towards consummation, the musical symbol also moves towards the universe of the diegesis."[37] Brown suggests that the music/visual interaction of the narrative film is dependent on a

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[37]Brown, 40.

dialectic opposition between the consummated symbol of the visual and the unconsummated symbol of the music. Drawing on the work of Barthes, Brown feels the abstract nature of the music distracts from the artifice of the visual. It processes the cinematic object-event into a Barthesian "myth," turning the iconic representation into mythic signifier (similar to the process at work in Gorbman's "spectacle"). When the human voice is heard and the musical score takes on meaning outside of the diegesis, the constructed nature of the cinematic object-event is exposed.[38]

I would agree with Brown that the more abstract the music remains, the more effective it is in concealing the constructed nature of the cinematic object-event. Music functions in a manner similar to that of the proscenium arch, or the physical limits of the cinematic screen. All act as a " window frame" through which the audience observes the diegesis, filling in the details of the diegetic world which are absent from view. However, unlike the static nature of the physical dimensions of the screen, music forms a dynamic frame that constantly shifts in support of the visual narrative. As creatures whose (arguably) primary means of communication is verbal, we are naturally attracted to the sound of the voice. When such a sound appears in the nondiegetic soundtrack, the attention of the audience is drawn to this "audio frame." As the audience does not live in a world where their emotional states are constantly accompanied by music, the artificial nature of the soundtrack convention is exposed. The narrative film is like a house of cards with conventions balanced upon more conventions. Once one convention is exposed and ripped away, the structure of the film becomes unstable and is in danger of collapse.

What this fails to account for is the rationale behind a second related convention: the avoidance of solo instruments and chamber ensembles in most narrative film scores.

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[38]ibid.

The avoidance of the voice is due in part to its association with text and linguistic meaning, and the danger it presents in shifting nondiegetic music into the realm of the consummated symbol, drawing attention to itself and revealing the constructed nature of the narrative film. Clearly without the associated dangers of text and linguistic meaning, this rational becomes problematic in the discussion of narrative film's forswearing of solo or chamber instrumental textures. I would argue that the conventions are related as follows: the smaller an ensemble becomes, the closer the musical texture approaches the condition of the human voice, not in the capacity of the audience to detect meaning, but, as suggested above, in the potential for the audience to detect in the nondiegetic soundtrack the bodily presence of an individual engaged in physical labour and thereby to enter into an imaginary unity with the diegesis. It is true that the smaller an ensemble becomes, the closer the musical texture approaches the condition of the human voice, and, by extension, the condition of the consummated symbol. Yet this is the exception that proves the rule for the consummated symbol in this case is not a text, but the concept of the imaginary.

The sign of the imaginary is what Derrida would describe as a final signifier. It is a term which he would place *sous rature* or 'under erasure' by notating it, crossing it out, and then printing both the word and its deletion:[39]
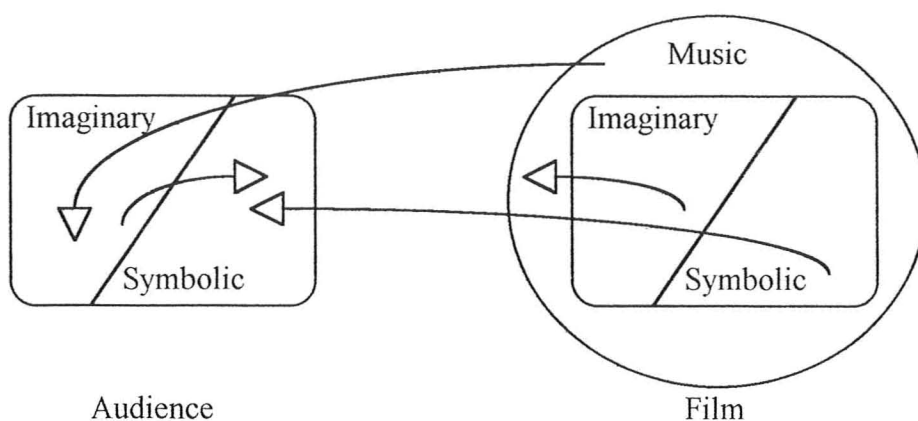
~~Imaginary~~

To place a term under erasure is to suggest that the word is inadequate yet necessary. imaginary is such a term. Language is the fundamental structure of the symbolic and all

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[39]Sarup, 33.

meaning is constructed within its limitations. Imaginary is a term constructed within the system of the symbolic yet it refers to that which is beyond the representational abilities of the system. It is the concept of a lack of concept: a sign, distinct from other signs, yet signifying an absence of the distinct. It is similar to the inability of science to formulate what exists outside the boundaries of our universe. Since all scientific conjecture is derived from our understanding of the laws of physics, laws which will most likely cease to hold sway beyond the limits of our universe, science has no starting point from which to theorize. For an intellect constructed within the symbolic, there is no starting point for a rational or discursive understanding of the imaginary.

So while it may be a consummated symbol, the imaginary is the termination point for a chain of signification, for an argument structured by difference and lack cannot move beyond an absence of these conditions - it can only return to the realm of the symbolic and begin to construct a new chain of signification. As such it is the one consummated symbol which does not threaten Brown's dialectical opposition. Indeed, the threat it presents is that the spectator will be drawn in too close to the narrative to maintain the suspension of disbelief.

We now have in place a model with which we may explain how music enhances the audience experience of a narrative film. Illustrated in Example 1.1, the model suggests that the symbolic of the diegesis is processed directly by the symbolic of the viewer, while the diegetic imaginary is projected by the film score into the viewer's imaginary where it is then "interpreted" by the symbolic, perceived as an enhanced emotional response to the narrative events. It is important to note that in this model (as in all models of narrative film function and operation) it is assumed that the spectator is engaged in the film.

Example 1.1: Perception Path from Film Imaginary to Audience Symbolic

However, this model fails to account for the process by which meaning is interpreted; how does the mechanism through which we "make sense" of the somatic experience of music operate? If we are to understand how a specific cue functions within a film, we must account for how our understanding of the various musical codes are structured. It is not enough to simply say that music affects us because it is a projection of the imaginary, for this offers only an explanation of the why. Our practical experience informs us that only a narrow range of possible musics will generate the desired response within a narrative film; therefore, there must be some characteristics of musical sound which make it more or less appropriate for a specific scene. While cultural coding and association through repeat exposure is an important aspect of what defines music's "suitability" within a film score (see Chapter Two for a discussion of these topics) , I would suggest that a more important link may be made between the intended emotional content projected by film music and recent theoretical work by American philosopher Mark Johnson, who suggests that our understanding of the world is structured primarily by our physical experience within it. Following a discussion of his work, I will demonstrate how his notion of the *image schemata* may be applied to film music in a process which derives meaning from purely sensual experience,

extracting signification from that which is pure signifier - from the imaginary to the symbolic.

The Image Schemata of Mark Johnson

In his book, *The Body In The Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*, Mark Johnson suggests that our understanding of the world is facilitated through what he calls *image schemata*: "a recurring, dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that gives coherence and structure to our experience."[40] Johnson argues that image schemata provide us with irreducible metaphorical models derived from our physical experience. These models provide a framework within which we may construct an understanding of the world by associating our various experiences at the epistemological level - the level of knowledge - with that of our physical experience. This is not simply a new version of the Cartesian mind/body split. Instead, Johnson is suggesting that the epistemological and physical understanding of our experience are located at the opposing ends of a continuum of consciousness in which imagination plays a key role, allowing us to make associations across the range of our understanding. Johnson's text is an attempt to reunite the mind with the body through the process of imagination - all of which he suggests are necessary for the understanding of meaning and rationality.

Johnson begins his discussion by positioning himself in opposition to what he describes as the "objectivist theories of meaning and rationality."[41] In essence, Johnson describes the objectivist view as assuming that in all things there exists a "God's-eye-view": "a fixed and determinate mind-independent reality, with arbitrary symbols that get

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[40]Mark Johnson, *The Body In The Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), xiv.
[41]ibid, xxii.

meaning by mapping directly onto that objective reality."[42] Such a point of view leaves

little room for the value of individual perception or interpretation. Instead, it values a

"universally reflective stance."[43] The various symbols and states of existence form

logical relationships among themselves which are independent of the individual. These

relationships may be observed from a point external to the relationship from which all

objective observers would see the same thing.

Johnson opposes this point of view by suggesting that our understanding of the

world is derived from our physical experience. These experiences may be reduced to a

series of metaphors and image schemata which form an irreducible foundation upon

which rationality and meaning are constructed. Image schemata are dynamic, analog

(continuous) patterns which reappear in our lives in a multitude of ways. They are

presented as a function x, where x is one of a number of operations such as compulsion,

balance, path, or scale. Johnson represents image schemata in simple graphic figures.

F1 ————————▷ □ ·····················▷

Example 1.2: COMPULSION

In the graphic representation of the COMPULSION schema, a force F1 acts upon

a subject, compelling the subject into a particular trajectory.[44] The nature of the

components of the COMPULSION schema are left undefined but it is clear that there is a

virtually limitless number of ways this schema may be defined: a bat striking a baseball,

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[42]ibid.

[43]ibid, xxiii.

[44]In his text, Johnson capitalises all references to specific image schemata. For consistency, I will continue this practice.

the wind blowing in the sails of a boat, eating in response to hunger, a reaction to a well reasoned argument, or a reaction to a threat. Components are not limited by relationships of subject and object. The batter compels the bat, which in turn compels the ball, which compels the glove, and so forth. However, what is important to grasp is that while the components involved in these associations are not limited to the purely physical phenomenon of cause and effect, our understanding of the function of the image schemata *is* based on the physical phenomenon: on our body's experience of the world.

In conjunction with the concept of image schemata, Johnson suggests that understanding is further structured by metaphor. The metaphor is presented as a function x IS y like the expression "time is money." As an example Johnson considers the metaphor "argument is a container" and its link to the CONTAINER schema illustrated in Example 1.3.[45] In the diagram "c" is contained, while "a" and "b" are not. If we now apply the "argument is a container" metaphor, "c" is an element of the argument, while "a" and "b" are not.
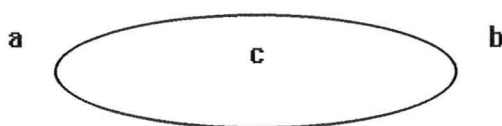
Example 1.3: CONTAINER

In such a case, an argument is considered to be a figurative container into which one places supportive evidence while that which counters the argument is left outside. If the quantity of elements within the container outnumber or "outweigh" (using further schemata such as BALANCE) the quantity of external elements, the argument would be considered strong.

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[45]Johnson, 21-23.

For comparison, consider the relationship between the "argument is a journey" metaphor and the PATH schema.

A ————————————————▷B

Example 1.4: PATH

Rather than bringing all of the evidence together as in the CONTAINMENT schema, the PATH schema suggests that an argument is a journey in which one follows a continuous path originating with one's initial opinion, moving past the various evidence offered by the argument, eventually arriving at a different point of view. Both the CONTAINER and the PATH schemata offer a metaphorical representation derived from our physical experience as a way of understanding the notion of an argument.

Johnson states that schemata are:

...constantly operating in our perception, bodily movement through space, and physical manipulation of objects. As embodied in this manner, therefore, image schemata are not propositional, in that they are not abstract subject-predicate structures that specify truth conditions or other conditions of satisfaction. They exist, rather, in a continuous, analog fashion in our understanding.[46]

Image schemata form the basis for our understanding, structured through the physical experience of being in the world. This physical experience is not learned in a rational propositional manner but through trial and error. Consider the concept of balance. When a young child learns to walk, s/he does so not by learning the physics of balance in a book, but through experience. While the theory of riding a bicycle is well understood, it is still difficult to explain the process. Both walking and riding a bike are things we do

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[46]ibid, 23.

with our bodies. Both are learned behaviors, yet because they are difficult to discuss in a propositional manner (ask someone how they walk or ride a bike) they seem to be instinctive activities.

If our understanding of balance emerges from our experience of being balanced and the discomfort which can accompany unbalanced moments, consider how this understanding maps onto the metaphorical use of the term balance. Many of the problems of modern living are attributed to a lack of *balance*. We need to eat a *balanced* diet, or *balance* our use of time between family and career. There is a great deal of stress associated with the lack of *stable* jobs in the current economy. Governments struggle to *balance* society's need for social programs against its dislike of taxation. Justice systems strive to *balance* the rights of the accused and the victim.

Closer to the subject of music, Johnson discusses the notion of artistic balance. He cites a study by Rudolf Arnheim who has performed a series of experiments to test how we visually perceive balance. Arnheim prepared a series of figures in which a black circle was placed in a variety of locations within a square, similar to the two presented in Example 1.5. He asked his subjects if the circle was at rest or if it was being pulled or pushed in some particular direction.
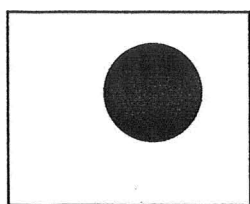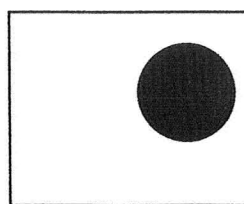
Figure 1   Figure 2

Example 1.5: Figures from Arnheim's visual perception experiments

In figure 1, Arnheim determined that most subjects felt that the circle was being pulled into the center of the square, while in figure 2, most subjects indicated that the circle was being drawn towards the closest side of the square. Arnheim concluded that our perception of balance is based on particular alignments of structural elements. In the case of the circle/square experiments, the subjects felt that the circle was at rest when it was aligned with particular aspects of the square such as the center or the diagonal axis.

Johnson states that this sense of balance is not objective. If a fence post is unbalanced, it will fall regardless of whether or not it is observed; however, the circle will not be drawn into the side of the square regardless of how long it is observed. "The disk on the white square is only balanced *in our acts of perception.*"[47] It is with this point that I will now turn to a discussion of Johnson's ideas in relation to music.

Application To Music

While Johnson does not discuss hearing in any great detail, he states that although the visual sense may dominate, image schemata "are not tied to any single perceptual modality."[48] Therefore, I feel confident that I may apply them to the perception of music without overly straining the limits of Johnson's intent. Indeed, recent musical scholarship has produced several texts dealing with the application of Johnson's theories in the field of music perception.[49] Image schemata and the associated metaphorical structures which may be mapped onto them, provide a mechanism by which musical meaning is constructed from somatic experience. It offers the film music analyst a tool by which the apparently innate associations between music and visual may be explained as a process

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[47]ibid, 79.

[48]ibid, 25.

[49]See Janna Saslaw, "Forces, Containers, and Paths: The Role of Body-Derived Image Schemas in the Conceptualization of Music," *Journal of Music Theory* 40/2 (1996), 217-243; Robert Walser. "The Body in Music: Epistemology and Musical Semiotics," *College Music Symposium* 31(1991), 117-126; Melissa West. *Music, Emotions and the Role of the Body* (McMaster University: M.A. Thesis, 1998).

whose center of activity is located not in the musical/visual object but in the perception of the listener/viewer: a perception dependent on the individual's sensual experience.

To examine the process at a more general level, we first ask the following: how do we hear music, and how may we explain music perception in terms of Johnson's theories? To continue the discussion from the previous section, there can be little doubt that the concept of balance is of major importance to the art of music. For instance: the 'A' section is balanced by the 'B' section, antecedent phrases are balanced by the consequent, preludes are balanced by fugues, and the *ripieno* is balanced by the *tutti*. Less obvious is the way musical balance is based on the oppositions of time and distance: high and low, loud and soft, fast and slow, thick and thin, or first and last. In a simplistic manner, all of these oppositional aspects of music may be represented by the BALANCE schemata (Example 1.6).
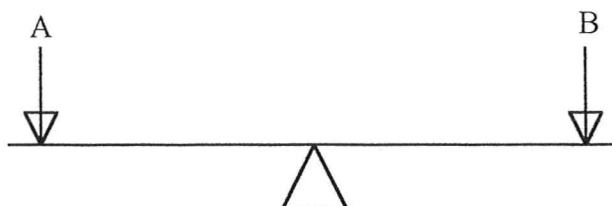
Example 1.6: BALANCE

Another schemata with strong musical applications is the FORCE or COMPULSION schemata, discussed earlier. The most important relationship in western tonal music is between the tonic and dominant pitches and corresponding harmonic structures in a given key. These two harmonic centers are thought to create feelings of motion and rest. Terms such as the "drive to the cadence," an important feature of Renaissance polyphony, are a propositional equivalent to the COMPULSION schemata.
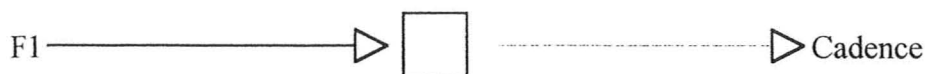
F1 ————————————▷ ☐ --------------------▷ Cadence

Example 1.7: COMPULSION (tonal)

Here, the diagram has been made slightly more specific through the addition of the cadence reference. A force, F1, acts on the object, a section of music, compelling it to reach a cadence. That this is accepted as the normal course of events is further supported by the term "deceptive cadence" used to describe a passage of music in which anything other than the tonic follows a statement of the dominant at the end of a particular phrase. The diagram is also a concise depiction of the work of Heinrich Schenker who proposed that all tonal works could be reduced to a common structure moving from the tonic to the dominant before returning to the tonic.[50]

Now, let us consider the implications of the above discussion. First, in reference to the BALANCE schemata, if we accept that balance is an important part of the aesthetics of western music, we must ask the same question of music that was asked of Arnheim's circles and squares. Is the sense of balance an objective aspect of the music - something possessed by the music - or is it present only in the act of perception? This would seem to resemble the question regarding the sound of a tree falling in the forest. If we *perceive* an aspect of balance within a work of music does it matter, for all intents and purposes, where that aspect exists? I would argue that it does, for if the guise of balance is an objective aspect of the work, present regardless of the act of perception, we return to the "music as autonomous or transcendent" argument championed by the "absolutists" of the romantic period: an argument in which, according to Leonard Meyer,

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[50]See Chapter Five of Allen Cadwallader and David Gagné, *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103-122.

"musical meaning lies exclusively within the context of the work itself."[51]   Music

becomes an objective presence in the world, existing on a level that transcends the

individual or even the society from whence it came. The meaning of such a music is

self-contained as its structure refers only to itself.

However, even if the form is self-contained, once it is perceived by the listener it

ceases to be self-referential; it is understood to exist within the larger context of

individual experience. For instance, one could argue that the aspect of balance is

objectively present in the work constructed in a balanced manner by the composer, the

way a building is constructed in a balanced manner to avoid collapse. However, in the

case of the building, the architect's sense of balance is reproduced in a literal manner in

the construction of the building which, although not self-aware, is literally balanced in

the same way that we are when we function in the world (standing, walking, sitting, etc.).

The sense of musical balance is a *metaphorical projection* of literal balance on the part

of the composer and is based entirely on how the composer perceives the notion of

balance, and how s/he translates this into musical form. The composer may rely upon

empirical features such as the length of the work's various sections or dynamics. There is

no guarantee that a given performer (who, according to Barthes, becomes author at the

moment of performance) will reproduce the composer's intent with any accuracy.[52] The

listener, in the act of perception is also engaged in a metaphorical projection of their own

experience of balance. If the listener does not perceive the composer's notion of balance

encoded within the music, they may not feel that the work is "balanced." Furthermore,

the fact that the listener may perceive the composer's intention is no guarantee that they

will interpret the work as balanced, as they may not share the composer's particular

notion of balance. The listener becomes author at the moment of perception, structuring

[51]Leonard Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 1.
[52]Barthes, "The Death of the Author," 142-143.

the work within his/her own understanding of balance. The conclusion of this argument is that while a composer or performer may intend for a particular mode of balance to be audible within the work, the ultimate decision is made by the final author: the listener. It is our constant experience of balance in our physical existence which informs our metaphorical notion of balance in the realm of music. It is also important to note that this perception of balance is not always conscious.

A review of the COMPULSION schemata also reveals a similar subjective bias structured by our bodily experience of the world. Most listeners raised in the tradition of western tonal music will admit to an unsettled feeling when played a short piece of music which ends with anything other than the tonic. The harmonic structures of the diatonic scale are associated with the listener's experience of various degrees of rest and motion: the tonic provides the greatest feeling of rest, and the dominant generates the strongest feeling of motion, indicated on the COMPULSION schemata diagram as F1 (see Example 1.7). However, this raises the obvious questions: upon what does the force act, where does this force reside, and what is its nature?

Does the music compel itself towards the cadence the way gravity compels a book downwards when it slips from the hand? If such was the case, the force of the cadence would be, as is the force of gravity, an objective reality independent of human experience. The very sound of the dominant would have an actual physical effect on the world, spontaneously generating tonic chords in the air around us. Instead, the compulsion to move to the tonic is generated, once again, in the act of perception on the part of the listener. It is the listener, not the music, who desires the move to the tonic, a desire generated by the perception of the dominant. However, can we at least say the force is generated by the music? Again, this suggests that the music possesses an objective character independent of the listener, a physical force capable of generating a

physical response in the listener. As in the discussion of balance, what we experience is not a force generated by the music, but one generated by our own *metaphorical projection* of force imposed upon the work of music. The nature of this force is *expectation*.[53] For the listener raised in the western tonal system, a lifetime of experience teaches that the "drive to the cadence" is the generally accepted practice. In a Pavlovian response to stimuli, the sound of a dominant function generates a force of expectation which will only be satisfied with the sound of the tonic. The sound is not the force, nor is it even that which generates the force. It is generated through the expectation of what will follow a particular sound. We feel the effect as a compulsive force because, metaphorically, the process most closely resembles our bodily experience of physical force.

The Image Schemata of Film Music

Meaning is constructed in the act of perception. Image schemata provide an explanation for the associations made by an individual between a stimulus and his/her subsequent derivation of meaning. In the study of film music image schemata allow us to examine the way our act of perception results in meaningful connections between music and visual.

In the "Afterword" of *Unheard Melodies* Claudia Gorbman cites a comparison between "the vintage airplanes in *The Blue Max* (1966), for which composer Jerry Goldsmith had written 'soaring' orchestral music of Wagerian grandeur, [and] the takeoff and flight of fighter jets in the 1986 *Top Gun* [which] had for musical accompaniment a

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[53]I will elaborate on the concept of 'expectation' as put forth by Leonard Meyer in Chapter Two of this thesis.

rock song with lyrics."[54] Gorbman states that although "the effect of the *Top Gun* music is certainly not 'stirring' in the manner of *The Blue Max* score, it is nevertheless compelling in its high-tech, driving energy and sexual exuberance."[55] Consider the number of physical metaphors invoked by Gorbman in this short passage: "soaring," "stirring," "compelling," "high-tech, driving energy," "sexual exuberance."

Example 1.8: SCALE

The theme music for *The Blue Max* features a steadily climbing motive in the strings. In a simplistic observation we might suggest that as the depicted aircraft soar into the sky, so to does the musical line. The music triggers in the listener a schemata in which upward motion dominates. We might then observe that in western culture there is a general association between upward motion and success. Johnson suggests that this is the case in his description of the "more is up" metaphor based upon the SCALE schema (Example 1.8).[56] The SCALE schema is the basis of metaphors as "MORE IS UP" which relate to generally positive western cultural associations of upward motion (an award presented for an increasing number of "kills"). So as well as mimicking the motion of the aircraft, the upward gesture of the melody is a metaphor of the World War I narrative

[54]Gorbman, 163.
[55]ibid, 163.
[56]Johnson, 122. The link between upward melodic motion and the "more is up" metaphor will figure prominantly in the examples presented by this study. This is only logical as the majority of narrative films produced in the west are structured by goal oriented stories.

in which German pilots compete for the Blue Max: the highest honour in the German airforce, awarded to pilots who have shot down twenty or more enemy aircraft.

The music for *Top Gun* suggests a different set of associations. The various flight sequences are scored with a collection of aggressive rock songs, the most prominent of which is Kenny Loggins' *Danger Zone*. Almost painful in its intensity, the volume of the music combines with the noise of the modern jet fighters at a dynamic level substantially higher than the rest of the film. The saturated audio level combines with the hyper-kinetic camera work to overload both the ear and the eye. The camera twists and turns following the paths of the jets: rapid cuts carry the spectator from the ground to the pilot's seat. Disoriented, the viewer strains to hear the dialogue over the music, catching only fragments. At times it seems that the limitations of the screen will be unable to contain the diegetic action. Such a sequence evokes a schema in which physical limitations may be pushed to the breaking point, such as EQUILIBRIUM, in which internal and external forces are balanced.[57] The high level of stimuli in the flight sequences of *Top Gun* presses upon the viewer, who lacks the strength to push back - to organize and process all the information in real time; however, the reaction of the individual viewers to this level of pressure will vary. Some will simply give in to the flow of images and sound in what we would describe as escapism. Like riders on a roller coaster, they will live only in the moment, allowing the spectacle to take them where it will. Others will link the overload of images to a metaphorical recreation of the experience of flying a high-tech jet fighter. Still others will see the rapid pace and signal overload as a metaphor of life within the postmodern age of information. However, all of these interpretations of the physical stimuli provided by the film are derived from the experience of physical overload.

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[57]ibid, 87.

As this brief example demonstrates, image schemata are capable of explaining the links between the perceived music/visual object and the perceiver's metaphorical associations. While the contrasting readings of these two film sequences come as no surprise, they were reached from what is essentially the same starting point. Rather than discussing what film music "means" in an *ad hoc* manner, Johnson's theory provides a consistent framework or methodology with which we may examine any number of distinct films, drawing conclusions and comparisons with a basis in collective experience rather than individual opinion.

The musical application of Johnson's work is not without problems. Johnson repeatedly stresses that image schemata are *not* in any way to be thought of as propositional in nature. Only if they maintain the level of irreduciblity - reduced to their most basic structure - will they remain general enough to explain the way we think and reason. Johnson believes that because we share a common physical make-up, we also share, at a fundamental level, a common physical existence. This is the level of the image schemata. While this level of physical sensation may be shared, the way in which it metaphorically maps onto the objective, propositional world will differ based on an individual's experience (as I suggested in the *Top Gun* example). This will result in some individuals associating their mode of thinking with the 'argument as CONTAINER' metaphor while others will connect with the 'argument as PATH' metaphor.

Therefore, when we speak of our reaction to music we frequently engage in not one, but two metaphorical mappings. The first involves the solidification of what is arguably the most esoteric of the arts. Music has nothing onto which we may hold; its materials are the vibration of air and the passage of time, leading those who are trained in the ways of western music to talk of high and low notes; textures that are thick or thin, light or heavy, dark or bright; and tempos that plod, walk, run, and gallop; all of which

have clear relationships with some of the image schemata we have considered. The second metaphorical process maps these "solidified" musical gestures back onto the more ambiguous world of emotions and states of being such as: triumphant, tragic, wondrous, ominous, or serene.

The problem is suggested by Johnson when he states that "we experience objects and events as having certain degrees of intensity. One light is brighter than another, one potato is hotter than another, one blue is deeper than another, and one pain is more intense than another."[58] But do listeners perceive the basic elements of music in the same way that trained musicians do? The notion of musical training is itself problematic: what constitutes "training"? Most of us know someone who has developed a high degree of musical ability with little or no formal education. Will formally trained musicians perceive basic musical elements in the same way? Do they all hear one note as higher or lower than another, or one texture as thicker or thinner than another?

Robert Walker cites numerous experiments in which subjects were exposed to changes in pitch and then asked to select a visual metaphor which best represented their perception of the particular stimuli. The subjects were exposed to two distinct types of pitch movement (up-down or down-up) using both pure (sinusoidal) and complex tones in either discreet steps or using glissandi. The visual metaphors included: "shapes in 2-dimensional space: vertical position, horizontal position, combinations of these two, size, shape, shapes filled in with various patterns, outline shapes with no patterns, and so on."[59] Some experiments also asked the subjects to draw their own visual representations while others tested congenitally blind subjects with the use of tactile metaphors. The results are quite surprising for those of us with musical training: "Musically trained subjects matched pitch movement with vertically placed visual metaphors, as in pitch

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[58]ibid, 122.
[59]Walker, 52.

notation, whereas untrained subjects favored no particular visual metaphor over another."[60] While I feel that this does not invalidate my argument, it does inject a note of caution into the discussion. Basic assumptions about the "solidification" of sound should be considered carefully before we metaphorically map them onto the domain of emotion and states of being. While perception is derived from physical experience, subjects will inevitably differ to some extent in how these perceptions are interpreted.

As a more detailed example of the application of Johnson's ideas, consider the following excerpt from James Horner's score for *Braveheart* (Paramount, 1995).

Uilienn Pipes (solo)

Example 1.9: "Wallace courts Murron (Murron's Theme)," *Braveheart*

In the context of the film, the theme is associated with Wallace's love for Murron, his bride, who early in the film is murdered by English soldiers. This event provides Wallace with his initial motivation to become a revolutionary and warrior leader. The theme is heard when Wallace (and the audience) first sees Murron, during tender moments in their courtship, during their "secret" wedding, and finally during her funeral. In general the theme is scored for either Uilieann Pipes or transverse wooden flute, both of which are associated with Celtic folk traditions. They are accompanied either by an

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[60]ibid.

Braveheart: Plot Summary

In fourteenth-century Scotland, William Wallace (Mel Gibson) becomes a reluctant revolutionary hero in the struggle for independence from English rule. Following the murder of his wife Murron at the hands of English soldiers, Wallace's desire for revenge is slowly transformed into a desire for justice. Following the battle of Bannokburn, Wallace is captured and executed.

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eighth-note figure in the harp (also an instrument with Celtic associations) with block string voicing, or by the strings alone, outlining the harmonic structure F major, G major, A minor.

First, consider the tonal structure. The passage is best described as modal, with its harmonic structure derived from the aeolian or "natural minor" scale. All of the harmonic and melodic material is diatonic, derived from the key of A minor. While it does not follow the conventions of classical harmony, the passage is still structured around the essence of cadence: there is a sense of motion during the bVI and bVII structures which comes to a sense of rest with both the harmonic motion resolving on i, and the melody resolving upwards (G to A).

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bVI                bVII                      i
_____▷
        motion.............................  rest
        lower.............................   higher
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Example 1.10:   PATH

In the act of perception, we structure our understanding of the harmonic motion around the COMPULSION or PATH schemata in two ways. First, the music progresses from a point of motion to a point of rest (COMPULSION and PATH); second, the harmony moves from a lower point to a higher point (PATH) (see Example 1.10.).[61]

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[61]Note that this diagram is not a literal representation of horizontal or vertical motion. It is simply indicating that a sense of motion is involved in its preception.

The tempo, rhythm, and instrumentation further define the character of the schemata. The tempo is slow but steady with regular rhythmic accents, while the eighth-note figure in the harp creates a sense of constant motion. There are no jarring changes in the rhythmic pulse of the passage. Likewise, the instrumentation is consistent throughout a given passage. Once assigned a part, a particular instrument or section will continue to perform that part until a point of rest is reached in the passage. The resulting character of the PATH or COMPULSION schemata is slow and gentle with a subtle feeling of determination provided by the harp. The melodic material is also quite simple with its focus on the tonic and supertonic (a and b) decorated with grace notes and *glissandi*. The range is only an interval of a minor sixth, defined by the high C and low E (third and fifth of the tonic A minor). Like the harmonic structure, the melodic material is clear in its direction and focused in its goal. While we might be tempted to suggest that the modality of the passage (lacking the raised leading tone of the harmonic minor scale) weakens both the sense of motion and the acquisition of the harmonic goal, we must remember that modality is the "common practice" of harmony in popular music; furthermore the progression bVI-bVII-i is a frequently used subset of what popular music scholarship describes as "Aeolian harmony."[62] It is a familiar sound to the western ear, which would have no difficulty recognizing the pattern of motion and rest suggested by the harmony.

This is a brief example of how we may map the physical characteristics of the music onto a corresponding schematic model. Note, however, that even in this basic discussion, I used the words "slow," "gentle," "determination," and "focused" in describing the passage. It seems almost impossible to talk about music without resorting

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[62]Richard Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990), 198. Also see Robert Walser, *Running With The Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1993), 80.

to adjectives which betray some kind of subjective mapping. The music is not gentle or determined: it is my perception of the music which, in an attempt to understand and then relay that understanding to a reader, resorts to subjective, extra-musical concepts such as gentleness or determination.

While these mappings seem almost unavoidable in the context of musical description, how, in a more explicit manner, is the passage designed to function within the context of the film *Braveheart* so that the music seems "natural" in its specific cinematic context? When we begin metaphorically to map states of emotion or other states of being onto music, the music begins to take on the characteristics of the Lacanian symbol. Like the words in this sentence, the meaning of the music (or more correctly, that which is metaphorically imposed upon it in the act of perception) is dependent on the music's position in relation to the symbols which surround it (other features of a particular film, or passages of music from other films which fulfill a similar task). In order to clarify the specific maps imposed upon the *Braveheart* example, I have included two other contrasting examples of themes associated with love. The first is taken from John Barry's score for *Out Of Africa* (Example 1.11) while the second is from John Williams' score for *The Empire Strikes Back* (Example 1.12).

Example 1.11: "Main Theme," *Out Of Africa*

First, note the difference in melodic complexity between the Murron theme, and the two new examples. As was previously discussed, the Murron theme is quite simple in its construction, encompassing a range of only a minor sixth, with no melodic leap greater than a minor third. In contrast, the melodic line in Example 1.11 encompasses a range of a minor tenth, with upward leaps of a fourth, a fifth, and an octave.

Example 1.12: "Hans Solo and the Princess" (theme), *The Empire Strikes Back*

Williams' love theme for *The Empire Strikes Back* encompasses a compound perfect fourth, and in contrast to both of the previous examples demonstrates a high level of chromatic activity. While the motion is primarily by step, there are also leaps of both a major and minor sixth. Both Examples 1.11 and 1.12 exhibit a much higher degree of harmonic complexity than the *Braveheart* excerpt. While Horner confines himself to only three harmonic structures derived from the A aeolian mode, Barry uses almost every available harmony in C major (only vii° is absent) while engaging in some modal borrowing to include ii° (over which we hear the Ab). William's uses dissonance such as the bII over a tonic bass (D major over C#) then shifts the key center up a semitone to D lydian (with a raised fourth) before returning to a tonic C# major.

This gradual increase in complexity is also echoed in the orchestration of the three themes. Murron's theme is presented on folk instruments with very simple accompaniment, aspects which further reinforce the accessibility of Wallace's love. In contrast, the Barry theme is presented in a complex web of nineteenth-century orchestration, accompanied by several lines of counterpoint (the most important of which is included in Example 1.11), while swells in the lower brass reinforce the harmony. In the Williams example, the orchestration is even more complex, undergoing several distinct textural changes within the space of one single cue. Williams is also an exponent of the Wagnarian *leitmotiv* approach to film scoring, and the theme undergoes numerous transformations throughout the course of the film echoing the changes in the nature of Han and Leia's relationship. This contrasts with Horner's decision to leave the Murron theme virtually unaltered.[63]

To compare the three themes I will now introduce two new image schemata, both variations of the FORCE schemata: ENABLEMENT and BLOCKAGE.[64] The complexity of the Barry and Williams themes suggest a distinctly different kind of love from Horner's theme, projected through the increased level of harmonic and melodic complexity. This complexity acts in the manner of a physical barrier, keeping the spectator at a distance from the narrative. If a system evokes the physical notion of BLOCKAGE, the perception of the subject is that a greater physical force is required for the achievement of the objective resulting in the generation of a more complex force vector.

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[63]It is important to note that due to the constraints of time associated with the production of a film score, composers frequently employ the services of an orchestrator. If such is the case, we must be careful that we do not automatically attribute decisions of orchestration to the composer: However, James Horner is credited with the orchestrations for *Braveheart*, while the other two composers under consideration in this section of the paper are known for making detailed orchestrational sketches with very little left to the discretion of the orchestrator.

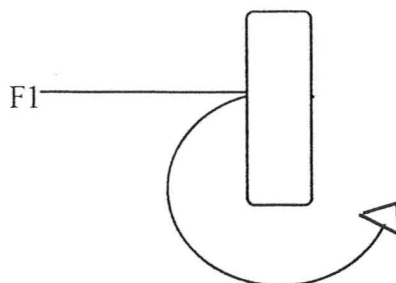[64]Johnson, 46-47.

Figure 1: ENABLEMENT | Figure 2: BLOCKAGE

Example 1.13

The object may even be unobtainable; indeed, an increase in complexity may be associated with an increase in the risk of failure. The metaphorical mapping of BLOCKAGE and the perceived increase in complexity results in a denial of self. When posing questions about possible careers or choices that seem daunting, one often hears the response, "I couldn't do that." There is a tendency to procrastinate or to distance oneself from tasks and situations that appear difficult or intimidating in their complexity. Although the mechanism is not the same as that described in relation to Barthes' "grain of the voice" the effect of the BLOCKAGE schemata is similar in result. The viewer is distanced from the narrative, entering into the safer state of contemplation rather than participation. This state of contemplation also allows the viewer to accept as real what is typically far outside their realm of experience: the wilds of Africa or the depths of space.

This is in contrast to Horner's music for Braveheart, the simplicity of which invokes the ENABLEMENT schemata. Although the film's setting is fourteenth-century Scotland (somewhat removed from the experience of the twentieth-century), Wallace and Murron are depicted as quite ordinary within the diegesis. There is nothing unusual, which might present obstacles to the process of spectator/character identification. Wallace's love for Murron is, like the music which accompanies it, simple and - accessible: a love with which anyone watching the film may also identify.

ENABLEMENT is the physical basis for this feeling of unrestricted association; the subject possesses the required force for the task at hand. Contrary to BLOCKAGE, the metaphorical mapping of ENABLEMENT encourages the promotion of the self: "That's easy. Even I could do that."

Facilitated by the music, the spectator may readily identify with the simplicity and humility of Wallace and Murron's courtship. Compare this to the love story accompanied by Barry's theme in *Out Of Africa*: a white married woman in the heart of Africa falls in love with a dashing pilot - a distant forbidden love, doomed by the eventual death of the pilot. While *Braveheart's* love story is played out in the quiet glades and villages of Scotland, the love story of *Africa* is accompanied by sweeping aerial vistas of the African Savannah. With the love story of *The Empire Strikes Back* we enter the realm of mythic love in its depiction of Princess and Pirate both struggling to escape the clutches of the evil empire, fleeing at the speed of light from planet to planet across the galaxy. This is a love which, despite overwhelming odds, is destined to succeed.

In order that we may use Johnson's theories for the analysis of film music we must first qualify our basic perception of the passage in terms of a particular image schemata before mapping metaphorical concepts onto the schemata, defining it in terms of its function within the film, and within the wider fields of film music or music in general. The available higher-level concepts for a given image schemata are dependent on which schemata is defined by the listener's initial perception of the music. While there will always be some overlap of possible mappings, a PATH or COMPULSION schemata will trigger a distinctly different list of metaphorical characteristics than the CYCLE or ATTRACTION schemata.

To conclude, I would now like to return to the ideas of Lacan. Johnson provides us with a mechanism by which we may explain the perception of film music in terms of

our physical experience of the world. In the case of the above example, perception is mediated by our experience of BLOCKAGE and ENABLEMENT. I would suggest that this physical experience is akin to the Lacanian imaginary - the realm of physical sensation devoid of the organization of language - and that the metaphorical projections we make onto these experiences is similar to what Kristeva states is occurring when we impose the order of the *symbolic* - the world created by the development of language - onto the realm of the imaginary.[65]   The perception of film music then becomes what I have described as a metaphorical projection of the diegetic imaginary into the nondiegetic symbolic. In other words, the music provides the audience with a Freudian "royal road" into the physical experience of the film world, so long as the image schemata generated evoke metaphorical structures applicable to the narrative. In this case, the simplicity of the music in *Braveheart* draws the audience deeper into the diegetic imaginary, so that when Murron is murdered by the English, we share Wallace's outrage and desire for revenge. In contrast, the complexity of the music in *The Empire Strikes Back* keeps the audience engaged but at a distance from the fairy-tale nature of the plot: a distance which is required for the audience to maintain the suspension-of-disbelief necessary for such a fantastic narrative setting. The characters of Wallace and Murron are ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances. As such, the audience may engage with their experience and motivations (the murder of a spouse, the loss of home and dignity) at a fundamental level. Meanwhile, the characters of Princess Leia and Hans Solo are extraordinary to begin with. While we may admire them, even wish to become them, we have nothing in our experience with which we may relate to them. The audience understands the characters on the level of the symbolic (indeed,

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[65]Once again, I point out that this is not to suggest a relationship between the symbolic/imaginary and the mind/body split. The imaginary is process *without* the concept of process, while the symbolic is process *within* the concept of process. Both mind and body are required for either state.

such understanding is required if the audience is to understand the plot), but the complex nature of the music assists in maintaining a distance from the diegetic imaginary.

In this first chapter I have presented a model with which we may examine the form and function of film music from the perspective of psychoanalysis and the theory of a understanding derived from physical existence . Music operates as a trigger, stimulating response through the analogous representation of physical experience - the same experience which informs our understanding of the world as a whole. The music facilitates various degrees of narrative integration depending on a variety of variables such as the audible presence of the human body engaged in the production of music. At the most fundamental level, music becomes an extension of the Lacanian imaginary with its evocation of a lost sense of unity. This unity is reconstituted within the perception of the spectator but, as its source is located somewhere between the diegesis and the nondiegesis (it is heard only by the audience but seems to have its origin in the diegesis), this unity is a combination of self and other, diegesis and nondiegesis, the experience of the spectator and of the narrative character.

Chapter 2:
Composer and Spectator: The View from the Balcony

The preceding chapter suggests a new way of looking at the perception of film music. Through the theories of Lacan and Johnson I have suggested that film music may be viewed as a manifestation of the diegetic imaginary, an extension of the physical experience of the film world into the realm of the audience. However, much of my argument is based on the applications of literary theory and philosophy. What is the point of view of the creators of film music or of those who study the science of music perception? How do visuals and music combine to create meaning and what is the influence of culturally produced musical syntax in the understanding of this meaning? Do the ideas presented in this work conflict with the findings of composers and researchers or are there points of congruency between the various perspectives?

In this chapter I will examine the thoughts and findings of those who write film music, and those who study how we listen from a scientific point of view. One of the pitfalls of theoretical discourse is the danger of an exclusive reliance on semantic argument which, according to the Derridian and Lacanian view of language, will never be definitive, or conclusive in its findings. There is always room for interpretation, alteration or manipulation on the part of either the writer or reader. The opinions of composers, or the research generated in the field of music perception is no less immune from the influence of ideology; however, the location of common ground between the work of theory, practice, and science can only lend support to the contention of a given

argument. It is the purpose of this chapter to locate and examine these points of congruency. It will also offer a discussion of the role of musical syntax, and how this syntax contributes to the production of meaning as part of the musical/visual interaction of narrative film.

The Practitioner's View

Claudia Gorbman states that nondiegetic music is frequently seen as the most "radical" of cinematic conventions. It simply does not logically belong in a diegetic film. Composer Max Steiner states that sound film producers before 1932 considered background music unacceptable, fearing that spectators would demand to know "where the music was coming from."[1] Despite the apparent success of musical conventions, this distrust of the nondiegetic soundtrack persisted into the 1940s when, during the production of *Lifeboat* (1944), Alfred Hitchcock decided that he would not use music in the film. He is reported to have asked, "'But where is the music supposed to come from out in the middle of the ocean?' Composer David Raksin replied: 'Ask Mr. Hitchcock where the cameras come from.'"[2] While Raksin's brilliant response demonstrates the double standard of treating film music as any more radical than other cinematic conventions, it does nothing to answer the question of *why* the makers of films continue to employ music in their productions.

Most texts on film music offer their own list of reasons for the continued presence of music. Paraphrasing Aaron Copland, film music scholar Roy Pendergast offers the following list:

- Music can create a more convincing atmosphere of time and place.
- Music can be used to underline or create psychological refinements.

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[1] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 53.
[2] Roy Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), 223.

- Music can serve as a kind of neutral background filler.
- Music can help build a sense of continuity in a film.
- Music can provide the underpinning for the theatrical buildup of a scene and then round it off with a sense of finality.[3]

Despite the superficial nature of this list, (which focuses on *what* and *how* more than on *why*) all of these proposed functions revolve around the ideas of absence and lack: the use of terms such as "create, underline, build" and "provide" all suggest that music contributes to the narrative film by correcting a deficiency or making good some kind of lack. At the root of this perceived lack it the notion of absence. Citing the work of Christian Metz, Hans Eisler and Theodor Adorno, Claudia Gorbman suggests that the film image signifies "the presence of an absence;" it is a representation without substance.[4] This lack of substance undermines the verisimilitude of the film, revealing the artificial nature of the medium. Consequently, film makers have developed strategies to disguise this artifice, facilitating a deeper involvement in the diegesis, the most important of which are the continuity conventions of the "180° rule" and "shot-reverse shot" editing.[5]

The argument that this built-in flaw or lack may be corrected or filled in through the use of music has become axiomatic in the literature of film music practice. During the Silent Era, the film house accompanist was expected to provide music for the entire length of the film. The dominant practice of the day was summed up by George Beynon in his *Musical Presentation of Motion Pictures*, a "how-to" manual published in 1921, which states that "allowing the picture to be screened in silence is an unforgivable

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[3]ibid, 213-226.
[4]Gorbman, 39.
[5]180° rule: Within a given scene, the director establishes an axis of action which runs perpendicular to the axis of the camera lens. The camera cannot cross this line resulting in a consistency of placement within the scene. Character and/or objects maintain left/right spatial relationships resulting in a minimization of spectator disorientation Shot-reverse shot: Once the director has established an axis of action, the camera can show points of view from the ends of this axis. For example, during a conversation we see character A from a point of view just behind and above the right shoulder of character B (shot); we then see character B from behind and above the left shoulder of character A (reverse shot).

offense that calls of the severest censure."[6] According to *Motion Picture World*, a periodical of the silent era, the longest allowable silence was 10 seconds.[7] Of particular note is the period of transition between silent and sound films. Although short sound films had been produced since the early teens, with literally thousands of shorts being produced by Warner's Vitaphone and Fox's Movietone studios during the 1920s, it was the production of *The Jazz Singer* (1927) which hailed the beginning of the end for silent film. While sound had been used to great effect, primarily in documentary work, *The Jazz Singer* marked the first successful use of sound in a feature length narrative. However, it was not until 1933 with the release of *King Kong* that the technology of sound production developed sufficiently for the separate recording of dialogue, music, and sound effects. Until then, music was frequently limited to opening and closing credits due to the various technical problems, such as the need to record all sound in real time, resulting in the musicians performing on the sound stage while the film was shot. However, Max Steiner's score for *King Kong* signaled a return to the silent aesthetic of "wall-to-wall" music as well as establishing the now accepted link between music and the fantastic. Steiner recalls how "the producers were skeptical about what kind of public reception they could expect. They thought that the gorilla looked unreal and that the animation was rather primitive. They told me that they were worried about it, but that they had spent so much money making the film there was nothing left over for the music score."[8]

The development of the sound film also introduced the concern over the verisimilitude of music. As Hitchcock revealed in his comment on the musical source

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[6]Quoted in Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling The Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 49.

[7]Quoted in Kalinak, 50.

[8]"Max Steiner on Film Music" in *Film Score: The View from the Podium,* ed. Tony Thomas (New York: A.S. Barns, 1979), 76.

for *Lifeboat*, producers of the new sound films were concerned that the reality of the film would be undermined by the inclusion of nondiegetic music. Great pains were taken to provide the audience with a visual clue as to the source of the music such as a radio, or the inclusion of dialogue which made reference to the music. Steiner states that "in order to justify the music thought necessary to accompany [a love scene], a wandering musician would be brought in for no reason at all."[9]

While the transition to sound provided an opportunity to discard nondiegetic music from the structure of the narrative film, the fact that it survived into the age of sound suggests that music was contributing something to the film. This desire to include music eventually overcame the concern with diegetic justification, and by the late 1930s many of the conventions of the classical film score were established. One of the most important figures in the development of this style was Eric Wolfgang Korngold. In 1940, he published an article in the periodical *Music and Dance in California*, in which he outlined his approach to film music composition:

> When I am sitting at the piano improvising or inventing themes and tunes,
> when I am facing the orchestra conducting my music, I have the feeling
> that I am giving my own and best: symphonically dramatic music which
> fits the picture, its action and its psychology.[10]

This reference to the psychological complement provided by music is a common theme among the practitioners of film scoring. During a 1988 interview, Miklós Rózsa succinctly states that "the final function of film music, at least for me, is to complete the psychological meaning of a scene."[11] This sentiment is echoed by Jerry Fielding: "If the film is working, if it's doing what you want it to do, then stay the hell out. There's no need to put music in a picture unless you have some reason to say something, [to do]

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[9]Quoted in Kalinak, 69.
[10]Brendan Caroll, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1997), 298.
[11]Brown, 271.

what the film is failing to do, or can't do on its own."[12] In 1945 Bernard Herrmann wrote

that "music on the screen can seek out and intensify the inner thoughts of the characters.

It can invest a scene with terror, grandeur, gaiety, or mystery."[13] While the term intensify

suggests that music can amplify aspects of the film already present, Herrmann goes

further to suggest that music can "invest" a scene with meaning. In other words, music

brings something to the film capable of creating in the viewer an emotional state beyond

that generated by the visual component alone.[14] Film scoring veteran David Raksin

touches on this point in a 1991 interview in which he states that:

> The music should try to get inside the spirit of the film. In a way that's
> begging the question, but I don't know how else to put it. You should try
> to find what the film is really about and what it is doing. Which means
> that at certain times the music will have to be at odds with the subject.[15]

Here again, a practitioner suggests that music is not only capable of working within the

"spirit" or psychology of a film, but is capable of moving beyond it and acting as an

autonomous force, "at odds with the subject." Such a comment suggests that the music

has a self-contained meaning which may at times contrast with the visual narrative.

The most striking implication in the comments of these composers is that by

filling this absence, music must therefore be *bringing* something in the way of meaning

to the visual image. If this is the case, can this meaning still be detected within the music

once it is separated from the image? My contention is that the meaning is not present in

the music itself, but is generated in the listener during the act of listening: meaning is a

product of perception. Does this mean that the perception of a musical passage will be

similar regardless of whether or not the passage accompanies a visual image? Or, put

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[12]Quoted in Fred Karlin, *Listening To The Movies: The Film Lover's Guide to Film Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 11.

[13]Graham Bruce, *Bernard Herrmann: Film Music and Narrative* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985), 29.

[14]Later in life, the notoriously difficult Herrmann once stated that Alfred Hitchcock "only finishes a picture 60 percent. I have to finish it for him." Quoted in Brown, 290.

[15]ibid, 285.

another way, does the image alter the perception of the music as much as the music alters the perception of the image?

What is important for the moment is to understand the chicken-and-egg-like nature of the discourse generated by this question. If music brings meaning to a film, certainly the belief in Hollywood, why does much of that meaning slip away when the music is removed from the visual narrative? If, on the other hand, the narrative brings meaning to the music, why do only certain types of music work in certain scenes? Indeed, if the music brings nothing to the narrative film, why use it at all? The paradox posed by these two points of view suggests that the answer lies not in one or the other but somewhere in-between, as if the separate entities of music and film act as a set of complementary coloured lenses. Viewing one through the other changes the appearance of both, simultaneously amplifying that which may be present, while adding that which may be absent.

Combining the Musical and the Visual

As an example, consider what if anything is particularly shark-like about the repetition of a semi-tone in the double basses. While the low pitch suggests both depth and size, the oscillation of the notes may suggest a heart-beat, and the gradual increase in rhythmic density suggests momentum, one is still hard pressed to move beyond general observations to suggest that John Williams' main theme from *Jaws* (1975) makes specific reference to sharks, the ocean, or anything even remotely wet (see Example 2.1). Yet the effectiveness of this simple two note motive is beyond question as it, along with a number of other film music gestures - such as Bernard Herrmann's violin "shriek" from the shower scene in *Psycho* (1960) or the opening of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach*

Zarathustra used as the main title in *2001: A Space Odyssey* - has become an instantly recognizable cultural symbol, even to those who have yet to see the film.

Example 2.1: "Main Theme," *Jaws*

Perhaps then, this belief in music's power to bring some kind of meaning to the visual image is a case of placing the musical cart before the visual horse. Meaning attributed to the musical gesture is not generated in the perception of the music alone, but in the combination of music and image. This would certainly explain the examples suggested above. The listener's perception of the music is profoundly affected by the music's location in the given film: the terror of the unstoppable destructive force of *Jaws*; the horror of bloody murder in *Psycho*; and the grandeur of the universe depicted in *2001*. If the associated scene is so striking that it becomes embedded in the cultural consciousness (such as the shower scene in *Psycho*), it is reasonable to expect that the various aspects of the scene, reenacted within a discourse of some kind, would become culturally encoded symbols - cultural shorthand - acting as a series of signposts for larger cultural references. Indeed, this is the case; in the example of *Psycho* these symbols include the ripping aside some kind of curtain to startle someone, the mechanical stabbing motion of the right hand, the swirl of a darkened liquid down the drain, and the violin "shriek" that underscored the scene.

So if the meaning is generated in the superposition of music and image, may we use the ideas of Johnson and Lacan to clarify how these combinations of media construct meaning? Let us reconsider the *Jaws* example in terms of image schemata in order that we may understand how metaphorical assumptions slip between the film and the accompanying music. Consider the application of the CYCLE schemata to the *Jaws* theme.
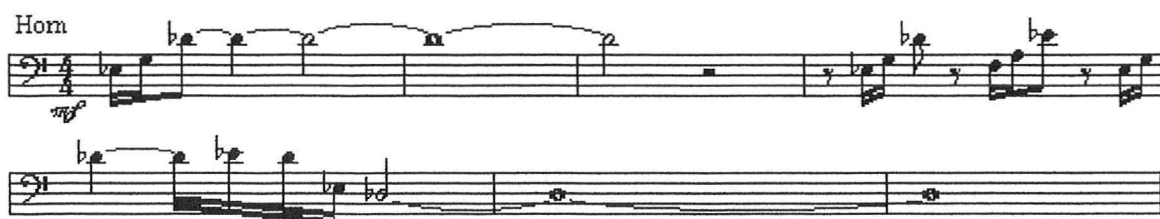

Example 2.2: CYCLE

The most obvious difference in the CYCLE schema as compared to the others we have considered thus far is that it lacks the characteristic of linear motion. It is continuous without a destination or point of rest. On to this we may metaphorically map our perception of the *Jaws* theme's lack of a clear tonal center (which may be based on F, E or something else altogether), and the syncopation of the rhythmic accents which leave the listener in a constant state of discomfort due to the lack of an obvious repeating pattern. The semitone is one of the least "stable" of musical intervals in tonal harmony. It usually resolves downwards as in the seventh of a V^7 resolving to the third of I, or upwards as in the third of a V to the tonic of I. The constant oscillation or cycling between the two tones without any clear final direction contributes to the lack of any sense of center or destination. The theme generates a constant state of tension in the listener.

This perceived tension is only heightened with the entrance of the horn motive (Example 2.3). The upward motion of a major third followed by a tritone outlines a V^7, a

structure with clear harmonic implications. On the surface, this suggests that we may be in Ab major, which would explain the E/F oscillation as leading tone and tonic in the relative key of F minor. However, the V structure is heard not in its usual tonal context but against the semitone oscillation resulting in the momentary superpositioning of the Eb, E natural, and F.

Rather than resolving, the figure repeats three times, the second repeat transposed upwards by a tone, before a downward sixteenth figure settles on Db. The rhythm of the horn motive is also syncopated, in particular during the fourth and fifth measures of the example, which combine with the Stravinsky-like accents in the accompaniment, clouding any sense of regular meter, eliminating any feeling of organized, predictable motion. The passage seems, in several ways, to evoke the feeling of a repeating cycle, spinning endlessly in upon itself with no feeling of resolution or rest.

Example 2.3: "Main Theme (Horn Motive)," *Jaws*

Now consider the metaphorical links the viewer could make between the CYCLE schemata and the figure of the shark.[16] The shark is characterized as a heartless predator described as a "perfect eating machine" (both the predator/prey relationship and the process of eating may be seen as cyclical). It is in constant motion searching for food, beneath the waves, the most powerful creature in an environment where humans are

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[16]One could also make an argument for the use of the COMPULSION schemata in the depiction of the shark; however, I would suggest that the CYCLE schemata corresponds to a broader image of the shark, one in which it destined to play the role of hunter within the endlessly repeating cycle of nature.

virtually helpless to defend themselves. The shark is depicted as a relentless hunter, an unstoppable force of nature which will continue to circle its victims, searching for weakness, and then attack until either it or its prey is victorious. The shark by nature will replay this role of hunter until it dies, its "black eyes" devoid of emotion seeing only that which can be devoured, and that which cannot.

The CYCLE schema also posses a significant threat to the western sensibility. Informed by the PATH schema, western culture is currently based on linear, Darwinian concepts of progress - a continuing state of "advance to an objective or final aim;"[17] This "cradle to grave" mentality has lead to a separation of culture and nature, the latter seen as something to be tamed and transformed into an appropriate linear process. Natural cycles which cannot be subverted are seen as a threat to the fundamental stability of PATH based culture. Such a threat is embodied in the figure of the shark. Its CYCLE based existence codes the shark as a primal threat, placing at risk the social structure of a resort community whose mayor values economic development over human life. In order to "tame," or "linearize" the shark, a monetary value is placed upon it in the form of a bounty. This value allows the community to place the threat of the shark into some kind of understandable context: how much they are willing to pay for its elimination as opposed to how much they hope to make over the approaching holiday weekend.

The associations between the theme and the figure of the shark are reinforced by the fact that the theme is only heard when the shark is present. The *leitmotive* style of film scoring frequently makes use of themes and motives in reference to something or someone absent from the screen. In *Jaws*, however, the theme clearly indicates that the shark is near, frequently sounding only when the camera presents us with the shark's point of view. Only one of the "attacks" remains unscored even when the camera cuts to

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[17]Curt Sachs, *The Wellsprings of Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), 212.

the shark's point of view. However, this lack of accompaniment is a clue, suggesting to the audience that all is not as it seems. In this case, the "shark" is revealed to be a pair of boys playing a practical joke with an artificial shark fin.

This constant association between the shark and the music eventually leads to a metaphorical merging of the two: the music *is* the shark, and vice versa. What we associate with the concept of one, we now associate with the other. While a shark is a natural predator, there is no evidence that the animal is spiteful. It is thought to be motivated by instinct alone. However, in *Jaws* our metaphorical associations of Williams' music, combined with the ominous nature of his melodic material and orchestral colours, are superimposed onto the shark. The musical manifestation of the CYCLE schema transforms the shark from a simple, instinctive, and disinterested predator, into one driven by malice and desire. The animal is imbued with a dark and destructive soul becoming an even more dangerous adversary to an audience that now believes in its capacity for rational, malevolent thought. It plans and schemes for the defeat of its enemies, driven by both its instinct and its intelligence. The shark places at risk the very fabric of western society, represented by the economically driven, PATH based resort.

If the film presented the shark without musical accompaniment, the effect of the attacks, though still disturbing, would be greatly diminished. The audience would not have a clear indication if the underwater shots were intended to reveal the shark or if they were supposed to represent the shark's point of view, a point of view which re-enforces the helplessness of the intended victims. However, by creating a musical analogy of the shark, one whose image schemata closely fits the schemata generated by the creature, and maintaining a constant association between the sounding of the music and the appearance of the shark, the audience creates a far more complex model of the predator, whose

malevolent intelligence heightens the spectator's sense of terror. Furthermore, the music's lack of clear tonality and rhythmic pulse will typically lead to a feeling of displeasure on the part of the listener; this feeling is magnified with the superposition of the shark upon the music. Both combine to create a more intense notion of fear and horror in the audience than either would have been capable of generating independently.

The Kuleshov Effect

The art of combining the various elements in a film to generate a particular response distinct from that generated by the elements in isolation is well known to those who edit and assemble visual images. In the 1920s Soviet film maker Lev Kuleshov performed a series of experiments in order to determine how film signified to its audience. In his most famous experiment, he took unedited footage of an expressionless male face and, in three separate versions, intercut it with images of a bowl of soup, a dead woman lying in a coffin, and a small child playing with a bear. When the different films were shown to a series of randomly selected audiences, all the viewers felt that the actor had done an excellent job in portraying the appropriate response to the particular motivational object.

> The public raved about the acting of the artist, They pointed out the heavy pensiveness of his mood over the forgotten soup, were touched and moved by the deep sorrow with which he looked on the dead woman, and admired the light, happy smile with which he surveyed the girl at play. [...] In all three cases the face was exactly the same.[18]

The audience saw two images and combined them to form a third, a creation of the audience's process of perception. This phenomenon is now known as the Kuleshov effect and is the basis for modern film editing. Kuleshov performed a further series of experiments in which he determined that not only the content but the order of shots

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[18]David A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film*, 3rd ed. (New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1996), 137.

would effect the way the audience perceived meaning. Shot A before shot B results in a different audience response from B before A.

The Kuleshov effect is central in the work of Sergei Eisenstein who refined it in his work on *montage*, a technique with which he is strongly associated through films such as *Battleship Potemkin* (1925). Eisenstein refined Kuleshov's ideas suggesting that two contrasting elements which he names *thesis* and *antithesis* combine to form a third element, the *synthesis*. The synthesis may then become a thesis and combine with another antithesis to create another synthesis which in turn becomes another thesis, and so on. This results in a chain of signification which is dependent on the participation of the audience to move from point to point within the narrative.[19]

While this theory was constructed around the medium of the visual narrative, it is possible to make a similar claim for sound and, in particular, music. In the example taken from *Jaws*, the audience is presented with the thesis (the shark) and the antithesis (the shark theme) which combine to form the synthesis, the audience perception that this shark is not simply an instinctively driven force of nature, but that it is an evil intelligence. The new concept of the shark then goes on to form a thesis in relation to a different antithesis (the attack on a given victim) in the continuing generation of the narrative.

Such an argument clearly suggests that music plays a fundamental role in propelling the narrative forward, as well as shaping the audience perception of the narrative events. A series of experiments carried out at Dalhousie University in 1988 support the contention that music can contribute to perceived meaning in a manner similar to that of the Kuleshov effect.[20] The experiments were meant to test the influence

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[19]See Cook, 169-173.

[20]Sandra K. Marshall and Annabel J. Cohen, "Effects of Musical Soundtracks on attitudes toward Animated Geometric Figures." *Music Perception.* 6 (1988), 95-112.

"of musical information on the interpretation of a film."[21] Subjects were either: a) shown a short animated film in which a silent narrative was acted out by three geometric figures; b) listened to one of several contrasting musical examples or; c) shown the film accompanied by one of the two musical examples. The musical examples consisted of two contrasting passages composed by one of the researchers as well as the last two minutes of the *Adagio* and *Allegro Marcato* from the Symphony No. 5 by Prokofiev. The subjects were then asked to rate their reactions to the particular stimuli (music, film, or the combination of both) on a scale of one to ten, within what the researchers describe as "semantic difference scale items": a series of twelve oppositional concepts arranged within three subgroups (see Example 2.4).

Evaluative	Potency	Activity
nice/awful	weak/strong	calm/agitated
good/bad	powerless/powerful	passive/active
beautiful/ugly	submissive/aggressive	quiet/restless
pleasant/unpleasant	small/large	fast/slow

Example 2.4: Semantic Difference Scale Items[22]

The researchers found that music perceived to rate strongly in one of the items within the Potency and Activity category (according to music-only subjects) would generate a higher rating for the same item when combined with the film. This is the result the experiment was expected to generate. However, music which evoked a strong rating in the Evaluative category would at times generate a proportionally *lower* response for the same item when viewed with the film. The researchers concluded that "the judgments

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[21]ibid, 108.
[22]Table from Marshall and Cohen, 102.

of the film on the Evaluative dimension depend upon a complex interaction of the film and musical material."[23]

The results of the experiment are important to the present discussion in two ways. First, the findings suggest that the audience was experiencing a version of the Kuleshov effect. If the results were simply the sum or difference of the ratings generated by the independent response to the music and film we would have to conclude that the two media were interacting in only the most basic of ways. However, the results for the Evaluative category (for music/film) seemed to have no clear correlation to the independently generated results. One may conclude that when experienced together the two stimuli combined in the perception of the viewer/listener, producing a unique response, distinct from that produced by the stimuli in isolation.

Secondly, the results offer support for the use of image schemata in the understanding of musical perception. The items in the Potency and Activity categories required the subjects to make judgments on elements which we understand or experience primarily through our bodily experience of the world. Each element in the eight polarities listed under Potency and Activity could either literally or metaphorically be represented by image schemata. Since the results of the experiment demonstrated that most subjects experienced these items in a consistent way, and that these experiences mapped from the music to the visual in an equally consistent manner, one may conclude that most of the subjects share a common understanding of these concepts.

The major differences occurred in rating responses to the Evaluative category. This response is related to what has been described as the two levels of metaphorically mapping or interpreting music. This first level, which I describe as the "solidification" of the musical gesture, occurs at the most basic of physical levels. Our common physical

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[23]ibid, 108.

experience of the world results in a consistent interpretation of stimuli in terms of this shared experience. However, it is the second level where perception is subjectively effected by the individual's particular experience. This is where one metaphorically maps a second level of subjective opinion onto a musical passage. Music may well demonstrate a relative level of loud or soft, high or low, long or short. Do we then associate loud with happy and soft with sad, or high with good and low with bad? Music is not in and of itself happy or sad, but it triggers image schemata through which it may then be connected with something else in the world which for the listener carries the associations of happy and sad. The items in the evaluative category would fall under the influence of this subjective personal experience, explaining the divergence in responses to these items.

To explain this second level of metaphorical mapping we must turn to the discussion of musical syntax. While in many cases, a variety of musics would seem appropriate under a given scene, it is not the case that any music may be used with any scene. To follow the argument of the previous paragraph to its logical conclusion - that any visual/musical combination will combine to create some kind of meaning in the perception of the spectator - one could argue that any music will work in any visual narrative context. This is indeed true; however, practical experience suggests that only a particular range of possible musics will generate a range of responses in keeping with the aims of the narrative. We have all seen films in which the poorly written (underwritten, overwritten) musical soundtrack distracts to the point that filmic experience is compromised. The music is so inappropriate that it draws attention to itself, revealing the constructed, artificial nature of the film. It is also true that in some instances, such as in *Jaws*, *Psycho*, or *2001*, the music seems perfect for the screen: indeed, one cannot imagine the scene without it - hence the reason these particular musical fragments become part of a larger cultural discourse.

The theories of Lacan and Johnson provide a framework for the interpretation of a given musical/visual combination; however, beyond the requirement that visual and musical stimuli generate a similar image schemata, these theories shed little light on what is deemed appropriate or inappropriate for a given scene. Such judgments and opinions are based significantly on cultural conventions - both large scale, as in the general scoring practice of the time (orchestral, popular), and small scale, as in the particular details of the film (historical or cultural locations, genre type). These culturally determined codes are transmitted by a musical syntax. To understand how syntax is at work in the narrative film score I will turn to the work of Leonard Meyer, who suggests that pleasure may be derived from "following or anticipating the music's designs, and of having those anticipations variously confirmed or 'agreeably led astray.'"[24]

Syntax and the Pleasure of Fulfilled Prediction

Imagine a thought experiment in which a subject listens to two excerpts of music. S/he is asked to identify the works given the (correct) information that one is composed and performed by the heavy metal group Metallica while the other is a composition by Mozart performed by the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Even subjects who proclaim to have little or no interest in music will be capable of discerning which is which. Such distinctions are possible for those of us raised in the west because constant exposure to music derived from the practice of twelve-tone equal temperament (through radio, television, film, "muzak," etc.) has equipped us with an intuitive understanding of the *syntax* of various related musical styles. In language, syntax provides guidelines which allow us to reorder a finite series of signs (words) to express a much larger range of concepts and ideas. As a result we may employ a limited number of signs, many of

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[24]Wayne D. Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 166.

which signify a number of different meanings. The decoding of the meaning of a particular sign is dependent on the context (which other signs are used in conjunction with the given sign) and how the particular signs are structured in relation to one another. This ordering of signs is governed by the rules of syntax. Without syntax we would need a distinct sign to express each unique concept requiring us to memorize many tens of thousands of signs just to carry on a casual conversation. The rules of syntax are so ingrained in our patterns of speech and writing that we seem to have an intuitive sense for the assembly of language. Only when the rules are broken do we become aware of them.

The rules of syntax also help to govern our expectations of what is about to be said or read. As we have seen, the work of Derrida and Lacan suggests that language is not the autonomous system of Saussure in which signifiers share a stable, one-to-one correspondence with something in the world, but as a system in which meanings shift and change: a realm in which truth is constantly deferred. To facilitate understanding, the listener or reader is engaged in a continuous process of evaluation and prediction of what is to follow based on what has passed. As long as the text is somewhere within the range of texts expected by the reader based on past experience, s/he will have little or no trouble understanding the content. S/he will also experience pleasure through this act of prediction and understanding. I describe this as the "pleasure of fulfilled prediction." Like the readers of a detective story, we gather clues from what is said or written and begin to form models of what is to come. The moment of real pleasure is experienced when we come to understand the ultimate goal of the text before it is reached. We then follow the final trajectory of the argument (even if it is an argument with which we disagree) with the satisfaction of seeing our predictions confirmed. If, however, the text strays from the reader's prediction, through an unexpected turn of phrase, an unfamiliar

word, a mistake in grammar or even the inclusion of a phrase in an unfamiliar language, the reader must realign his/her predictions to take this unexpected change of direction into account. Such a realignment may even enhance the feelings of pleasure as we experience (retrospectively) a feeling of pride from having negotiated what at first may have seemed too sharp a corner, or too steep a climb. But if we are unable to realign our predictions of the text it will seem to take on something of a random nature. We will have trouble with an understanding of the text "of the moment" as well as being unable to make any reliable prediction about what is to come. This inability both to understand and, in turn, to realign prediction with the text will result in a feeling of displeasure and/or frustration.

The same thing occurs when listening to music. Through constant exposure to various styles we develop a sense of how musical syntax operates. Part of the pleasure of listening to music (in particular an unfamiliar work) is derived from the accuracy of our predictions about what is to happen musically. Even greater pleasure may be derived from a point in the music which deviates from expectation, yet can be quickly integrated into a new set of predictions, such as an unexpected change of key or a long delayed cadence.

The link between expectation and pleasure is not new in the discussion of music. Leonard Meyer describes how the difference between "pleasant" and "unpleasant" emotions is found in the expectation of resolution: "[...] not so much in the resolution itself as in the belief in resolution - the knowledge, whether true or false, that there will be a resolution."[25] This is another way of stating what I described as the "pleasure of fulfilled prediction." Our pleasure is derived not only from the resolution of a state of tension but by our expectation of impending resolution. Otherwise, as Meyer points out,

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[25]Leonard Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 19.

our experience of pleasure would occur only after the resolution had come to pass. So, if

the ability to accurately predict the future course of events is central to the experience of

pleasure in music, we may conclude that it is of paramount importance for the listener to

possess (at the very least) an intuitive understanding of the syntax which governs the

parent musical system: an understanding generated by the constant musical inundation of

the subject primarily through the channels of mass-media.

At this point I wish to clarify the difference between my use of Meyer's terms

"pleasure" and "displeasure" and that intended by Meyer himself. The work of Meyer has

been rightly criticized for its objectivist point of view:

> Just beneath [Meyer's] 'modern' surface lies a conviction at least as old as
> Plato that 'merely' sensory experience is of a lower order of reality and
> value than experience mediated by mind, and a belief in the possibility of
> descriptive neutrality and objectivity. True musical value resides in
> patterns and relationships that carry the definitive human trait of
> rationality.[26]

It is clear that for Meyer, there existed an 'ideal listener' who would experience these

states of pleasure and displeasure in a consistent and (perhaps more importantly) a

correct way. I have no such illusions about my listener. This is a revised application of

Meyer's terms informed by the works of Lacan, Johnson, Derrida and Barthes. Rather

than viewing pleasure/displeasure as a mutually exclusive opposition, I feel that they

represent end points on a continuum. A given stimuli will generate a response unique to

a given listener. Even if two listeners find their responses positioned at a similar point on

the continuum (both describing an equivalent level of pleasure and/or displeasure for a

given stimuli), the processes and associations by which they reached this specific level of

stimulation will be distinct from one another. This allows for a multiplicity of readings

of a given text to be placed in context with each other, while reducing the need for an

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[26]Bowman, 193.

'ideal listener.' It is also important to note that the pleasure/displeasure continuum may generate several levels of response. It is entirely possible to find pleasure in the experience of displeasure (or vise versa). Consider the attraction of horror films, roller-coasters or the recent trend of so-called 'extreme sports." In all of these examples the participants or spectators feel a sense of exhilaration from overcoming feelings of fear, or from putting themselves in danger (whether real or vicarious) and surviving.

The main obstacle in this revision of Meyer is balancing the suggestion that a series of fundamental structures (image schemata) inform the processes by which we understand our world, with that which allows for the multiplicity of individual responses from a variety of communities. I propose that the culturally competent audience for a western narrative film is a self-contained community. Regardless of where the individual members originate, when the audience takes his/her place in the theatre there is an implicit agreement on the part of producer and consumer to perceive this music in a particular way. This agreement allows the creators of film to apply the various well-worn strategies of narrative film which just enough variation to keep the audience engaged. The film maker must balance the creation between that which will be so predictable that it will fail to capture the audience's interest, and that which is so obscure as to leave the audience in a constant state of disorientation and displeasure.

By placing musical response onto a continuum of pleasure/displeasure, this adaptation of Meyer's work offers a powerful tool for the examination of any particular musical passage, within the limitations of a given syntax. Within the syntactic structure of western music, a passage that generates a sense of resolution, or implies that a resolution is pending, will in turn, produce a feeling of pleasure in the listener. If the passage generates a sense of tension without the prospect of future resolution, it will produce a corresponding sense of displeasure in the listener. We may reduce these two

concepts even further by considering them as metaphorical states of rest and motion. Any musical procedure may be categorized as one or the other. For example, consider the musical form ABA. The first A, although in the tonic key, implies motion by virtue of its position; the listener expects the structure to "go" somewhere but for the moment the destination is a mystery. With the sounding of the B section, the mystery is solved; however, the move away from the tonic key (to the subdominant or dominant) implies that the return to the tonic is pending. With the return to the final A the musical form is complete, the tonal motion is at rest, and the listener's expectations (based on hearing many other works structured on the ABA form) has been satisfied.

As another example, consider the use of repetition. If a passage sounds once, the listener expects either a repeat of the passage or the introduction of new material. If a passage repeats twice, the listener will now favour the introduction of something new. This expectation will be pleasurable as the listener has no reason to feel that his/her predictions will be frustrated. A tonally stable passage may repeat indefinitely without the listener feeling a sense of discomfort from the lack of motion (although, they may become bored). If, however a tonally unstable passage continues to repeat, the listener will come to expect change but will lose any sense of where such a change may occur. Such a repetition will generate a feeling of discomfort.[27]

The use of the term 'syntax' in reference to musical structure is not without critics. Steven Davies suggests that the use of the term "cannot help but draw on the notion that music has a semantic content produced as that of language is."[28] Highly critical of Meyer's view on the presence of a musical syntax, Davies takes Meyer to task for

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[27]It is important to note that for the purposes of this paper, we are considering the use of repetition within the orchestral film score, whose conventions are derived in large part from the orchestral styles of the Nineteenth Century. While all musics are based on repetition so some degree, clearly there are numerous examples of musical styles which are dependent on the concept of repetition for their very structure such as any western popular style based on the notion of the "groove."

[28]Stephen Davies, *Musical Meaning and Expression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 2.

suggesting "that music is, if not a full-blown language, a special, limited language."[29]
However, I would argue that clearly the music of any given culture does posses a
recognizable system of organization. How else does one recognize Mozart from
Metallica? Even Davies admits that "to hear music as music is to hear it as displaying
organization."[30] To detect organization is to enter into a process of comparison of what
has passed, and prediction of what is to come. This does not imply that meaning is
present; indeed, there is organization in the structure of a snowflake, (organization which
becomes a source of value within a given culture), but who is to say that the crystalline
structure of the snowflake "means" anthing in and of itself.

This notion of the pleasure of fulfilled prediction and its relation to syntax is
particularly germane to the discussion of film music: specifically, in the construction of
what I describe as the second-level mapping of the more subjective notions of emotion
onto the basic image schemata of a given section of film music. Like language, musical
syntax is a learned, socially defined system which through its constant use seems to take
on the air of something natural. In the particular case of film music, it is a series of
established conventions that by mutual agreement (reached through the exchange of the
market place) on the part of the producer and consumer allow for the association between
general categories of musical gestures and general categories of dramatic situations.

The problem with the process of syntax development is that it may lead to the
assumption of hierarchy or the supposition of a "natural" system which stands as a
paradigm against which all other systems are to be compared. For example, non-western
musics are seen as existing only in relation to western music, or atonality may only exist
in relation to tonality. However, as a musical paradigm, tonality is assumed to exist only
in relation to itself. It needs no comparative system for the formation of context. This

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[29]ibid, 27.
[30]ibid, 325.

point of view is still found in the literature of musicology such as in Joseph Swain's *Musical Languages* in which he positions the "natural" language of tonality against the "artificial languages [of] serialism, minimalism, chance music, *musique concrète*, and countless other nameless kinds of musical compositions. The artificial systems of the twentieth-century composition are by far the most prominent feature on the face of its troubled history."[31] This association of non-tonal with the "troubled history" of the twentieth-century is clearly at the root of the link between non-tonal systems and the supernatural in all of its cinematic manifestations, such as ghosts, aliens, murders, the mentally unstable. The syntax of the non-tonal is perceived by the tonally acclimatized ear to lack any obvious organization, and as such, the accompanied characters are depicted as being unpredictable. They are positioned on the margins of normalcy, as opposed to the tonal accompaniment of the majority of sympathetic characters whose musical accompaniment is familiar and comfortable to the spectator.

Musical Syntax and Second-Level Mapping

There can be little doubt that, at least in the minds of film composers, there is a negotiated system of syntax in place through which the composer may communicate with the audience. As early as 1913 accompanists for silent films could purchase collections of music (both originally composed and excerpted from classical repertoire) organized into various psychological or situational categories such as: "Night , sinister mood; Night, threatening mood; Uncanny, *agitato*, Magic, apparition; Impending doom, 'something is going to happen."[32]

That composers continue to "pigeonhole" a given set of musical "moods" and "emotions" is evidenced in the recent trend towards the use of prerecorded orchestral

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[31]Joseph Swain, *Musical Languages* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997) 119.
[32]From the *Handbook of Film Music* quoted in Prendergast, 6-7.

"samples" as a way of generating as large a sound as possible without the cost of recording an actual orchestra. Companies such as East-West and Best Service (both based in the United States) produce CD libraries of original orchestral music which is sold to commercial composers and music editors. Legal purchase of these CDs allows the owners to use the music in any commercial project without the need to secure additional rights from the original composers. The music is arranged into patterns of various length which is then recorded onto a Digital Audio Workstation (such as a computer or digital sampler) and "looped" or repeated to create a continuous musical track over which the composer may add other loops or originally composed melodies.

The advertising copy for one such library, "Scoring Tools" from East-West, demonstrates how defined the syntax of film music has remained in relation to a specific mood or affect:

> East-West would like to introduce you to the very first sample library to include original orchestra loops and film music templates: "Scoring Tools." Every orchestral sample in "Scoring Tools" is four to sixteen bars in length. You can play any melody on top of these loops to build endless symphonic sequences. Of course "Scoring Tools" contains a large variety of different styles such as: magic, happy, sad, mysterious, triumphant, western, dramatic. We also provide between two to five different keys and up to three different tempos for maximum flexibility. [33]

The similarity between products such as "Scoring Tools" and the collections of music compiled for the accompanists of silent films such as Erno Rapee's *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* (1925) and *Motion Picture Moods* (1924) is striking. In the promotional material for "Scoring Tools," like its historical predecessor, basic emotional states and narrative situations have been categorized and provided with music. As an illustration of what I describe as second-level mapping, consider these two brief excerpts taken from the library which are considered to musically depict those most basic of emotional states: "happy" (Example 2.5) and "sad" (Example 2.6).

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[33]"Scoring Tools": *East-West Samplemania 5 Showcase CD*, East-West Communications Inc., 1997.

Example 2.5: EastWest-*ScoringTools*, "Happy"

Example 2.6: EastWest-*Scoring Tools*,"Sad"

At this point I might offer a provisional comparison of the two excerpts and draw

conclusions about the musical characterizations of "happy" and "sad," based on their

differences (see Example 2.7).

Example	tempo	dynamics	tonality	harmonic motion	melodic motion	articualtion	orchestration	rhythmic motion
Happy	medium	med. loud	major	static	static	staccato	sparse	regular
Sad	slow	quiet	minor	active	static	legato	thick	regular

Example 2.7

While such as list is helpful in a comparison of the specific cues, it is obvious that such an approach will tell us little about such emotional characterizations in general, to the extent that each of these subjective observations may be countered by numerous examples - not all sad music is slow, etc. Nonetheless, I believe that these two musical excerpts may offer us some very useful insights into emotional characterizations if we approach them from the point of view of metaphorical mapping, which results from the general understanding of western musical syntax.

First, consider the possible image schemata for the "happy" and "sad." Melissa West, in her analysis of James Horner's score for the film *Glory* (1989), suggests that the metaphors "HAPPY IS UP" and "HAPPY IS MORE MOTION" can help in the reading of the emotional content of a musical work.[34] These metaphors are complemented by the inverse "SAD IS DOWN" and "SAD IS LESS MOTION."[35] While I concur with her reasoning for the origins of these metaphors, reasoning which references linguistic terms such as "jumping for joy," observations of depressed psychiatric patients, or the orientation of the mouth in simple renderings of happy and sad faces, I feel that her applications to the music of the film *Glory* are too case-specific. As was suggested in the initial observations of Examples 2.5 and 2.6, upward melodies do not always indicate happiness; slow tempos do not always indicate sadness. Certainly, within the codes of a given film, such as *Glory*, these metaphors may well hold true; however, if we wish to structure a theory capable of considering a large number of distinct musical scores, we need to find a more rigorous, generalized way of applying metaphor and image schemata theory to musical gesture.

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines "happy" as "feeling or showing pleasure or contentment" while the *Webster's New Dictionary* defines "happy" as "possessing or

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[34]Melissa West. *Music, Emotions and the Role of the Body* (McMaster University: M.A. Thesis, 1998), 91.
[35]ibid.

enjoying pleasure."[36] In both works "sad" is defined as a state of "unhappiness." Therefore, I would suggest that "happy" and "sad" may be redefined in light of Meyer's binary of pleasure and displeasure. Aligning "happy" with a pleasurable state, it may be redefined as the expectation of, or the achievement of resolution from tension; "sad" would then be redefined as tension without expectation of resolution. Note, I am not suggesting that happy/sad is interchangeable with pleasure/displeasure; rather, I feel that pleasure/displeasure acts as a background continuum against which we may position oppositional concepts such as happy/sad. By restating the nature of these emotions in terms of Meyer's opposition, it is also possible to examine how the conditions necessary for the evocation of the two emotional states may be generated musically. "Happy" and "sad" become metaphorical interpretations of "rest" and "not-rest:" the attainment of, or the desires for a particular state of being which is either accessible or inaccessible to the subject. Such a metaphorical state may be reduced to the following schemata which I have named GOAL and NOT GOAL.

a) GOAL   b) NOT GOAL
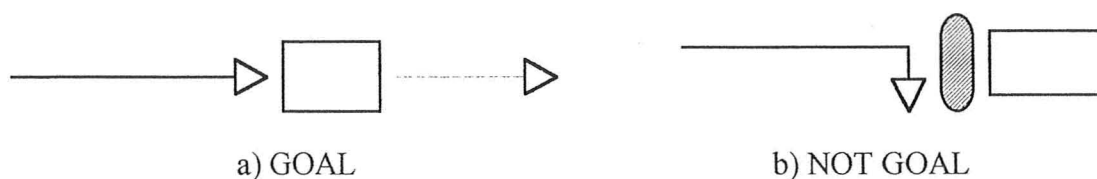
Example 2.8: Image schemata for the metaphorical reduction of "happy" and "sad."

In A, the goal, represented by the box, is either seen to be obtainable, or as already having been obtained. In NOT GOAL, the goal is unobtainable because of some intervening object. In cinematic terms, this could be a physical object like a jail wall, or a

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[36]Joyce M. Hawkins, ed., *The Oxford Paperback Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 296. Iseabail MacLeod and Mary Pauson, ed., *Webster's New Dictionary* (New York: Windsor Court, 1989), 309.

rival suitor, or it could be a metaphorical obstacle such as a lack of courage or information. GOAL implies rest or the expectation of rest while NOT GOAL implies continuous motion with no expectation of rest. These image schemata provide one possible interpretation of how a subject perceives notions of "happy" and "sad" in terms of physical experience. These schemata are also derived from the application of Meyer's opposition of pleasure and displeasure. As such it should be possible to use them in a discussion of the musical interpretations of "happy" and "sad" (Examples 2.5, 2.6).

The "happy" example is marked by a regular rhythmic activity. Although the notes of the upper harmony remain unchanged, the syncopation of the bass movement between the tonic and the dominant as well as the repetitive rests in upper part generate a sense of motion through time. However, the use of a B major harmonic structure (including the major seventh) generates little tension in the western ear. The harmony is *preresolved* resulting in a feeling of rest despite the rhythmic motion, the regularity of which adds to the sense of rest once the pattern has repeated several times. After two or three repetitions, the listener now familiar with the sound, will expect the pattern to repeat. The stability of the harmony does not suggest a desire to move elsewhere (although motion is present) and we may assume the goal has been achieved. In the GOAL schemata above, this musical fragment may be located in the region of the dotted line.

Consider the "sad" example. Like "happy," the fragment is a harmonically static, rhythmically regular minor chord. However, any sense of resolution is foiled (even within a minor tonality) by the Ab on the second beat of each measure. This note is unstable within the context of western tonality suggesting to the listener that the harmony will change. Indeed, it is the first note of an upward moving line which moves by step to the tonic C natural. But this stability is short lived with the return to the Ab in the next

measure. This frustrates the acquisition of the goal (the resolution of tension) in two ways: first, resolution is momentarily heard at the beginning and end of each measure before the introduction of the Ab (followed by a Bb and F natural);[37] second, the suggestion that resolution may be obtained by following a different trajectory either harmonically or melodically is frustrated by the constant repeating of the pattern. This repetition is different from the repetition of "happy" as the harmonic instability of "sad" creates the expectation of some kind of change.

As West observes in her discussion of the "HAPPY IS UP" metaphor, Johnson suggests that our concept of quantity and goal orientation is informed by the *More Is Up* metaphor.[38] We define our economy by its upturns and downturns, while corporate culture is described as a ladder. The theme from *The Jeffersons*, a popular sit-com of the 1970s, declared that its protagonists were "movin' on up" in a description of their improving social status. This leads to West's suggestion that listeners make the metaphorical association between upward motion in music with pursuit of success. However, if we alter this view slightly with the metaphor *Goal Is Up*, we now have a way of explaining upward motion in what is clearly a "sad" sounding gesture. In the "sad" example there is strong upward motion in both the strings and the harp suggesting some kind of goal orientation, however this motion is constantly frustrated. The notion of happy/sad may be defined not in terms of a particular melodic direction but in terms of goal acquisition.

These examples hopefully begin to clarify the relationship between image schemata and culturally constructed syntax. As a practical example of how this

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[37]When I state that resolution is heard at the beginning and end of each measure, it is important to note that the pattern repeats. I am not suggesting that the pattern begins in a state of resolution, for resolution may by definition only appear from a state of tension. However, I would argue that in general, music of the west emerges from a state of *stability*; it is the introduction of tension which propels the music forward.

[38]Johnson, 122.

relationship functions consider the following two excerpts from John Williams' score for

Empire of the Sun. When young Jamie accidentally stumbles upon the Japanese soldiers

waiting in the fields behind Max's house, Williams scores the scene with a combination

of western military percussion such as snare and bass drums, timpani (which frequently

slide in pitch), and a selection of Japanese percussion. The percussion accompanies

Jamie as he slowly and cautiously walks along the edge of the soldier's trench with a

slow, quiet and apparently irregular pulse. When the two adults (Jamie's father - John -

and their host, Max) call to the boy, telling him to walk slowly away from the Japanese,

the camera switches to a point-of-view shot from behind the soldiers. This presentation

of the Japanese point-of-view is accompanied by the entrance of a *shakuhatchi*, whose

plaintive syncopated shriek further serves to hide the rhythmic pulse.

Example 2.9: Japanese Soldiers' theme from "Imaginary Air Battle," *Empire of the Sun*

After his capture by the Japanese, Jamie is taken to the labour camp where he is

to join thousands of others in the construction of an airfield. Across the field he sees a

number of Japanese aircraft undergoing repairs. Jamie's greatest love in life is airplanes.

As if in a dream he walks over to the planes, ignoring the protests of a guard. In a

surreal halo of sparks from the mechanics' grinders and welding torches, Jamie reaches

up to touch the aircraft in what might be described as religious reverence. Three

Japanese pilots seen only in silhouette approach Jamie from behind, and when the young

boy turns to salute the men, they in turn snap to attention and return the salute. In

contrast to the first encounter between Jamie and the Japanese, the musical accompaniment is strongly tonal, scored for full orchestra and chorus. The *rallentando* followed by the key change (see Example 2.10) occurs at the moment Jamie turns to salute the pilots.

Example 2.10: "Cadillac of the Skies," *Empire of the Sun*

In terms of syntax, the two examples present the audience with very different characterizations of the Japanese. The first example presents a western expectation of Japanese music: an expectation informed by the occasional integration of Japanese gestures within other soundtracks such as Hans Zimmer's score for *Black Rain* (1989). Such scores rarely offer an extended example of Japanese music; instead the sounds are used to punctuate the action. This disjointed style of presentation, in which the listener is offered fragments of unfamiliar sound, create a sense that the gestures are to be heard as sound-effects as well as music. Our lack of experience with the codes that may (or may not) be informing the composer's judgment draws our attention to the unfamiliar sounds. The timbre of the *shakuhatchi* is harsh and hollow. The distinct sound of the *shakuhatchi*, itself an "other" within the predominantly western orchestral score, codes the Japanese soldiers as "other." Furthermore, there is no pitch or rhythmic center onto which the audience may anchor its expectations. The result is an unpredictable, random series of musical events, linked only by the sense that they are incomplete: something else will happen, but what this may be, and when it will happen, are unknown. This lack of a clear syntactic structure resulting in an inability on the part of the audience to make accurate predictions regarding future events generates a feeling of agitation in the listener which is associated with the Japanese soldiers, who are narratively depicted as the source of the disruption. In terms of image schemata, the soldiers represent a threat to the acquisition of the goal; in this case, the goal is one of physical safety. According to Meyer, unpredictability generates a feeling of displeasure. The displeasure generated by the unpredictability of the music is mapped onto the Japanese, who become a threat to both Jamie and the spectator.

In contrast, the second encounter with the Japanese is accompanied with an understandable musical syntax for the western ear. Presented in the structure of melody

with accompaniment, the melodic and harmonic structures follow well-worn paths in the musical memory of the audience. The theme is not new to the audience, as Williams uses it in an earlier scene in which Jamie is tucked into bed by his mother in the family's final "perfect night." As such, the theme has the association of home and safety. An important feature of Jamie's bedroom is the several model aircraft suspended from the ceiling, one of which is a Japanese *Zero*. It is a *Zero* which Jamie approaches with such reverence as if the plane represents some kind of sanctuary for him. When he turns to salute the pilots there is no fear in his face. He believes anyone associated with the aircraft is incapable of doing him harm. The orchestration is for a large conventional orchestra with no trace of the Japanese instrumentation further distancing both Jamie and the Japanese pilots from the threat of the narrative's cultural context. The *rallentando*, the extended cadence with the addition of the extra measure, and the upward key change combine to both create a sense of expectation, which is fulfilled with the restatement of the theme, while also suggesting to the audience that this is a moment of great emotional depth. When the theme returns following the key change, the audience is allowed to realign its set of expectations. The recognition of what has happened before within a new and unexpected context generates a feeling of pleasure. The major tonality, and the prior associations with the theme, tell the spectator that despite the generation of expectation, there is no threat to either Jamie or the viewer. The key change, which accompanies Jamie's salute, is a moment of goal acquisition. After becoming separated from his family, victimized by an older Chinese boy who beats him for his shoes, eventually becoming a prisoner-of-war, Jamie has at last found in the pilots, someone who will return his offer of respect and friendship. In a way, the music serves to disarm the Japanese (both literally and figuratively), momentarily removing them from their diegetic cultural context. Unlike the unpredictable "others" of the first example, who were clearly

Japanese, presented as a threatening force which silently disappeared behind the hill patiently waiting for some sign, the pilots are presented in silhouette. We cannot see their facial features - their Japanese "otherness" - and our impression of them is structured by the predictable familiarity of the western musical syntax which accompanies them. While one could correctly argue that the Japanese lose their cultural identity in a musical act of repression, from the point of view of the narrative the pilots are imbued with a cultural identity similar to that of Jamie. For a moment, the pilots, Jamie and (by extension) the audience are linked through a common musical language.

In this chapter I have attempted to explain how the culturally dependent rules of musical syntax help structure the negotiation of meaning between the fundamental constructions of image schemata and the subjective experience of the individual spectator. With the four elements of the model now in place (Lacan's imaginary/symbolic, Johnson's image schemata, the recognition of the music/visual interaction in the generation of meaning, and the influence of musical syntax) it is now possible to analyze the function of film music in some depth. Chapter Three offers such an analysis of two films: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* and *The Piano*.

Chapter 3: Analysis

I will now turn to the application of the ideas presented in this work with the analysis and discussion of the music of two films: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* and *The Piano*. Following brief plot summaries, I will present a general discussion of the approaches taken by the composers in terms of style and orchestration, and how these choices are influenced by the narrative structure of the films. This will be followed by a basic analysis of what I consider to be the most important musical passages from the scores, in order that we may see how particular passages function within the Western tonal system, and how these functions may be linked to specific image schemata and metaphorical structures. The final section in each discussion will offer further examples from the respective films demonstrating how, in the perception of the spectator, the visual and musical stimuli merge in the construction of meaning.

While the discussions of the two films will follow a similar structure, the content of these discussions will diverge significantly. These are two very different films with scores which function in very different manners; indeed, the reason I selected these two films for my examples was to explore the distinct feelings in sensed while viewing the respective film. James Horner's music for *Star Trek II* helps us accept as real the far distant future in which mighty star ships battle against the vast panorama of space. His equally expansive score creates a discreet distance between the diegesis and the nondiegesis, a distance which insulates the audience from the fantastic images with which they are presented. This distance facilitates the spectator's suspension of disbelief

through a process similar to Claudia Gorbman's "moments of spectacle."[1] At the same time, he employs several distinct image schemata to bridge this distance, engaging the audience's sense of character identification and emotional response.

At the opposite end of the spectrum we find the music for *The Piano*, a story of the complex emotional and sexual bonds which develope between three people on the edge of "civilization." Michael Nyman's original score draws the audience into the diegesis by creating a bridge through which the viewer may enter the Lacanian imaginary of the diegesis, directly experiencing the torment and suffering of Ada, the film's protagonist. This example of audience integration through the evocation of the imaginary is in marked contrast to the score for *Star Trek II*, which depends on the notion of a culturally coded syntax for its interpretation.

Indeed, my decision to use these two films as my analytical examples was a result of what I felt was a significant difference in the composer's approach to the music. Clearly the two film scores employ, to some extent, both the stratagies of Lacanian and syntactic intergration, but in each case, one will dominate the other: syntactic intergration in *Star Trek II*; Lacanian intergration in *The Piano*. However, it is my contention that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but are points on a continuum mediated through image schemata. By selecting two unique and seemingly unrelated examples it is my hope to demonstrate that the same basic methodology may be used in the analysis of a film score regardless of the composer's approach. The analysis itself will dictate what direction it will take following the formation of the basic schemata at work in the music: either, into the culturally constructed world of syntax or into the preconceptual realm of the Lacanian imaginary.

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[1]See Chapter 1, pg. 22.

Case Study No. 1: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan.* Composer: James Horner

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Plot Summary

Released in 1982, *The Wrath of Khan* was based on an episode of the original television series entitled "Space Seed"(original airdate: February 14th, 1968) in which Captain James T. Kirk and the crew of the USS Enterprise encounters the S.S. Botany Bay carrying a crew of genetically engineered humans frozen in suspended animation. It is soon determined that, like its namesake, the Botany Bay is a prison ship - its crew condemned to an eternity adrift in space for the crime of leading a revolution against the world governments of Earth. Superior both mentally and physically, this group is lead by the psychotic, megalomaniac Khan Noonian Singh who, despite his genetic superiority, fails in an attempt to take over the Enterprise and is exiled to a deserted, though naturally abundant planet.

The film picks up the story fifteen years later, where we find that a natural disaster has laid waste to Khan's planet, killing his wife and many of his followers. After capturing a passing ship engaged in the testing of a powerful new scientific device named *Genesis*, Khan sets out to wreak his revenge on the (now promoted) Admiral Kirk, who with age has grown uncertain of his ability to command. Kirk is busy supervising the trainee crew of the new Enterprise under the command of Captain Spock. Khan springs a surprise attack upon the Enterprise killing many of its young crew. His ship seriously damaged, Kirk must now use all of his experience to save the crew of the Enterprise. Following a series of battles between the two, Kirk eventually manages to defeat his nemesis; however, in a final act of revenge, Khan locks the powerful *Genesis* device into a self-destruct mode producing a massive explosion. His damaged ship unable to escape the blast, it seems that Kirk has finally been beaten. Unknown to Kirk, his friend Spock sacrifices his life to repair the Enterprise's engines and at the last possible moment, the ship escapes to safety. Only after the danger has passed does Kirk realize how dearly bought was their escape.

James Horner's score for *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* is large by any standard. Music accompanies over 68 minutes of the film's 114 minute running time (almost 60%), far more music than the average of 30 to 45 minutes found in a typical Hollywood film of

the early 1980s.[2] The score calls for a large, conventional orchestra to which Horner adds two harps, two synthesizer keyboards (Roland Jupiter-8s) and a battery of percussion instruments. Horner worked quickly (with orchestrator Jack Hayes), completing the score in only five weeks.[3] The music is a textbook example of the *Leitmotiv* style of film scoring, using motives or themes to represent the various characters, objects or situations within the narrative. The score is then assembled from the variation, superposition, or fragmentation of these themes. The themes contribute to the structural unity of the film, and assist in the creation of mood and character. In keeping with the established practice of Hollywood scoring, there is a careful relationship between music and dialogue, with dialogue occupying the position of audio privilege except in moments of spectacle where music is given free reign.

Themes

Although on the surface, *Star Trek II* seems to be a typical struggle between good and evil set within the futuristic mythology of *Star Trek*, the underlying story is one of human fallibility and the growing uncertainty of judgment and purpose which frequently accompanies middle-age. Capitan James T. Kirk of the original television series was the perfect mix of mental and physical. No matter how grim the situation he was always able to find the solution, saving himself, his crew and his ship. However, Admiral James T. Kirk of *Star Trek II* has moved from the bridge to the boardroom. Without his command he is devoid of purpose and becomes indecisive.

The opening sequences of the film develop this notion of the now middle-aged Kirk in a number of ways. Much of the narrative action is generated by the fact that it is

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[2]Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On The Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1990), 65.
[3]ibid, 78.

Kirk's birthday. Despite three years and 72 episodes, no mention was ever made of Kirk's birthday in the original series, but now Kirk is finally allowed to age. We also find that he has taken to collecting antiques. For his birthday he is given a book (Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*) which he must hold at arms length in order to read, an indication that his eyesight is beginning to fail. He is also given a pair of eye glasses, a fairly primitive form of treatment in the twenty-third century; however, as we are informed by Kirk himself, he is allergic to "retnox," the contemporary method of eye treatment. The glasses mark him as a man living in the past, unable to cope with the changes in his society, as does his collecting of antiques. The various indicators are eventually summarized in the advice of his friend Leonard McCoy: "Get back your command. Get it back before you turn into part of this [antique] collection - before you really do grow old."

Example 3.1: Kirk's Theme: "Main Theme," *Star Trek II*

Kirk's growing sense of indecision and lack of purpose is also made manifest by the film's main theme (see Example 3.1). What is initially striking about this theme is that, despite the apparent nature of the film with its emphasis on adventure and battles in space, the music seems to lack any strong martial quality, such as a strict march tempo or *staccato* phrasing. The tempo is too slow for a march while the orchestration is quite lyrical in the use of brass and percussion as opposed to the regimented, repetitive employment, characteristic of a military style. While the use of triplets is common within the march genre, they are usually performed with a *staccato* articulation; however,

the triples of Example 3.1 are performed *legato*. Furthermore, the rhythmic strength of beat four is undermined by the use of the tie between the third quarter note and the first note of the triplet group.

Compare this theme with the opening music for *Star Wars*, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, or *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, all of which employ brisker tempos and conventional military influences in their orchestration. While the theme from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* makes use of dotted rhythms, both *Star Wars* and *Star Trek: TMP* use fully articulated triplets in contrast to the triplets in Example 3.1. This becomes an even more interesting point if one considers that the plots of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Star Trek: TMP* possess far less in the way of martial overtones than does *Star Trek II*. Horner also employs a higher degree of chromaticism than the other cited examples do. In all four cases the main themes are generally associated with the protagonists and the success of their respective quests. In both *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* the themes are completely diatonic (and major), while *Star Trek: TMP* employs the mixolydian mode in a consistent manner. If we consider the *Star Trek II* as a story of battles and revenge, the character of the main theme is difficult to reconcile with the narrative. I would argue that the music becomes meaningful only when we view the film as a character study of James T. Kirk.

The opening phrase of the theme is an ornamentation of a C major triad moving upwards from the root to the fifth. In short order it employs all of the diatonic tones with the exception of the leading tone, yet nevertheless clearly establishes a sense of mixolydian or ionian tonality, while presenting an easily recognizable motive associated with Kirk. However, following this first phrase, the melodic content begins to stray from the diatonic in a variation of the A natural to G natural in the second measure. The line

attempts to climb chromatically from Ab to Bb always returning to the tonal anchor of G on the metrically strong beats of one and three.

The combination of the clear major tonality and the upward motion of the melodic line of the opening two measures suggest a positive frame of mind, reinforced with the associations of the GOAL schemata and the 'positive is up' metaphor. If this was the end of the theme, the audience would most probably be left with the metaphorical impression of confidence and determination. However, this is undermined by the chromatic alterations of Ab and A natural with the G natural in the following measures. The upward motion continues through the Ab to the Bb, but it is now frustrated in several ways. The move from diatonic to chromatic undermines the sense of key still suggested by the constant return to the G natural. The back-and-forth motion generated by the constant resounding of the G frustrates the upward motion, seemingly dragging it back before it can find tonal resolution on the high C natural. With both the upward motion and the weakened sense of tonality, the second half of this phrase is evocative of the NOT GOAL schemata. Although the two halves of the phrase form an antecedent/consequent pair, the relationship is unsteady; the consequent undermines the stability of the antecedent. NOT GOAL follows GOAL in such quick succession that the audience is left out of balance. By suggesting two possible directions for interpretation but allowing neither to sound for very long, the audience is unable to ground their experience of the music in any particular schemata resulting in a similar sense of indecision to that which is at the heart of Kirk's characterization.

When the theme repeats, the A natural changes to an Ab. The conflict of the first antecedent/consequent pair is now combined in the antecedent. In the consequent, the melody is allowed to complete the climb to the C natural, the goal of the first four measures; however, there is no sense of resolution here, for the C is reached on a

metrically weak beat before the tonality shifts to that of E major. Resolving to a B natural, the status of the C is changed from that of the tonic and goal of the line's upward motion to that of a chromatic approach note. The reaching of C becomes an empty and inconsequential goal. It may even be possible to say that the real goal of the passage is the B natural which is both the most unstable note in the key of C major as well as the only note in C major which remained unheard until its appearance in the transition to E major. Throughout the course of the film the ambiguous nature of this theme, with the constant undermining of tonic and goal, becomes synonymous with the indecision and insecurity of Kirk's now middle-aged character.

A second important theme, associated with the Enterprise, is shown in Example 3.2.

Example 3.2: Wonder: "Main Theme," *Star Trek II*

This theme is evocative of the "up is wonder" metaphor. The music possesses an upward orientation on two levels: the melody is clearly structured by a series of upward leaps during the first four measures, while the harmonic structure moves upwards through the major keys of E, F#, G, A, and finally to B. It is possible to suggest that Example 3.2, with its large leaps and rapid key changes, may lead to a sense of disorientation, evoking the BALANCE or EQUILIBRIUM schemata; however, the aural effect of the passage is clearly one of upward direction. However, despite the clear sense

of orientation, this melody does not fit the profile of the GOAL schemata because of the design of the melodic line. All of the sustained pitches sound on the metrically weak second beat, creating a much softer, less aggressive sound. Following the initial series of leaps, the melody moves down to, and oscillates around the B natural. This back-and-forth motion seems to invite contemplation rather than assert any claim to achievement. It is as if the listener is asked to reflect on the events of the first four measures.

Consider now the theme associated with the film's villain: Khan (Examples 3.3 and 3.4).

Example 3.3: Khan Theme A (fragment): "Surprise Attack," *Star Trek II*

Example 3.4: Khan Theme B (developed): "Surprise Attack," *Star Trek II*

First heard in the fragmentary form of Example 3.3, it is quickly developed into a full version during the cue "Surprise Attack" that will be discussed in detail later. The main characteristic of Khan's theme is unpredictability. Horner avoids conventional

harmony in favour of a chromatic cluster, heard over the vertical structure of an open perfect fifth. Although the open fifth is a stable structure (movement is not required for the release of tension), its lack of a "defining" third can lend it a certain instability when it is heard in the context of triadic harmony, an instability which may lead to a heightened sense of unpredictability. One may also suggest that the use of the open fifth is far less common than the use of thirds; the unfamiliar sound has something of an archaic quality which could be linked to Khan's position as a "man out of time" (see the discussion of Khan as "other" below). Despite the use of chromaticism, Kirk's theme is based on the major triad which creates a strong contrast with the open sound of Khan's fifths.

Horner then adds a pitch cluster to the top note which further weakens any sense of major/minor tonality. The chromatic back-and-forth motion of the line, coupled with quick rhythmic pacing, results in a blurring of the structure. The melodic motion takes place quickly within a narrow range, making it difficult to discern any pattern. Horner further frustrates the listener through (in the first example) the use of a syncopated rhythmic figure superimposed on an irregular meter. Its accompaniment is reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, dominated by metallic percussion and *col legno* strings. When the theme is heard in a more fully developed form, it maintains some syncopation and a contrast between quick and slow rhythms; however, it is now accompanied by a frantic mechanical pulse, symbolic of Khan's quest for vengeance, and his relentless pursuit of Kirk.

The result is a theme which is at once unpredictable, yet tremendously focused. The unpredictability is both melodic and rhythmic in nature. The lack of any clear functional harmony which the ear may grasp suggests that in general, the listener cannot predict when the quick melodic gesture will resolve (generation of displeasure), and

when the gestures do resolve there is no release of tension (further generation of displeasure). The second aspect of the theme (extreme focus) is produced not by its melodic or harmonic content, but by its rhythmic drive. In the west, an emphasis on rhythm over melody or harmony has long been considered a sign of the primitive and subversive force of the non-western "other" illustrated by music composed for the Apaches of *Stagecoach* (1939), the Japanese of *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), or the Africans of *Zulu* (1964). However, far from making it predictable, the continuous repetition of the rhythmic figure in Example 3.4 generates a type of tension, the resolution of which is expected yet unpredictable.

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Example 3.5: RANDOM

Khan's theme and character combine to generate associations with several schemata, such as RANDOM (in which a force follows an unpredictable course - see Example 3.5) and COMPULSION.[4] He is compelled to enact his revenge on Kirk and only a force greater than himself will be capable of deflecting him from his course. However, while his actions over the long-term are predictable (he will attempt to kill Kirk) his actions in the short-term are unpredictable. He is guided by his passions and, as such, is difficult to second guess through rational thinking. The music that accompanies him is also reflective of the RANDOM and COMPULSION schemata. Because of Horner's use of syncopation and a chromatic cluster of pitches, it is difficult to predict the course of the themes in the short-term even though the use of a driving rhythmic figure and the open fifth as the primary harmonic structure provide the theme with an

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[4]See Chapter 1, pg. 28-29.

apparently solid and predictable framework. However, this predictability is illusory as the resolution of the theme is never what the guidelines of conventional harmony would suggest. The audience anticipates change in both the music and in the character of Khan, but the nature and timing of the change remains unknown until after the fact.

Related to the RANDOM schemata, the BALANCE schemata also plays an important role, as it does whenever we deal with a narrative character who is perceived to be mentally "out" of balance. Johnson states that an imbalance in negative emotions, such as anger or hatred, is metaphorically understood to function in the same manner as overheated fluids held within a closed container. Our concepts of anger are expressed using terms such as "simmer, well up, overflow, boil over, erupt, and explode," all terms one may associate with the character of Khan.[5] This imbalance is also reflected in the Khan theme. The contrast between the horizontal and vertical structure of the chromatic flurry and the long sustained open fifths creates a sense of imbalance, as does the use of the odd time signature and the syncopation. The link between BALANCE and RANDOM is that the lack of the former generates a constant state of displeasure in the listener who, because of the presence of the latter, feels there is no relief in sight.

The use of open fifths also serves to code Khan as "other." Parallel fifths have long been a convention for the cultural "other" in Hollywood film scoring practice, used to signify anything of non-European origin from the Orient to the Wild West. Even within the (relatively speaking) culturally enlightened depictions of *Star Trek*, the "primitive" parallel fifth is frequently employed, as in Jerry Goldsmith's music composed for the war-like Klingons as they battled the all-powerful V'ger during the opening scene of *Star Trek: TMP*.

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[5]Mark Johnson, *The Body In The Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 88.

Khan's Indian heritage (and Ricardo Montalban's distinctly un-Indian accent) defines him as a cultural "other," while his origin in the twentieth-century makes him a temporal "other." The primitive nature of Khan and his followers suggested by the dominance of rhythm in the Khan theme is emphasized through their depiction as a tribe, both in their appearance (an eclectic, post-apocalyptic mix of rags, skins, and electronic components) and in their behavior. Compare the bridge of the Enterprise, whose disciplined crew are seen positioned at their various stations, with the bridge of the hijacked Reliant, where Khan's followers are seen draped around him. It is interesting to note that Horner seems to avoid any clear musical references to Khan's "genetically superior intelligence," focusing instead on the primitive, aggressive aspects of the character. One could argue that such a musical depiction would run the risk of conflicting with the musical themes associated with the character of Spock.

Example 3.6: Spock's Theme A: "Spock," *Star Trek II*
(octatonic scale)

Example 3.7: Spock's Theme B: "Spock," *Star Trek II*
(whole tone scale with tritone motion in bass)

Like Khan, Spock is also a highly intelligent "other"; however, as a Vulcan, Spock is devoid of emotions, his actions guided by pure logic. In some ways, Spock forms a mirror image of Khan: both are isolated from the diegetic world, Spock an alien (social dislocation), while Khan is from the past (temporal dislocation). But where Spock is a cool and logical scientist, Khan is a warrior prince, ruled by his emotions. This difference in the characters is obvious in the themes composed for the character of Spock. Consider the orchestration used in Examples 3.6 and 3.7. The theme is introduced to the listener on a keyboard synthesizer programmed with a cool crystalline sound, similar to that created by stroking the rim of a wine glass. It is not that there is any natural association between the sound and the character of Spock, but the use of this sound draws attention to itself through its unique character, similar to the use of the *col legno* strings with their distinct "clacking" sound in the Khan theme. The singular character of sound codes the theme as "other."

Even more important is the melodic material of the Spock theme. Like Khan's themes, Spock's music avoids the use of functional harmony in favour of a more unusual sound. Example 3.6 presents an unaccompanied melodic line that is best described as a fragment of the whole-half (or octatonic) scale, while Example 3.7 is a linear statement of the whole-tone scale with tritone motion in the bass. Example 3.7 may also be viewed as a C# major triad followed by a G major triad; indeed, this is often the way Horner appears to orchestrate the theme in the later stages of the film. However, in either view (whole-tone scale, or triads separated by a tritone), the importance of the even distribution of pitch material cannot be understated. Both the diminished and whole tone scales are defined by the fact that they are "maximally even" pitch sets: they are the most symmetrical distribution of a given number of pitches (6 for the whole tone scale, 8 for the octatonic) within an octave. This is distinct from the major/minor system, which

selects a group of seven pitches from the chromatic aggregate which are distributed in an

uneven pattern of whole-tone and semitone intervals. While the Western ear is attuned to

the sound of the major/minor system, the organization of the whole/half and whole-tone

scales demonstrates a much higher level of mathematical logic and symmetry. I would

go even further to suggest that the outward display of emotion by Khan and Spock are

paralleled through the presence of semitones in their respective themes. As Spock shows

little outward emotion, so to is Spock's theme is devoid of semitones, lacking the added

edge of tension/resolution provided by the half-step. Khan's theme, in contrast, is

comprised of a cluster of semitones which strain and pull at one another, echoing his

outward displays of emotion. However, it would be a mistake to suggest that Spock has

no passion. Indeed, he sacrifices himself not only for logic, but for the love of his ship

and crew. Spock's real passion is found not in a cluster of semitones but in the relentless

upward motion of his theme.

At the centre of both the whole/half and whole-tone systems is the interval of a

tritone, unique in the system of twelve-tone equal tempered tuning in that it is the only

interval unaltered by an octave transposition of one of the component pitches.[6] In other

words, it is the most symmetrical of intervals, providing a further level of symmetry to

the Spock themes. While the sounds of the whole/half and whole tone scales are unusual

in Western tonal music, coding Spock as "other," the symmetrical structure of the themes

makes the motives perhaps the most predictable of all (if one understands the syntax),

reflecting Spock's character whose actions are always predictable if one thinks logically.

Therefore, like Khan, the character and music of Spock both resonate within the

BALANCE and COMPULSION schemata, but for very different reasons. Without the

distractions of emotional response, Spock appears to be completely balanced, evaluating

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[6]One could also argue that the octave falls into this category; however, from the point of view of pitch class analysis, an octave is not a true interval as it involves two members of the same pitch class.

each situation on the evidence, deciding on a course of action directed by only logic with each decision a reflection of his credo: "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or the one." But logic does not simply inform Spock's decisions and course of action - it compels him to make a specific choice. When faced with a dilemma, Spock must take the path dictated by logic, making the decisions of his character not just predictable, but hyper-predictable. In a similar manner, the Spock themes (in particular Example 3.6) are restricted to the limits of the specific scale. They cannot stray from the given pitch class set without losing the set's characteristic sound. In Example 3.6 this limitation is even more severe as the melodic line is restricted to ascending stepwise motion. Both the theme and the character of Spock are balanced, as neither seem to possess a tension which needs to be resolved: however, the systems within which they both operate compel them to a particular course of action.

Variations

The preceding discussion outlines the primary themes and how they may be seen to relate to the characters and situations presented in the narrative. I would now like to examine how these themes accompany specific scenes within the film. In general, the analysis of the various cues will reveal how Horner, operating within many of the accepted conventions of Hollywood film scoring practice, uses an opposition of tonal/non-tonal to emphasize the conflict between Kirk and Khan, and by extension, the conflict within Kirk himself. The success of this approach depends on the ability of the audience to grasp the differences in syntax between the tonal systems of Kirk, Khan and, to a lesser extent, Spock.

The *Main Titles* introduces the audience to three of the previously discussed themes (Examples 3.1, 3.2 and 3.6). While the Paramount Logo is still on the screen, the

music opens with a high string tremolo over low woodwinds, augmented by hollow, synthetic drones. The music remains static as the Paramount Logo fades, replaced by a moving starfield. The obvious impossibility of the starfield shot should generate a negative reaction in the audience as they are being asked to accept an obvious lie: in the reality of the late twentieth-century no such scene is possible. However, as Kathryn Kalinak explains, "music signal[s] the entry into the fantastic realm, facilitating the leap of faith necessary to accept [the narrative] as real."[7] The convention of a high string and pedal-point generate both anticipation and suspense through the expectation of resolution, as well as acting as a Lacanian bridge from the "real" world to the fantastic diegetic world of deep space through the addition of a physical presence in the bodies of the musicians. This presence imbues the scene with a sense of the Lacanian imaginary, transforming the star field from an artificially constructed impossibility to a living, breathing world in which the narrative may be enacted.

A similar strategy is employed at the conclusion of the *Main Title*. As the last of the opening titles are shown, the music moves through a succession of key changes involving the opening fragment of Kirk's theme (Example 3.1) before returning to the opening texture of high strings, low woodwinds and electronics. The star field fades and is replaced by the intertitle,[8] "In the 23rd Century." As the music fades, its electronic nature blends with the sounds of equipment on the bridge of the Enterprise, the (apparent) location of the opening scene. This blurring of the nondiegetic music with diegetic sound strengthens the "bridge-like" nature of the score, as at this point it seems to become an actual extension of the diegetic experience, but one that is only perceivable by the spectators, thus drawing them further into the narrative. As the static nature of the

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[7]Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling The Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 71.

[8]A short nondiegetic text phrase identifying an object, a place, or a time (e.g. "Rome: 43 BC").

introductory high string and pedal-point facilitated the movement from the non-diegetic to the diegetic world, the return of this texture signals that a second transition is in process, smoothing the passage from the wider diegesis into the specifics of the opening scene. This is equivalent to the visual editing practice of using an establishing shot of the wider diegesis (a city, the prairies) before moving to a specific location within the diegesis (an apartment, a farm). This allows the audience to orient itself in a gradual manner instead of simply being "dropped" into the middle of a scene.

Horner also eases the transition from diegesis to nondiegesis with the use of a theme familiar to fans of the original series. During the *Main Title* he introduces the motive shown in Example 3.7. Quoted from the original television series, the use of this theme (composed by Alexander Courage) is dependent on audience recognition. It forms an immediate link between the film and its television predecessor, acting as an obvious signal to the informed. It is interesting to consider that the structure of the melody was designed by Courage to coincide with the visual opening of the television series. The key change in measure three was synchronized with an image of the Enterprise passing at high speed. While the opening of *Star Trek II* was similar to the television series in several ways (see below), the lack of any visual action during the sounding of the key change actually seems to weaken the dramatic effect. The motive is included exclusively for its association with the original series.

Example 3.7: Alexander Courage Theme: "Main Title," *Star Trek II*

The use of the "Courage" theme and the opening shot of the starfield (also suggesting a link to the original series which opened with a similar image) may have been in part due to the perceived failure of *Star Trek II*'s precursor, *Star Trek: TMP*, which was criticized for a lack of the action/adventure conventions that had made the original series such a success. Its opening featured credits projected on a black background, with original music by Jerry Goldsmith, music which would later be used as the main theme of the first of several television spin-offs, *Star Trek: The Next Generation.* The return to the familiar in *Star Trek II* (including the use of blue lettering for the opening titles) could serve to reassure the audience that they were about to see a film much more in keeping with the style of the series.

Throughout the film, Horner plays on the Hollywood convention of the privileged connection of music and visual spectacle. Beginning with our first external view of the Enterprise in space dock, accompanied by the Courage motive, almost all of the exterior shots of the various starships are dramatically underscored. When the Enterprise leaves the space dock on its "training" mission (cue: *Enterprise Clears Moorings*), shots of the various sections of the ship, dramatically lit by its running lights, are synchronized with equally dramatic articulations in the brass. As the scene cuts to the bridge, marked by a build to a full orchestral chord with key change, Horner drops the dynamic level of the music, returning the audio privilege to dialogue. The bridge music is based on the Kirk theme, fragmented, and arranged for high strings, harp, and woodwinds over a pedal-point with military snare. This fragmentation of the theme expresses the sense of anticipation and tension, both of the crew as it prepares the ship for its voyage, and of Kirk as he, at last, returns to the bridge of the Enterprise. It also adds a small amount of humour by playing against Kirk's nervous reaction to Spock's decision to allow the inexperienced Lt. Saavik (Kirstie Alley) to pilot the ship out of space dock. As the scene

cuts back to the exterior shots of the ship in motion, the privilege returns to the music with a substantial increase in complexity and dynamic level. We see a series of close-ups of the various sections of the ship, emphasizing its size and power, while suggesting that the Enterprise is too large to be contained in a single shot. This fragmented presentation of the ship is matched by Horner who underscores the scene with an equally fragmented version of the opening fanfare. The scene, both visually and aurally, builds to our first sight of the entire ship, free of the confining arms of the space dock, accompanied by the first complete statement of Kirk's theme since its presentation in the *Main Titles*. Once the ship has been revealed in its entirety it appears to pass overhead in a single shot, the camera panning to follow its motion. This shot - the longest single shot of the Enterprise in the film - is accompanied by the "wonder" motive (Example 3.2).

This technique of privileging music in moments of spectacle is of primary importance in the audience acceptance of such genres as science fiction or historical epic - genres whose narrative setting poses a particular challenge to the suspension of disbelief. Music is a "crucial element in the films of this genre where [it has] inherited the responsibility of creating the credible from the incredible."[9] But how does this work? Recall Claudia Gorbman's suggestion that "orchestral grandeur [...] invites the spectator to contemplate."[10] I suggest that this contemplation removed the spectator from the diegesis, creating a safe, discreet distance from the visual spectacle. This contemplative response takes the form of a mental "stepping back" in an attempt to grasp a larger perspective on the unfolding events. When first presented with a view of the spectacular (entering a great cathedral, first seeing a view from a great height) there is a tendency on the part of the spectator to slow for a moment, employing all energy in the business of

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[9]Kalinak, 71.

[10]Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 68.

contemplation, with the goal of organizing the spectacular into something understandable. This distance allows the viewer to accept the spectacle as real. In general, dialogue is most effective at advancing the plot; with only the odd exception, it must maintain a privileged position on the audio track. However, in a film such as *Star Trek II* with its spectacular narrative elements, the musical requirement of privileging dialogue (maintaining a low dynamic level, not crowding the frequency range of the particular actors) results in a conspicuous change of level from scenes involving dialogue to scenes involving images of the spectacular. As is the case with the cue *Enterprise Clears Moorings* these changes of scene can happen in rapid succession challenging the composer to maintain the sense of continuity while meeting the dramatic needs of the individual shots.

This rapid change from dialogue to spectacle is an important aspect of the cue *Surprise Attack* that underscores Khan's first attack on the Enterprise. This cue also demonstrates the many ways in which Horner fragments or varies the motivic material in support of the narrative. The music enters, following a comic exchange between Spock and McCoy reminiscent of the television series ("Why you pointed-eared, green-blooded..."). Lt. Saavik informs Kirk that another vessel is approaching the Enterprise, and when he asks what they can "make of it," she replies: "It's one of ours Admiral. It's Reliant." This observation that it is "one of ours" is immediately followed by the statement of Khan 'A' (Example 3.3) reminding the audience who is on the other ship. The menacing tone of the music is accentuated by the preceding comic exchange. Kirk, oblivious to the danger he faces, is puzzled by the lack of communication from the Reliant. A cut to an external shot of the Reliant bearing down, not on the Enterprise, but on the audience is scored with a full statement of Khan 'B' (Example 3.4) followed by our first view of Khan on the stolen ship. The music builds with an ostinato based on the

chromatic figure from Khan 'B'. A cross-cut to Kirk on the Enterprise is followed in the score with a statement of Kirk's theme over a pedal-point and military snare. The accompaniment adds an urgency to the theme which begins but never resolves. The music is an echo of Kirk's growing tension and indecision. He has been out of the captain's chair too long and ignores his instincts, even after Saavik reminds him that standard procedure would be to raise the shields. As the two ships draw closer together, Khan's theme is heard in several variations, each building in chromatic density and dynamic intensity. Horner then introduces a new motive first heard as Khan gloats over his imminent victory (see Example 3.8).

Example 3.8: Khan's Revenge: "Surprise Attack," *Star Trek II*
Intervals of P4 (4) and P5 (5)

This motive is based on parallel fourths and fifths further emphasizing the "primitive" nature of Khan and his followers. Only a single tentative fragment of Kirk's theme is heard as the scene returns to the Enterprise bridge ("This is damn peculiar"). An agitated string ostinato precedes a unison *crescendo* based on the Khan chromatic figure when to Kirk's horror, the Reliant raises its shields and fires on the Enterprise from point-blank range. A quick series of cross-cuts follows showing the devastation of the Enterprise, internal and external shots of explosions, the trainee crew in chaos, and close _ ups of the bridge instruments showing the ship spinning out of control. All of these shots are scored with a frantic atonal wall of colour, which blends with the various sound

effects, emphasizing the destruction and chaos. Kirk and the Enterprise crew try to recover but the situation and the soundtrack is now dominated by variations of Khan 'B': there is no trace of any Federation theme. This is one of the few moments in which the music has privilege over the dialogue, compelling the audience to strain in order to hear the speech, adding to the sense of confusion. As Kirk and Spock consider the damage report (Spock: "They knew just where to hit us." Kirk: "Who? Who knew where to hit us, and why?"), Horner uses a headlong variation of Khan's "revenge" motive (Example 3.8.), accompanied by a plaintive theme in the lower strings. This builds back into the Khan 'B' pulse as the Enterprise crew braces for a second volley from the Reliant, resulting in further destruction. The smoke clears and Kirk realizes that his ship is dead. The music's audio level drops with the start of a rapid ostinato of the chromatic material from Example 3.3, building the tension as the crew tries to find some way to defend themselves. Then, at the climactic moment of the scene, Kirk is informed that the commander of the Reliant, the ship described as "one of ours," is ordering him to surrender. After four minutes and thirty-two seconds of continual musical motion, Horner brings the rhythmic drive of the score to a virtual standstill. The tonal center drops by a semitone from E to Eb. The harmonic structure changes from a chromatic cluster into a static minor harmony with an ominous synthetic bass, broken only by an octave pattern in the harp. This downward motion, statement of a clear harmonic structure, and abrupt termination of the rhythmic drive, combine to halt the forward motion of the narrative, seemingly freezing time for an instant, adding extraordinary impact to Kirk's horrified reaction to the surrender demand. Kirk's decision to answer the request in order to "buy time" for his ship is accompanied with a plaintive minor variation of Kirk's theme (the first time this theme has been heard in almost three

minutes), and the cue ends with a slow fade as Kirk gasps in recognition when he sees who has attacked him.

As this scene is primarily focused on the conflict between Kirk and Khan it should come as no surprise that it is the themes associated with these characters that dominate the corresponding cue. However, during the scene *Genesis Countdown* near the end of the film, it is the themes associated with the character of Spock that hold sway in the score. Defeated and mortally wounded, Khan locks the *Genesis Device* into a self-destruct mode which will result in a catastrophic explosion destroying the crippled Enterprise. Although a Pyrrhic victory, it seems that Khan will at last have his revenge. However, Spock realizes that the "needs of the many out-weigh the needs of the few, or the one." At the cost of his life, he repairs the engines allowing the Enterprise to escape. An important structure of the Spock themes is the tritone, and Horner incorporates tritone harmonic motion in all four of the external shots of the Enterprise trying to flee the Reliant. This suggests that it is Spock who has the power to save the ship, while the tritone motion frustrates the audiences' attempt at predicting future harmonic events: the salvation of the ship is far from certain. However, Horner scores the internal shots of Spock making his way to the engine room, and entering the area flooded with radiation (the cause of his death) with Kirk's theme. This is consistent with the suggestion that the film is ultimately about Kirk facing the "no-win" scenario for the first time. The music informs the audience that the responsibility for Spock's death lies with Kirk.

As the bridge crew waits, convinced that they are defeated, we hear a complete version of the "wonder" theme; however, it is the characters of the film who engage in the contemplation of their impending doom. The theme appears again when, following the explosion, the crew contemplates the new planet which has come into existence. However, when Kirk realizes that their salvation has been bought at great cost, the

"wonder" theme appears again over a pedal point, accompanied with a chromatic cluster of strings, climbing higher and higher: a mirror of Kirk's rising sense of panic and fear that his friend may be dead. As the two themes merge on the soundtrack, shots of Kirk hurrying to his friend's side are intercut with images of the new planet. The despair of death is combined with the hope of new life. As Kirk reaches the engine room and realizes that he cannot save his friend, the music fades into a gentle statement of Spock 'A' which is left unresolved - perhaps as a veiled reference to the sequel, *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock.*

Numerous examples of established conventions can be found throughout the film. The use of tremolo strings to create tension has no better example than when Khan first appears, discovered by the now Commander Chekov (a character from the original series) and Captain Terrell of the soon-to-be hijacked Reliant. Although Chekov has already guessed the identity of his captor (as has the audience) from the discovery of a seat belt marked US Botany Bay, Khan is slowly revealed to the accompaniment of a cloud of chromatic colour in the style of Ligeti or Penderecki, which resolves to an octave unison as we see his face fully exposed for the first time. A similar texture is heard as Khan recognizes Chekov. Horner also uses this scene to build the theme and accompaniment for Khan. The slow string pulse later becomes the machine-like accompaniment symbolic of his desire for revenge, while the three note trumpet call is later expanded into Khan 'A.' All of the elements of Khan's music are presented here, smoldering in Johnson's metaphorical container, waiting for release - as Khan has waited fifteen years for the opportunity to extract his revenge.

This "cloud" effect is also used as the Enterprise enters the *Mutara Nebula.* The Nebula renders the ship's instruments almost useless: the ship (and its crew) are essentially blind. The music adds to this effect through the use of atonal textures and

colours - a fabric without form - invoking a sense of aimless wandering in the ears of the audience who lack a key center upon which they may base some kind of expectation of future events. Horner "Mickey Mouses" the entrance into the nebula with a chromatic *crescendo* into an orchestral chord synchronized with the ship's impact with the nebula boundary.

The convention of the unison *crescendo* (gradually building a dynamic level through the addition of the same pitch class across an increasing pitch range spectrum) is also used to great effect when Kirk forces the Reliant to drop her shields, allowing the Enterprise return fire, compelling Khan's retreat. Khan is under the impression that he has the Enterprise at his mercy and (unlike the audience) has no idea what is in store for him. Horner scores the scene with a continuous pulse in the strings while the confidant sounding of Kirk's theme (the first time this has been heard in major since before the Enterprise was attacked) accompanies the donning of his eyeglasses. The assertive quality of the horns suggest that Kirk's hope for success is found in the acceptance of his weakness. Once this weakness is embraced, the string pulse grows into the dramatic unison which builds to its climax synchronized with Kirk's understated order: "now, Mr. Sulu." A confused flurry of strings and percussion accents echo the confusion of Khan and his crew as they realize how the tables have turned; however, despite their surprise, the unison *cresecendo* informs the audience that Kirk's plan must succeed.

Horner's decision on where not to put music is also of dramatic and narrative importance. The opening scene is set in a training simulator in which officer-trainees, in command of the Enterprise, are attacked by computer-generated Klingons as part of a test of character and command ability. However, the way the scene is presented to the spectator suggests that the attack is real, within the diegetic realm of the film. Only after "Captain" Saavik issues the order to abandon ship is the simulated nature of the scene

revealed. One way in which the scene is "coded" as artificial is the lack of musical accompaniment. Convention would suggest that a battle in space would present an ideal opportunity for accompaniment; however, throughout the entire simulation of the Klingon attack, there is not a single note of music. Compare this to the various diegetically real battle scenes between the Enterprise and the Reliant which are completely underscored. This is similar to John William's decision to score only the diegetically real shark attacks in Jaws. As was noted earlier, when two boys fake an attack as a practical joke, the scene remains unscored as a clue to the audience that this shark is not real. The *Kobayahi Maru* training scenario is "unreal" and therefore does not need accompaniment, while the later diegetically real battle scenes are completely scored.

The opening sixteen minutes of the film contain no music at all following the *Main Title*, despite several changes in temporal and spatial locations, obvious places for the use of music. The opening cue is sufficient to facilitate the audience acceptance of the diegetic reality. By leaving the establishing scenes, and the introduction of the various characters unscored, the narrative takes on something of an ordinary quality, and its entrance becomes all the more powerful when Chekov's discovery of Khan's presence is accompanied by menacing string tremolos. Another good example of the use of silence is found following the first battle. After the Reliant is driven off, we see an external close up of the Enterprise now badly damaged by its encounter with Khan. This shot creates a powerful contrast with the battle scenes and its privileging of music during moments of spectacle. Without its heroic accompaniment, the ship seems impotent and vulnerable as do her crew, who have narrowly escaped death.

This analysis of James Horner's score for *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* has attempted to demonstrate how film music may be understood to operate within a system

of culturally dependent syntax. Horner shapes the musical material in order to manipulate listener expectations - expectations based on the norms of the western tonal system. The themes and their variations combine to form a code that the experienced listener will read and understand in combination with the narrative structure of the visual. Like subtitles, the music shadows the narrative, "commenting" on the drama and informing the engaged listener. However, the audience is kept at a discreet distance. Never allowed fully to enter into the narrative, lest the one-dimensional nature of the diegesis be revealed, the spectator may only contemplate from a distance the events of the film. While the music may be read through the influence of image schemata, these codes are also dependent on the context of the particular film, as well as on many of the established conventions of the Hollywood film score.

We now turn to *The Piano*, a film which offers a distinctly different approach to the film score: one which is understood less in terms of musical syntax and more in terms of the Lacanian imaginary. Where the music of *Star Trek II* maintains a careful distance between the diegesis and nondiegesis, the score for *The Piano* draws the viewer into the narrative allowing them to experience the film as a participant as much as a viewer. However, despite the obvious differences between *Star Trek II* and *The Piano*, it will be possible to see that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive but are two distinct points on a continuum of possible approaches.

Case Study No. 2: *The Piano.*   Composer: Michael Nyman

Plot Summary

Mute since childhood when she consciously decided to stop talking, Ada McGrath and her nine-year-old daughter Flora travel from their native Scotland to the remote bush of nineteenth-century New Zealand as part of an arranged marriage. The two are deposited on a rugged beach with their various possessions, the most important of which is Ada's piano. The following morning, Ada's new husband Alister Stewart arrives accompanied by fellow Scot George Baines and a group of Maoris to help transport Ada's belongings. However, because of its size Stewart refuses to transport the piano and it is left on the beach.

Ada's contempt for her new husband (an arrogant and socially clumsy man who believes himself superior to the Maoris) is matched only by her wish to reclaim the lost instrument. Realizing its importance to Ada, and driven by his growing desire for her, George Baines buys the piano from Stewart and arranges to take lessons from his friend's new wife. Baines has to some extent integrated himself into the Maori culture, a point emphasized by his facial tattoos, and is not encumbered by Stewart's notions of Victorian sexuality. He offers Ada a bargain; she may earn her piano back at the rate of one black key per lesson if she allows him to "do things" while she plays.

Baines' desire for Ada is eventually overwhelmed by his love for her; racked with guilt, he returns the piano before the bargain is complete. Ada also realizes that she has come to love Baines but their relationship is soon discovered by Stewart who locks his wife in the house until he feels he may trust her. That trust is broken when, inscribed on the side of a piano key, Ada sends a message of love to Baines. But instead of its intended recipient, Flora takes the key to Stewart who in a blind rage drags his wife from the house and cuts a finger from her hand with an axe.

Finally realizing that he cannot win the heart of his wife, Stewart overcomes his rage long enough to send Ada back to Baines. The two leave the bush in a Maori canoe. During the voyage Ada has Baines pitch the piano overboard; but as it sinks, she deliberately catches her foot in the ropes and is dragged into the sea with the instrument. Seemingly satisfied with the notion of her death, Ada's will reasserts itself and much to her surprise she decides she wants to live. Pulled back into the canoe, the two travel on to Nelson where they (presumably) live happily ever after.

Because of it's narrative, much of the Michael Nyman's music for *The Piano* is diegetic. One of the main motivations of action within the story is the relationship between the character of Ada and her piano: many of the scenes revolve around Ada in performance. It is therefore appropriate that much of the nondiegetic score also depends on the solo piano. Nyman also makes use of all members of the saxophone family, with the alto and soprano frequently employed in solo passages, all supported by a large string orchestra and harp. There is no apparent use of brass or percussion.

The music for *The Piano* occupies a unique space in the normally well defined line between diegetic and nondiegetic becomes blurred. The relationship between music (in particular, the music of the piano) and the mute character of Ada, in which music often functions as her "voice," carries over into what would normally be considered clearly nondiegetic scoring. At times we are unclear if the music is nondiegetic or *metadiegetic* - music that exists in the imagination of a specific character, made audible to the spectator.[11] While Nyman does make use of several recurring themes, the score is not an explicit example of the *leitmotive* style. The themes lack the clear associations or one-to-one correspondences of *Star Trek II*. The music functions in a far more general way, evoking mood or sensibility rather than any specific reference. Indeed this lack of a one-to-one correspondence extends to the interaction of the visual and musical stimuli at the most basic level, since only a small number of cues depend directly on the visual narrative for their structure. It is rare that a specific action or cut is accompanied with a distinct corresponding gesture in the music.

This provides a sense of space between the music and the visual as the two seem to lack the mutual dependence of a typical film score, while also providing a greater sense of flow and continuity. Musical ideas are permitted to exercise a certain amount of

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[11]ibid, 22-23.

autonomy, working themselves out to logical (within their particular tonal system) or previously defined ends rather than undergoing the fragmentation and variation required to match the visual action in a direct way. It is interesting to note that it is the diegetic performances, scenes in which Ada is both seen and heard playing the piano, that are frequently disturbed by some kind of interruption, such as the sexual advances of Baines. This creates the sense that the nondiegetic (or metadiegetic) space becomes Ada's refuge; a place where the music may comment on the narrative, yet remain untouched by it. This refuge in turn becomes the space into which Ada herself withdraws. It is a sanctuary which offers some kind of protection from the strange and violent world in which she finds herself. This role of music as a metadiegetic sanctuary is its most important function in the film. As such, the music represents Ada's Lacanian imaginary, made manifest to the audience through the medium of sound. It is the access of the audience to this refuge which makes Ada such a sympathetic character, despite the fact that she is incapable of expressing her thoughts in words.

Nyman's music is best described as influenced by new-age and minimalist styles, characterized by a use of modal and pentatonic tonal systems, repetitive rhythmic patterns, and static vertical structures. There are virtually no substantial changes of texture, dynamics or tonality within a given cue: once a "mood" has been established it continues uninterrupted until the end of the section. Any changes which may occur are introduced slowly in the style of composers such as Steve Reich or Philip Glass. This choice of style for the music of *The Piano* has met with strong criticism for what seems to be a major historical anachronism. If the film is set in the mid 1850s, how is it that this mute woman from Glasgow is composing and improvising music in the style of the late twentieth-century? However, to dismiss the film for such a liberty would be hypocritical in light of the artificial conventions we readily accept in genres such as

opera. If we allow Julius Caesar to sing in Baroque recitative, then surely we can forgive director Jane Campion's liberty of a mere hundred years. Nyman's comments on his approach to the film score also shed a great deal of light on the apparent anachronism: "Initially I was unsure as to how [sic] precisely to pitch the style. But once I had the perception that [sic] since Ada was from Scotland, it was logical to use Scottish folk and popular songs as the basis of our music."[12] This reference to Scottish folk and popular music explains Nyman's selection of the modal and pentatonic systems, both of which dominate the folk music of the British Isles.

However, the music with its static, repetitive, and new-age overtones has also been criticized for its lack of substance.[13] Nyman explains this as follows: "It's as though I had to write the music of another composer who happened to live in Scotland, then New Zealand in the mid-eighteen fifties. Someone who was obviously not a professional composer or pianist, so there had to be a modesty to it."[14] It would have been even more nonsensical to cast Ada as a pianist and composer whose talents rivaled those of the romantic masters. The "modest" nature of her work befits her social position in the film as property or chattel to be disposed of in whatever manner the owner sees fit. To depict Ada as "great" talent might strain the limits of credibility.

To accept the musical anachronism and yet argue for social authenticity is not as inconsistent as it may seem. Giving Ada a musical voice "out of time" serves to emphasize how removed she is from her environment. Indeed, when Baines begins to touch her during one of the "lessons" she stops playing her own music and performs a fragment of a Chopin waltz as if she wishes to absent every aspect of inner-self from the

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[12]Michael Nyman, CD Liner notes from *The Piano: Original Music from the Film by Jane Campion* Composed by Michael Nyman. (Virgin Records Ltd, 1993, V2 0777 7 88274 2 9). Pages unnumbered.
[13]As an example of the critical venom inspired by the film's music, I was once told by a respected academic composer that what he heard in Nyman's work was "minimal music," not minimalism.
[14]Nyman, liner notes from *The Piano*.

scene of the sexual abuse.[15] However, one may also argue that the lack of importance placed on Ada's abilities by the men around her is a comment on the general status of women in the nineteenth-century, a history that is replete with the suppression of such talent. Nancy Reich notes how the nineteenth-century's "cult of domesticity" compelled women performers and composers to abandon any hopes of a professional career in favour of domestic responsibilities. "Some distinct talents emerged from the musical training intended merely to provide entertainment and pave the way to better marriages, but pressure from male family members and society thwarted full development of these talents and discouraged even the most gifted from taking music too seriously."[16] While selling the piano to Baines, Stewart decides that as part of the deal, Ada will provide Baines with lessons. He notes approvingly that a letter from Ada's father had commented on her musical skill as if that were one of the factors in his decision to marry her, yet he has not heard her play and shows no interest in her abilities. The experiences of women such as Fanny Mendelssohn provide a precedent for the depiction of Ada as a suppressed or ignored talent.

Themes

The most important theme in the film is presented in Example 4.1. Although not heard in the opening credits of the film (indeed, it is not heard in a complete version until fourteen minutes into the film), this is the cue which has become known as the "Theme from *The Piano*" in the mind of the general public.

Primarily heard over a sixteenth-note arpeggiated figure in the piano, this theme is associated with moments of passion and stress. It is introduced early in the film when

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[15]The waltz is Chopin's *Prelude No. 7 in A major, Op. 28* - uncredited in the end titles.
[16]Nancy B. Reich, "Women As Musicians," in *Musicology and Difference*, Ruth Solie, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press: 1993), 132.

Ada, waiting on the beach for her husband, reaches into the piano's shipping case to play a brief fragment of it before the incoming tide washes over her feet. She and her daughter are alone on a wild and distant shore awaiting the arrival of a man she has never met. The piano is her only link with the familiar. The theme is then heard nondiegeticaly in its complete form with full string accompaniment when, forced by her husband to leave the piano behind, she gazes down upon it from the cliffs above the beach as the tide advances threatening the beloved instrument (cue: "The Promise").

Example 4.1: Passion Theme: "The Heart Asks Pleasure First," *The Piano*

The theme is associated not only with Ada's desire for the piano, but with Baines' and Stewart's desire for Ada. During one of the lessons, Ada performs the theme while Baines sits transfixed by the scent of Ada's jacket (cue: "The Scent Of Love"). Ada breaks off her performance and grabs the jacket out of Baines' hands. For a moment he loses control, tearing at Ada's clothes and forcing her to his bed; however, his love for her overcomes his lust and he regains control of himself before physically harming her. The music is also heard in an arrangement dominated by saxophone and strings when Stewart confronts Ada on her way to Baines' cottage (cue: "Deep Into The Forest"). Overcome with passion and anger, he tries to rape her, but his clumsy attempt is interrupted by the arrival of Ada's daughter Flora. Finally the theme is used as the nondiegetic

accompaniment for the film's climax, when after reading Ada's declaration of love for Baines, Stewart no longer able restrain his anger, savagely attacks his wife, severing one of her fingers with an axe (cue: "The Sacrifice").

Nyman's decision to employ Scottish folk influences is evidenced by the primarily pentatonic motion of the melody, as well as the harmonic motion of i-bVI-bVII, a chord progression frequently employed by folk and popular music (see also the *Braveheart* example from Chapter One). Later in the theme, Nyman employs the technique of modal borrowing (with clear folk and popular implications) through the incorporation of D major (IV) within A minor (see Example 4.2). The rhythmic shift introduced by the 9/8 measure is also a result of folk influence. Folk and popular songs frequently alter rhythmic patterns to fit the requirements of a set of lyrics, adding or subtracting beats and/or measures, as may be felt necessary to facilitate the flow and meaning of the words. Nyman also incorporates the syntax of common-practice harmony when he moves to V with the raised leading tone (G#) suggesting the influence of eighteenth or nineteenth century art-music styles.

Nyman does employ something of the GOAL schemata in the gradual climb of the melody, first to A, then to C with a hint of E in the appoggiatura, finally reaching the high E before decending and working its way back up to the A, outlining the predominating harmony of A minor in the process. However, the contour of the melody reaches the high E in measure four of Example 4.1, just over halfway through the phrase; during the return to A the melodic line moves down as low as middle C. Th early aquisition of the GOAL (the high E), followed by downward motion over the interval of a minor tenth, suggests that the goal is unsatisfactory. Rather than envoking a "positive is up" metaphor, the theme combines its minor tonality and motoric rhythm to offer the metaphor "desire is up." As we shall see, much of the film's narrative is structured

around the desire for the unobtainable.   Indeed, it is not in the theme's melodic or

harmonic structure than Nyman creates the strongest sense of passion and abandon, but

in the rhythm. Following the statement of the material in Example 4.1, Nyman increases

the rhythmic density by introducing four measures of syncopation. He then mixes both

the syncopated and the original unsyncopated figure while presenting the melody in a

lower octave, increasing the apparent vertical density (see Example 4.2).

Example 4.2: Passion Theme (continued): "The Heart Asks Pleasure First," *The Piano*

The metaphorical construction "desire is up" may once again be linked to

Johnson's suggestion that our understanding of a repressed emotional state is similar to

the process of overheating fluids within a closed container, creating a situation in which

the emotions threaten to boil over, erupt, or explode.[17] The increase in the rhythmic

density heard over the motoric rhythm of constant sixteenth-note arpeggios generates an

increase of tension in the listener, with an associated increase in a feeling of unease and

displeasure. Even when the theme offers some kind of respite from the tension in the

form of tonal resolution it is unsatisfactory and indecisive. In Example 4.1 the tonality

. resolves in the seventh measure rather than the eighth, metrically a far weaker position

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[17]Johnson, 88.

that is further undermined by the inclusion of the extra beat in measure six. In Example 4.2, tonal resolution is not reached until measure ten (also metrically weak), which is in turn undermined by the following motion of i-III-IV-i with the return to the tonic occurring in the middle of measure eleven.

Undermining the expected release of tension through tonal resolution is also the function of what I describe as the "grief" motive found in Example 4.3.

Example 4.3: Grief: "A Bed of Ferns," *The Piano*

Performed by soprano saxophone with string accompaniment, the motive employs a repetitive rhythmic figure. However, any sense of resolution is confused by the voicing of the tonic chord which only appears in second inversion, and more importantly by the transition from a four-measure pattern into a three-measure pattern. Even this transition is not as clear as it may appear on paper. When the harmony returns to the tonic chord in measure six, followed by the bVI chord of measure seven, the ear, despite the differences in melody, hears the harmonic pattern beginning to repeat; the assumption is that the pattern is five measures long. However, this is frustrated by the return to the bVII in the first repeat. It is not until the pattern has repeated two or three times that the ear is able to make sense of the structure, identifying it as a three-measure phrase.

This unsettled frustration of expectation lends the theme what might be described as a quiet urgency - a powerless protest against events beyond its control. Recalling the adaptation of Meyer from Chapter Two, I would argue that this three bar measure generates an extended level of tension with no clear resolution. When heard within the syntax of western musical phrase structures which are dominated by multiples of two (2,4,8, etc.) the three bar phrase seems to overlap itself. Our familiarity with even numbered structures leads us to believe that the first measure of the phrase sounds briefly as though it is the (absent) fourth measure of the previous repeat It is not that the theme is in constant motion so much as it is never at rest or at peace, continually cycling back to the same point. A musical example of Johnson's CYCLE schemata, the theme takes on the quality of an endless loop; it fades from the soundtrack, suggesting that it does not really end but continues on in some other form or space.

This feeling is in keeping with its function in the film. The motive is heard at three of the most important points in the narrative, all concerned with Ada's contemplation of loss, and her powerlessness to prevent the loss. Nyman seems to have deliberately avoided the use of piano in this theme, as if the sense of grief felt by Ada transcends her ability to communicate through her instrument. In a similar vein, the theme is only heard when Ada is outside, as if the limitations of an enclosed room, like those of the piano, are too confining for the depth of Ada's grief.

Always heard in nondiegetic space, it is first utilized when Ada is told by Stewart that he has sold the piano to Baines (cue: "A Bed of Ferns"). As the music plays, the camera slowly pans in on Ada and Flora lying prostrate in a green bed of ferns, gradually revealing Ada's face registering the shock and loss of the instrument. The second time the theme is used follows the return of the piano. Stewart asks Ada to play for him but she refuses, directing Flora to play instead. The grief theme begins as Ada wanders into

the yard, the camera slowly zooming in on the back of her head. The scene fades replaced by the now empty rain forest, wind disturbing the ferns at the base of the trees. The music reveals that while she may have reclaimed the instrument she has lost Baines, the man with whom she is truly in love (cue: "A Bed of Ferns - Reprise")

The final use of the theme occurs near the end of the film. Following Stewart's attack on Ada and his banishment of both her and Baines, we see Ada wander from the house, her wounded hand wrapped in a bandage (cue: "Lost And Found"). Although she has escaped from Stewart and reclaimed her true love, it has come at a terrible cost. Obviously, the loss of the finger creates a significant obstacle for her to continue playing the piano, and more importantly her ability to communicate. Her hands are the tools through which she demonstrates to others her experience of the world. Without them she becomes truly mute. On a metaphorical level, the loss of the finger represents a loss of self. Despite her apparent triumph she has seemingly lost her tenuous connection to the world, a loss which will lead to her suicide attempt on the water. I would even describe it as a form of castration. Ada's power is exercised through her hands; they are her phallus. Her refusal to submit to Stewart's "law-of-the-father" drives him to the attack. He could have injured her far more seriously than he did, even killing her. In such a case Ada would have emerged victorious. Although a questionable victory to be sure, by killing her, Stewart becomes the weaker figure unable to control his wife or his will. However, by symbolically and (to a great extent) literally castrating her, he reasserts his control over his wife by removing her ability to exercise power, returning her to the appropriate condition of the female, and in the process very nearly breaking her will.

One may also suggest that the opposition of inside/outside presented by the film is at work in Example 4.3. Campion emphasizes the differences between interior and exterior shots with the use of coloured filters. While there are some exceptions, exterior

scenes are filmed through a blue filter while interior scenes are filmed through an orange filter. Consequently, the exterior scenes appear cold and wet; the faces of the characters are grey and corpse-like. This contrasts with the internal shots which appear much warmer. The fact that Ada is outside whenever the "grief" motive is heard, surrounded by the blue and grey of the rainforest, suggests that the external realm of the diegesis is the source of her suffering; ultimately, she struggles against the wilds of New Zealand.

However, I would argue that the opposite is actually the case; it is the external in which Ada finds her refuge. Consider that it is with Baines that Ada eventually falls in love; Baines' home is the one interior location frequently filmed through a blue filter linking him with the natural word. He has integrated with the Maoris, learning their language, respecting their customs; he is living in harmony with the land instead of railing against it as Stewart does. If we consider the external realm as a place dominated by the Lacanian Imaginary, while the interiors of the British colonial homes as the space of the Symbolic, we may begin to see the consistency of Ada's choices.

Variations

When we consider the film in terms of psychoanalytic theory we may begin to make sense of music's role in the integration of the audience within the narrative. This is a narrative concerned with power relationships revolving around repressed sexuality and the role of women in the nineteenth century. Ada's source of power is her music. She has repressed her literal voice as patriarchy has repressed the figurative voice of women. Music is one of the only avenues open to her. Carolyn Abbate explains how this "alignment of male with discursive language, female with music," which she attributes to Roland Barthes, has become the "dogma [of] certain schools of psychoanalysis and

feminist writing."[18] She identifies Luce Irigaray's *écriture féminine* and Julia Kristeva's *chora* as concepts which exist in a similar state to that of music: "enveloping but nonlinguistic sound" which she describes as "the female cry" or a "presymbolic speech."[19] If we consider the fact that Ada has consciously made the decision to stop speaking, thereby rejecting the male-dominated form of communication in favour of music, an *écriture féminine*, may we not also suggest that she has attempted to reverse the process of the Lacanian mirror? Similarly we might suggest that she is generating a Kristevan "rupture," deliberately forcing the imaginary (or chora) to the surface of the symbolic. In either case, she rejects the symbolic and attempts, through her mode of "presymbolic speech," to recapture the imaginary. As such, her music becomes the language of the imaginary, while our witness to the music's production through Ada's physical engagement in her performances creates an embodiment of the imaginary tangible through the film's soundtrack. As I suggested earlier, I believe that this embodiment of Ada's imaginary state is responsible for the engagement of the audience. Through music, the spectator experiences the emotional impact of the film at the most fundamental of levels - their own understanding of the imaginary.

The chain of experience begins in the symbolic realm of the audience. We are able to comprehend the role and nature of Ada's character within the literal spectrum of events relayed through the narrative: the level of discursive language. Ada uses the music of the piano to manifest her refuge from these events: an *écriture féminine* which resembles the imaginary made real. This access to the imaginary is further facilitated by the chain of narrative events and images which serve to blur the line between Ada and the piano. While she approaches the condition of an inanimate object, the piano in turn approaches the condition of a living entity. Ada moves from subject to object while the

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[18]Carolyn Abbate, "Opera: Or, The Envoicing Of Women" in *Musicology And Difference*, 232.
[19]ibid, 232.

piano moves from object to subject. The two merge to form a seamless bridge over which one may pass into the imaginary realm of the diegesis. The union of Ada and piano is sealed through the depiction of the physical labour required to produce music.

The major factor in Ada's metamorphosis from subject to object in the eyes of those around her is her muteness. We are told by Ada (in her "mind's voice") that she has not spoken since she was six years old, but she is far from silent, as she speaks through her daughter (who can translate her sign language for others) and through her piano, both methods of communication which are "performed" by her hands. Indeed, the first visual image of the film is the world viewed through Ada's fingers, as if to suggest that the narrative will be told from Ada's point-of-view. However, as she speaks to others through Flora, the only character who understands her sign language, Ada becomes one step removed from the conversation. Rather than speaking to her directly, they frequently speak to Flora, referring to Ada as an absent third party. As such, Ada becomes a present nonentity.

There are several references to Ada being less than human. When replying by letter to the news that his future wife is mute, Stewart states that "...God loves dumb creatures so why not he." When discussing his new wife with Aunt Morag, the older woman comments on the virtues of silence, suggesting that there is nothing more lovable than a pet and "they are quite silent." Only Baines seems to see the person within. When he first sees his new wife, Stewart remarks that Ada is shorter than expected. When he asks Baines what he thinks of her, no doubt inquiring into his friend's opinion of the suitability of his new wife, Baines unexpectedly replies: "She looks tired." He alone expresses any real concern for her well-being, or attempts to see past the object to the subject.

Ada is frequently fetishised by her depiction within the narrative. As she comes ashore we see her held aloft on a sea of hands, simultaneously surrounded by and isolated from the men who carry her from the boat--isolated by her gender as well as her depiction as a figure supported by disembodied hands. She is precariously balanced, uncertain, afraid of where she is being conveyed, entirely dependent on the actions of others for her well being. In a way, this brief scene is a microcosm of the story: Ada is a possession passed from hand to hand without any real regard for her status as a person. This notion of Ada as an object to be possessed is also suggested by the scene in which she and Stewart have their wedding picture taken by a local photographer. A series of eyes peer at her through a camera viewfinder, reducing her presence to the condition of a peepshow object. We see her from the camera's point-of-view, confined in the restricted frame of the photograph. She is there only to provide pleasure for others, further reducing the esteem placed on her musical talents.

Central to the depiction of Ada as a fetishised object is the bargain between her and Baines. If she will allow him to treat her as an object of pleasure, she may in turn regain the piano, the object of her pleasure. During one of the "lessons," Baines lies under the piano, ordering Ada to lift her skirt. While she continues to play, the camera reveals Baines' point-of-view focusing on a small hole in her black stockings through which we glimpse her skin. The camera then shows us several close-ups of Ada's body (her foot on the sustain pedal, her hands on the keyboard) before returning to the stocking. Ada is visually reduced to a series of unconnected body parts which all function to provide Baines with pleasure.

While Ada is gradually reduced to the condition of object, the piano itself is portrayed as a living entity. When the Maoris are transporting the instrument through the forest they accidentally drop it. The roar that issues forth from the case (like that of some

wild animal) startles the natives, who jump back in alarm. Later, while working on the instrument, a blind piano tuner strokes the soundboard and strings as though it were a lover. He then detects a "scent" on the keyboard, sniffing at the piano in a visceral, sensual manner. As the instrument is brought ashore one of the sailors compares it to a coffin, a comparison echoed near the film's conclusion when one of the Maoris tells Baines that the piano is a coffin: "We should let the sea bury it." Perhaps the clearest illustration of the living presence of the piano is found in the scene in which Ada, deprived of her instrument "plays" a piano keyboard which has been carved into the top of a table while her daughter sings the appropriate notes. This superposition of the piano with the voice and body of the daughter, is the point at which Ada's two main modes of communication merge into one. The piano becomes a human body, its sound, the sound of a human voice, made manifest by the labour of the human body. Both the daughter and the piano, and the music they produce, are extensions of Ada's physical presence.

Indeed, it is the visibility of this labour which serves to enhance the emotional link between Ada and the piano. Upon her arrival in New Zealand, while still sitting on the beach, waiting for her husband, she reaches into the shipping case briefly to caress the keys. The visual image is a close-up of Ada's hand and the keyboard, both (for the moment) isolated from the intrusion of the wilderness. The hand and the keyboard become fetishised objects, due to the proximity of the camera, existing only in relation to each other. When she strikes the key, the noise of the instrument's mechanics, the levers and hammers, the viscera of the piano are heard as loud as the strings themselves. The physical labour (both human and mechanical) involved in the production of music are brought into sharp focus.

This presence of the body in the production of music is illustrated at several other points of the film. As Baines lies under the piano, the camera focuses on Ada's foot

repeatedly depressing the sustain pedal which produces a series of mechanical clicks and thumps whose volume rivals that of the music itself. In one of the film's final scenes, Ada's fingers are again seen in close-up upon the keyboard, her metallic finger (fashioned by Baines to replace the one severed by Stewart) clicking on the keys. Her metallic finger serves as both a representation of her real finger, and a link between her and the piano. While the extraneous finger and key sounds still demonstrate the physical link between Ada and the piano, the use of the artificial finger shows the growing distance between them. It is at this point that Ada tells us that she is learning to use her "real voice."

As Lawrence Kramer encountered the foregrounding of the body in the performance of a Mozart string trio, the spectator experiences the foregrounding of Ada's body while watching *The Piano*. The Barthesian "grain" of Ada's performance, and her experience, is made manifest within the music through the merging of the subject-object relationship between performer and instrument, and the demonstration of physical labour in the production of sound. This demonstration moves beyond the diegetic performances to influence the reception of the nondiegetic score; we hear the body even if we do not see it. We are engaged by the diegetic imaginary regardless of the location of a given cue: diegetic or nondiegetic.

But does this suggestion for the use of solo piano not threaten Royal S. Brown's dialectic opposition between the consummated symbol of the visual and the unconsummated symbol of the music?[20] Brown feels that this opposition is necessary for music to function within the narrative film. The fact that the piano operates in part as a surrogate voice for Ada should bring the music it creates closer to the realm of the consummated symbol. According to Brown, this should move the score into the

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[20]See Chapter 1, pg. 27-28.

condition of the consummated symbol with its inherent threat to the diegesis. If this were the case, the consummated symbol of the diegetic imaginary should undermine the similitude of the narrative. However, I suggest that the smaller an ensemble becomes, the closer the musical texture approaches the condition of the human voice, not in the capacity of the audience to detect meaning of an absent text, but in the potential for the audience to detect in the nondiegetic soundtrack, the bodily presence of an individual engaged in physical labour.

Furthermore, in Chapter One, I proposed that the diegetic imaginary is the one consummated symbol which does not threaten Brown's dialectical opposition, for it is what may be described as a Derridian "final signifier:" a term which Derrida places *sous rature* or "under erasure," suggesting that the word is inadequate yet necessary.[21] The Lacanian imaginary is a term constructed within the system of the symbolic, yet it refers to that which is beyond the representational abilities of the system. For an intellect constructed within the symbolic, there is no starting point for a rational or discursive understanding of the imaginary, we may only experience it.

The music of *The Piano* offers us such an experience. It is the "grain" made real: Lacan's cinematic imaginary made manifest in the "symbolic" of the audience. The piano and the music it produces becomes a conduit for the physical experience of Ada: a bridge between the sensual realm of the film and the perception of the audience. When the audience is connected in such a strong way with her, the impact of Ada's physical and mental abuse becomes a personal assault on the viewer, instead of a distant impersonal cinematic event.

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[21]See Chapter 1, pg. 24-25.

Conclusion

So, how do these two films illustrate my contention of a "continuum" of scoring practice? Simply put, I believe there is a correlation between narrative characterization and musical approach, a relation which is graphically presented in Example 4.4.
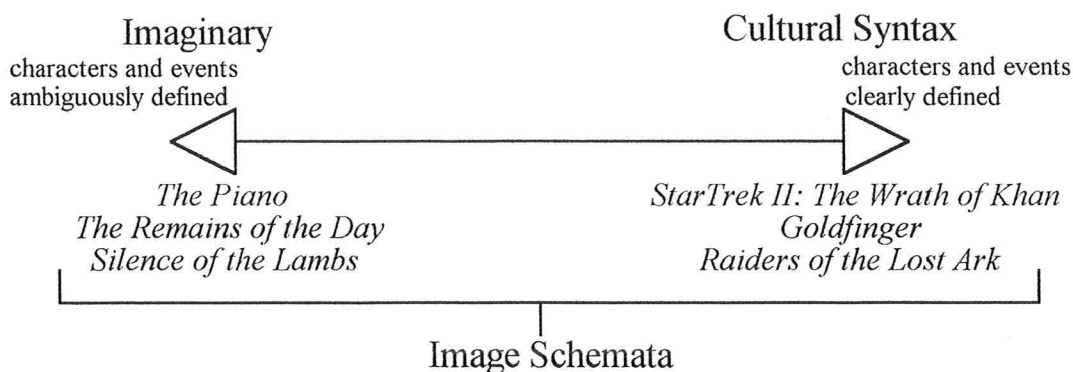
Example 4.4: Score-approach / characterization (with example films)

In the case of films such as *Star Trek II*, in which characters are constructed in a clear, consistent manner, there is a tendency to depend more on a syntactic approach with the employment of leitmotives. Since such well-defined characters are rare in our experience of the world, the score must create a sense of discreet distance between spectator and diegesis, a space which serves to strengthen the spectator's suspension of disbelief. The fact that the various diegetic characters are accompanied by specific musical themes and textures - that the narrative conflicts are explicitly reenacted within the music - lifts the characters into the realm of the mythic; these are figures who are literally accompanied by music. They are one-dimensional: amplified fragments of the whole which constitutes a living subject. Music is required to emphasize that which is important and obscure that which is absent: Kirk is hyper-good; Khan is hyper-evil; Spock is hyper-logical. The audience contemplates from a distance, loving and/or hating,

but knowing that such characters could never function in the "real" world and more that the spectator could function in the "reel" world.

However, for films such as *The Piano*, in which the natures and motivations of the characters are of a far more ambiguous nature (similar to our own experience of the world), the score may invoke the sense of the Lacanian imaginary without the fear of positioning the audience too close to the diegesis. Accordingly, the music is of a more ambiguous nature in its relationship to the characters of narrative conflicts. If functions more as a bridge than a mirror, reaching out to the spectator with its evocation of diegetic mood and experience. Music is an echo of the diegetic mind and its emotion, rather than a set of sonic subtitles. The closer the spectator is drawn to the diegesis, the higher the level of audience integration. The spectator "becomes" the characters even though, on the level of the symbolic, the one may feel ambivalent about the other. Indeed, the complex structure of the individuals in films such as *The Piano*, pose a problem for audience identification. Unlike the one-dimensional characters of *Star Trek II*, the characters of *The Piano* are presented with both good and bad aspects to their personalities. Only by drawing the spectator into the diegesis and fusing him/her with the narrative personality, can the director of the film ensure that the audience feel sympathy for the appropriate character.

The link between these two types of film scoring practice is the concept of the image schemata. By constructing schemata for the various musical passages within the film we can derive possible metaphorical interpretations of the score. These interpretations may then be compared to a reading of the film to see if the scoring approach is dominated by syntax or the imaginary, or is a blend of the two.

Epilogue

The stated purpose of this thesis was to "explore the process" informing my
perception of narrative film music. I have attempted to construct a model by which any
film may be analyzed in a consistent and rigorous manner. The proof, however, is in the
viewing and listening. I invite you to keep the thoughts presented here in mind next time
you see (and hear) a film.

Glossary of Terms

Diegesis: the universe depicted by a narrative film. The diegesis consists of all characters, objects and events contained within the world presented by the film including those whose existence is only implied by the narrative events.

Diegetic: of the diegesis.

Diegetic Music (Source Music): music audible to both the spectator and the diegetic character, whose source is shown to be within the diegesis.

Imaginary: term referring to a preliguistic period in early childhood development. Theorized Jacques Lacan, this period is thought to be a realm of sensation marked by the inability of the subject to distinguish between self and other.

Leitmotive: derived from the music of Richard Wagner, this approach to film scoring assigns specific reoccurring musical themes to the narratives various characters, objects, or events. The manipulation of these themes acts as a subtext which the spectator may use in the interpretation of narrative events.

Mickey Mousing: a term coined from the cartoon music convention of using a high degree of synchronization between music and visual action. A nondiegetic musical analogy of physical action within the diegesis.

Nondiegetic: the realm of the spectator. That which does not occur within the diegesis.

Nondiegetic Music: music which accompanies the narrative yet is audible only to the spectator.

Semiotic: Julia Kristeva's term for the Lacanian imaginary

Symbolic: Lacanian term referring to the entry of the subject into the world of language.

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