Film Music: History and Function from 1930 to Present

Units: 4
Term—Day—Time: Fall 2020—Tuesdays and Thursdays—4:00–5:50pm (Pacific Time)
Location: ONLINE
Instructor: Tim Greiving
Office: Virtual
Office Hours: Virtually anytime
Contact Info: tim.greiving@usc.edu

Course Description

Music is the soul of film. Film scores can animate, enhance, pump blood into, subvert, and often transcend their movie. This underlooked, underappreciated art form is almost 100 years old—still an infant compared to its predecessors like opera, ballet, and theatre music, but old enough to have a rich, fascinating history worth exploring. In this course we'll take a trip through that history, at times skimming along the surface, at times diving deep. With the aid of film clips, live watch parties, and the occasional special guest, you'll gain a solid knowledge of and appreciation for the most-heard, least-noticed art form of the past century.

(Because we're cramming one hundred years of history into a single—shortened!—semester, we'll primarily focus on *Hollywood* film music, although a few classes will be devoted to international films and composers. We'll also limit our study to *feature films*, without spending time on television or videogame music.)

Recommended Reading

• *King Kong* chapter from *Music by Max Steiner*, by Steven. C. Smith (Blackboard / Content)

• "The sound of movie music," *New York Times*, March 28, 1976

• "Underscoring Richard Wagner's influence on film music," *L.A. Times*, June 17, 2010

- "John Williams' early life: How a NoHo kid and UCLA Bruin became the movie music man" *L.A. Times*, July 18, 2018

- "Young composers challenge the Hollywood music establishment," *Washington Post*, Aug. 17, 2017

- "Female Composers Are Trying to Break Film's Sound Barrier," *New York Times*, Jan. 10, 2019

- "Name Composers Not Above Getting the Boot," *Variety*, April 29, 2015

Description and Assessment of Assignments

There will be one midterm writing assignment and one final exam, with four shorter writing assignments throughout the semester.

Weekly films
For each class period, I will assign two films to watch related to what we cover that day.

You will likely need to pay to rent or download many of the films I assign—although, definitely always check any streaming services you're subscribed to and see if they're carrying the movie. Consider this cost the equivalent of purchasing a textbook.

Score Role Paragraphs
Four times during the semester, you'll watch a film from the era of film music we're discussing and write a paragraph (150 words) about the role the score plays in a scene (or moment) from that film. This may include musical, emotional, or psychological analysis, but the larger question will be about *role*.

Midterm essay
Building off of the tools gained through the paragraph assignments, you will pick one film—to be approved by me—and write a longer, more substantial essay (1500 words) about the role that score plays in the entire film, with a brief introduction about the film and its composer.

Final Exam
A short-answer exam, the culmination of the major subjects and ideas we discuss in class. It will be administered inside Blackboard and scheduled for the period of our final class, but exceptions will be made on a case by case basis.

Grading Breakdown

Grades will be recorded in the Blackboard gradebook. *Participation* will be measured by your level of engagement (either vocally or through chat) in our Zoom class discussions and watch parties.

Assignment	% of Grade
Paragraphs (4)	30
Midterm essay	25
Participation	10
Final exam	25
Total	**100**

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale.

A   93-100
A-   90-92
B+   87-89
B   83-86
B-   80-82
C+   77-79
C   73-76
C-   70-72
D+   67-69
D   63-66
D-   60-62
F   59 and below

Policies

Late work
You are allowed up to one late paragraph assignment (to be submitted by the subsequent class period). Beyond that, any late assignments will be graded as 0.

Attendance

Regular "attendance" at our synchronous class discussions is important and highly advised, and your participation there will count positively towards your final grade. If you know that you're regularly unable to make the live appointments, please contact me and special considerations will be made.

Course evaluation

You will have an opportunity to submit comments on the mid-semester evaluation and the standard USC course evaluation survey at the end of the semester. Be honest!

Course Schedule

Week 1
Introduction: Why film music matters, how it all started, and how it's evolved. Film music as an heir to the concert hall, opera, theatre, and the church; the various roles music can play in a film, the mechanics and artistry of film scoring, definition of terms, innovations throughout the years, etc.

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Required films for Week 2:
• *King Kong* (1933)
• *The Sea Hawk* (1940)
• *All About Eve* (1950)
• *Sunset Blvd.* (1950)

Week 2
The Architects: Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Max Steiner, Franz Waxman, Alfred Newman, Dmitri Tiomkin

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Required films for Week 3:
• *Spellbound* (1945)
• *The Best Years of Our* Lives (1946)
• *The Big Country* (1958)
• *Pinocchio* (1940)

Week 3
--PARAGRAPH 1 DUE--

The Architects: Hugo Friedhofer, Victor Young, Herbert Stothart, Miklos Rosza, Bronislau Kaper
The Torchbearers: David Raksin, Jerome Moross, André Previn, Ernest Gold, Russell Garcia

Mickey-Mousing: Disney and other cartoon music, and its far-reaching influence (Carl Stalling, Frank Churchill, Paul Smith, Leigh Harline, George Bruns, Pixar)

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Required films for Week 4:
• *On the Waterfront* (1954)
• *Candyman* (1992)
• *Citizen Kane* (1941)

• *Vertigo* (1958)

Week 4
Classical Composers Try Their Hand: Camille Saint-Saëns, Dmitri Shostakovich, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, John Corigliano, Philip Glass, Michael Nyman, Gustavo Dudamel

The Innovators: Bernard Herrmann

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Required films for Week 5:
• *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951)
• *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962)
• *The Pawnbroker* (1964)
• *Goldfinger* (1964)

Week 5
--PARAGRAPH 2 DUE--

The Innovators: Alex North, Elmer Bernstein

Jazz comes to Hollywood: Henry Mancini, Duke Ellington, Quincy Jones, Lalo Schifrin, Dave Grusin

The Rock and Pop Invasion: John Barry, Burt Bacharach, Peter Gabriel, Brian Eno, Toto, Mark Knopfler, Mark Mothersbaugh, Jon Brion

Broadway Sensibility: David Shire, Marvin Hamlisch, Alan Menken

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Required films for Week 6:
• *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966)
• *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962)
• *The Parallax View* (1974)
• *Rocky* (1976)

Week 6
Continental Breeze: Ennio Morricone, Maurice Jarre, Michel Legrand, Georges Delerue, Nino Rota

The Auteur Era: Jerry Fielding, Bill Conti, Michael Small, Pino Donaggio, Jack Nitzsche, Angelo Badalamenti

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Required films for Week 7
• *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979)
• *Rudy* (1993)
• *E.T.* (1982)
• *Jurassic Park* (1993)

Week 7
The Second Coming: Jerry Goldsmith

--MIDTERM DUE--

The Second Coming: John Williams

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Required films for Week 8:
• *Easy Rider* (1969)
• *The Tree of Life* (2011)
• *Halloween* (1978)
• *Blade Runner* (1982)

Week 8
Song Scores, Music Supervisors, and The Kubrick Effect: Or, How To Stop Worrying About an Original Film Score and Learn to Love The Temp (*Easy Rider*, Martin Scorsese, Peter Weir, John Hughes, Quentin Tarantino, Terrence Malick, Michael Mann)

The Space Age: Wendy Carlos, Giorgio Moroder, Vangelis, Tangerine Dream, Klaus Doldinger, John Carpenter, Harold Faltermeyer, Goblin

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Required films for Week 9:
• *Avalon* (1990)
• *Meet Joe Black* (1998)
• *The Land Before Time* (1988)
• *The Fugitive* (1992)

Week 9
--PARAGRAPH 3 DUE--

The Next Generation: Randy Newman, Thomas Newman, David Newman

TNG: James Horner, James Newton Howard, Basil Poledouris, George Fenton

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Required films for Week 10:
• *Back to the Future* (1985)
• *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992)
• *Emma* (1996)
• *Edward Scissorhands* (1990)

Week 10
TNG: Alan Silvestri, Bruce Broughton, Elliot Goldenthal, Trevor Jones, Randy Edelman

TNG: Rachel Portman, Danny Elfman, Howard Shore, Carter Burwell

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Required films for Week 11:
• *The Matrix* (1999)
• *3:10 to Yuma* (2007)
• *Three Colors: Blue* (1993)
• *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000)

Week 11
The New Millennium: John Ottman, Don Davis, David Arnold, Marco Beltrami, Mychael Danna

Further Abroad: Zbigniew Preisner, Wojciech Kilar, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Tan Dun, Gustavo Santoalla, Ravi Shankar, Joe Hisaishi, Fernando Velázquez

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Required films for Week 12:
• *Rain Man* (1988)
• *Interstellar* (2014)
• *Malcolm X* (1992)
• *Get Out* (2017)

Week 12
--PARAGRAPH 4 DUE--

The Zimmer Era: Hans Zimmer, John Powell, Harry Gregson-Williams, Klaus Badelt, Lorne Balfe, Ramin Djawadi, Steve Jablonsky, Junkie XL, Brian Tyler

Women and Non-White-Dudes (an Embarrassingly Brief History): Terence Blanchard, Angela Morley, Michael Abels, Pinar Toprak, Germaine Franco, Kathryn Bostic, Tamar-kali, Jocelyn Pook, Kris Bowers

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Required films for Week 13:
• *Birth* (2004)
• *First Man* (2018)
• *The Social Network* (2010)
• *Jackie* (2016)

Week 13
The Cutting Edge, Traditionalists: Alexandre Desplat, Michael Giacchino, Nicholas Britell, Daniel Hart, Justin Hurwitz, Dan Romer, Ludwig Göransson, Daniel Pemberton

The Cutting Edge, Inventors: Mica Levi, Trent Reznor, Jóhann Jóhannsson, Jonny Greenwood, Steven Price, Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, Bryce Dessner, Max Richter, Dustin O'Halloran and Hauschka, Clint Mansell, Cliff Martinez, Hildur Guðnadóttir

--FINAL EXAMINATION--

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

You will need a laptop, internet access, and an operating system that allows you to download Zoom and Slack. We may also be using a Google Chrome extension that allows us to do a Netflix watch party, but possibly not.

USC technology rental program

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please submit an application. The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

USC Technology Support Links

Zoom information for students
Blackboard help for students
Software available to USC Campus

Synchronous session recording notice

As required by USC, the synchronous sessions for this course will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously. This policy does not apply to individual lessons.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Please do not share or otherwise distribute class materials, music scores or recordings produced by me or any students in the conduct of this course without expressed permission.

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (SeeSection C.1 Class Notes Policy).

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems
Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.