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Soundtracks and the moving image

Zachary Ian Barnes
James Madison University

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Soundtracks and the Moving Image

A Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Visual and Performing Arts
James Madison University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Bachelor of Music

by Zachary Ian Barnes

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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Music, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Music.

FACULTY COMMITTEE:

HONORS PROGRAM APPROVAL:

Project Advisor: J. Randall Wheaton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, School of Music

Barry Falk, Ph.D.,
Director, Honors Program

Reader: Jonathan Gibson, Ph.D. & A.M.
Associate Professor, School of Music

Reader: Gary Fagan, B.M.
Adjunct Professor, School of Music

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Abstract:

This study is a survey and analysis of modern soundtrack pieces accompanying recent movies. I will analyze the form and chord progressions within the scores to better understand the role each musical element plays in the piece. Then, I will compare these details to find common themes to see if they correspond more to the Western classical tradition, or to modern pop music, and how each textural element enhances its visual counterpart.

This paper is an attempt to define and understand the formal procedures are common across the audio that accompanies modern movies.

Movie Music Analysis and Categorization

Movie music borrows the simplicity of pop and the instrumentation of classical and blends these two elements in order to accompany a moving image. For greatest effect, the music ought to be relatable to a mass audience--hence the tonal, theoretical simplicity. Traditional orchestral instrumentation is utilized, many times with additional percussion and in some cases, ethnic instruments (scored to achieve a desired effect).

The actual instrumentation and scoring of a piece of soundtrack music contains many hints as to the nature of the movie itself.

For example; a solo violin marked as 'fiddle', $\frac{3}{4}$ and 6/8-time signature-heavy.

The quintessential soundtrack music accompanies the moving image and places priority in what is happening onscreen, rather than what is happening in the music itself. Many times, the music is subservient to the visual stimuli. However, aural stimuli via accompanying music is used for three distinct effects: 1) Anticipatory; to let the consumer know *something* is coming or about to happen (similar to Wagner's *Leitmotif* anticipating the arrival of certain characters), 2) Prompting: to draw a consumer's attention to something immediately on screen (in the case of sudden cues, hits etc.) and to give that image importance in relation to other, non-accompanied images, and 3) Responsive: create depth of emotion pertaining to an

event that has already occurred. Keeping a simple theoretical framework in which to work allows for heightened flexibility when dealing with these sometimes-sudden visual cues.

Soundtrack Music as Re-instrumentalized "Pop" Music

Upon examining the fundamental structure of modern popular music and modern soundtrack music, a few things come to light, which are important to understanding the form and function of soundtrack music.

Popular music: chord structure revolving around V-I, instrumentation broken into bass, rhythm, chords, and melody, and is largely homophonic and highly repetitive.

Soundtrack music: chord structure revolving around V-I. Instrumentation broken into vital sections: bass voice outlining chordal structure, rhythmic figures, chords present in harmony, and the primary melody. This music is largely monophonic, at times polyphonic and also highly repetitive, *a la* Wagnerian *Leitmotif*.

Soundtrack music is therefore more in line with today's popular music than it is with classical music, though it relies heavily upon the scoring of originally 'classical' instruments.

Modern movie soundtrack music is a bridge between the wildly varied genres of popular and classical. It draws from the tradition of composition and instrumental-textures used heavily in classical music in both wind and string ensembles.

Soundtrack music--being a product of its time--also draws

heavily on the simplicity of the well-known chord progressions used extensively in popular music. It also capitalizes on the pervasive rhythmic drive of today's popular music, through ostinato and drone practices--both which have been explored in the classical tradition, but are prevalent in popular music as well. This is all done for specific effect: 1) accompany the visual image by mimicking movement with sound; 2) compound visual emotion; and 3) introduce characters/ideas.

Like popular music, the majority of soundtrack music can be reduced to fit into two categories: 1) The rock anthem--the movie theme, adventure theme, fight theme, pirate theme, etc. and 2) The rock ballad--the love theme, the 'sad' theme, etc.

However, soundtrack music also occupies a distinct third category, which is most directly related to its confluence with the visual appeal of the movie itself: *atmospheric*. This category of music is very free form, and, unlike motif-cues and brief instrumental interludes, is used to introduce a character or idea, is generally atonal, slow tempi (if any tempi at all), and highly varied. The instrumentation is generally held over from the standard full symphonic soundtrack orchestra, but percussion and 'specialty instruments' are highly used.

"Rock Anthem"

The rock anthem is the theme of the movie, and is many times comprised of the most-repeated *Leitmotif* as the central theme around which the rest of the piece revolves. This motif dictates long-term structure. Sometimes, the anthem acts as a musical/operatic overture in that it introduces multiple themes, and gets the listener oriented and familiarized with the varied themes so that when they recur later during the film, they are not totally foreign. This is a technique that allows for easy introduction of thoughts and characters, strengthened through musical/aural familiarity. Good aural examples of this category include, but are not limited to:

- "Main Title/Rebel Blockade Runner" *Star Wars IV: A New Hope* (Overture)
- The Bridge of Khazad Dum 0:00-0:18 *Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring*
- This Is Berk 0:00-3:13 *How to Train Your Dragon* (Overture)
- Raiders March *Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark*
- He's A Pirate *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*
- Main Title *Game of Thrones*

The above musical selections share many commonalities such as *marcato* attacks throughout, *ostinato* rhythm (often in Vln. 2/Cello), fixed bass (constantly orienting audience to key for

ease of listening), firmly tonal in a major tonality (straying away from atonal almost exclusively), and driving percussion.

This last factor is the most significant of all, and is becoming characteristic to modern original scoring for movies.

Marcato

The *marcato* nature of the typical movie theme or "rock ballad" is so ubiquitous because it fits the role of movie music so well. *Marcato* attacks and sudden entrances reinforce visual images. Borrowing from a theory of evolved human nature, inherent interest in loud and sudden sounds can be used by movie-music composers to illicit immediate audience reaction.

Loud accompanies loud--both visual 'loudness' and aural 'loudness'.

As an example, take the corresponding image and music of the iconic Star Wars IV opening credits. The credits flash on to the screen accompanied by triumphant brass fanfare, heralding the heroic nature of the story and reinforcing empathy with the written word and associating the audience with the protagonist-- in this case, the Rebel Alliance. By the time the credits fade into the distant space and the camera pans down to capture the intimidating mass of the Imperial Star Destroyer as it passes above, John Williams' music has already shifted from Fanfare/Overture (0:00-1:09) to Atmospheric (1:09-1:36) and quickly to Motif-driven thematic material (1:36-2:14). This

quick transition, aided by the marcato fanfare and dictated by the visual image, exemplifies movie-music in its most appropriate setting.

Ostinato

Repetition of rhythm and pitch is another driving agent of movie music. Repetition in music is comfortable to the listener, and is easily identifiable. This repetition can be used to elicit particular viewer emotion. Like Pavlov's dog, we may be trained to feel certain emotions with enough repetition.

Many times the repetition of the ostinato is present within the violins or upper woodwind family, and the melody is carried in low brass voices, which share many features with the human voice. The same-pitch ostinato on a rhythmic figure reinforces the pulse and may lend a sense of urgency to the music, but also establishes key and orients the listener's ear to the tonic of every chord (in almost every case, V-I). In this way, a fixed metric harmony is established under which an augmented melody can persevere. This combination of metric rhythm repeated and melody represents the bulk of movie music anthems and themes.

A great example of this feature figures prominently in the work of composer Hans Zimmer, who has been made famous for his work on *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Gladiator*, and the *Dark Knight Trilogy*, among others. His music is often very similar, featuring a driving pulse and clear melody or motivic figure.

This transparency is due in part to total lack of complex rhythms and homophony, but enables listeners to easily distinguish important sections of music from one another, and subsequently identify themes. Transparent music more effectively transfers specific musical intent.

'Up is Down' from *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* is a good example of this. The violin 2 and cello ostinato reinforces the simple chord structure (in d minor: i--VI--III--i67--V[open fifths]--i) one time through before repeating with the violin/fiddle solo above. Though the piece modulates fifths-down a total of four times, the chord structure is still easily distinguished because the tonic was established early by way of ostinato.

Major Tonality

Many movie themes aside from horror and suspense movies are pitched in one major tonality, and often modulate to different major tonalities. There are many various, famous examples of this, from the Star Wars fanfare, to the Raiders of the Lost Ark march, to the Fellowship Theme from Lord of the Rings. Most movie themes or protagonist themes are pitched in major tonality, which has come to represent honor, valor, and even good over evil. The then apparent contrast between the good theme and the evil theme is made that much more apparent. The Fellowship Theme melody is played by high voices--primarily the

trumpet and high horn sections--with P5 violin ostinato outlining chordal structures beneath, which combines to create a bright, energetic theme rooted in major tonality. Contrast that with the Saruman/Sauron theme, the melody of which is performed primarily in low brass at high (almost un-musical) volume; the heavy *marcato* low brass sound is minor tonality, full of dissonance, and accompanied by banging anvils and metallic sounds. It is abundantly clear where the viewer's allegiance ought to lie when these two styles clash.

Sustained Bass

Sustained bass--or a constant bass voice that underlines the chordal structure above as well as the melody--is another feature of movie music that operates similarly to the ostinato in the upper voices. Just as the ostinato reinforces tonality as it is usually played on the tonic, the sustained bass technique roots listeners in a certain tonality, even if that means the bass is a non chord tone within the given chords moving above. This constant reminder of tonality acts like a magnet, drawing the listener's ear back to the original key though various melodies and countermelodies may be moving in contrary motion above. The dissonance and tension-release shift build energy that accompanies on-screen visuals, and the release and attending cadence correspond with major visual cues, such as the protagonist's face or a shot change.

'This is Berk' from *How to Train Your Dragon* roots the listener's ear in its F major tonality when double bass and tuba sustain F3 while the french horn melody shifts over top from 0:00-0:25 before the main theme is introduced.

Extensive percussion section

Use of percussion has become more and more widespread since Hans Zimmer's pivotal *Gladiator* soundtrack was released in 2000.

This soundtrack relied heavily upon the energy provided by an extensive percussion section in contrast with a melancholy vocal track representing the protagonist's loss and sadness. Because of the massive popularity of the movie and the subsequent soundtrack, many typical 'blockbuster' movie titles have since elected to feature a similar soundtrack. This trend toward heavy, often ethnic percussion (which accomplishes the goal of an energetic sound and the establishment of specific atmosphere) can be seen in many of the soundtracks of recent releases. The *Dark Knight Trilogy* soundtrack is almost primarily percussion and synthesized sounds, as is the soundtrack to *Inception*.

Movies like *Troy*, *Avatar*, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, and *VanHelsing* have taken up this trend and have expounded in varying ways upon the possibilities of including an ethnic rhythm section. In many of the accompanying tracks to *Avatar*, the naturalistic, native-American theme is reinforced with heavy use of traditional native-American instruments and playing

styles. The pounding tribal rhythm that can be linked ethnomusicologically to nearly every race of human inhabiting earth permeates today's soundtrack music when action or high energy is called for and the music must appropriately accompany the moving image.

Operatic Overture Style & Motivic Construction in "Rock Anthem"

In many ways, the tradition of operatic overtures has continued into movie-making. Movies produced before 2000 did not have to start with such a bang as movies today, and instead could introduce the cast, director, and movie itself for whole minutes before focusing on the plot. During this window before the actors became the spotlight, a musical overture would accompany the text. Like operatic overtures, this music might contain thematic material from every motif that is going to be presented in the soundtrack throughout the length of the movie.

This overture, much like the standard opera overture, had two functions: 1) An aural cue to the audience to be quiet because the film is about to start and 2) A 'preview' of thematic material, in order to familiarize the audience with the sounds of the movie, from which you might already be able to identify the 'good' theme or 'protagonist' theme versus the 'evil' or 'antagonist' theme. Also present here would be various other material, such as a standard 'love' ballad or 'mourning' elegy, depending on the content of the movie itself.

As early as 1978 movie music began to shift in order to remain well-fitted to the moving image. Introductions became short, and the action became more immediate, and so the standard overture was forced to change. In many movies there is still a thematic introduction, but many times this section of music

before the dialogue begins is purely the theme music for the movie itself--whether it be adventure or romance is again decided by the content of the film.

"Rock Ballad"

The Rock Ballad, or thematically romantic, slow, minor or more complex piece compromises the second distinct category of movie music. The thematic material here is a subdued yet important counterpart to the anthem, and every modern blockbuster has its 'pirate song' and 'love song'. The goal of this music is to promote emotional contrast between characters in poignant ways, and relate them to the audience via a tonal analog. The ballad comes in many various forms, and either represents a true ballad in every sense of the word, or more of an elegy. The distinction comes in the intentional thematic material and whether it is conveying pain or joy and reinforcing those emotions between characters on-screen.

A few important ballads to this survey:

- "Wallace Courts Murrin" from *Braveheart*
- "What Shall We Die For?" from *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*
- "The Wheat" from *Gladiator*
- "The Steward of Gondor" from *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*
- "Lovers - Flower Garden" from *House of Flying Daggers*
- "Leah" from *Diablo III*
- "Farewell" from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*
- "Shutting Down Grace's Lab" from *James Cameron's Avatar*

- "Across the Stars" from *Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*
- "Romantic Flight" from *How to Train Your Dragon* (in depth analysis in appendices)

There are three distinctive elements typical of a Rock Ballad:

1) Minor tonality, 2) Slow tempi, and 3) Complex harmonic structure.

Minor Tonality and Transparency of Orchestration

Many soundtracks ballads or elegies are primarily rooted in minor tonality, because of the extensive chord progressions available while still operating under a Western system of composition. The minor tonality also sets apart the ballad from its counterpart, the anthem and the change in color is not only due to a shift in tonality, but a different set of instruments utilized. Where anthems are dominated by heavy brass and percussive voices, the ballad is predominantly strings and woodwinds, with rich orchestral textures provided by lower winds. In general, the scoring is more transparent in ballads, and there is a higher level of contrary harmony and movement toward polyphonic sound. This fuller scoring is filled out with high voices, such as flute, oboe, or violin carrying the melody overtop a low voice obligato or ostinato.

Slow Tempi

All ballads revolve around slow tempi in order for the complexity of their construction to come across cleanly, and for the emotional intent of the piece to be made clear to the audience even though the scoring in question is closer to the Western classical tradition than the Western Pop tradition.

Complex Harmonies

As addressed above, the chordal structure of the 'rock ballad' is more complex than their more straightforward counterparts (the anthem). While most anthems repeat I-IV-V-I *ad nauseum*, ballads are afforded the chance to be more chordally complex because of their minor tonality and underlying part-writing rules that govern the progression of chords in a minor key. Simply put, there are more aural avenues that are *pleasing* to the human, Western ear in a minor key than there are in a major key. These harmonies hinge on the use of the VI (vi) chord for variety of color via deceptive cadential motion and as a pivot point from which modulation occurs.

Ballad vs. Elegy

Contrast "Romantic Flight" from *How to Train Your Dragon* and "Across the Stars" from *Star Wars II: Attack of the Clones*. Thematically, both of these fit into the category of ballad, yet display the huge variety this element of movie music can contain. They also demonstrate the true separation between the

intention of a ballad and an elegy. Both pieces are the central 'love theme' one being an innocent romance between two cartoon Vikings, Astrid and Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, while the other is the doomed love of Anakin Skywalker and Padme Amidala. Both pieces have comparatively slow tempi. "Across the Stars" is pitched in minor tonality, with melodic introduction in the oboe. "Romantic Flight" is pitched in major tonality and its melody is carried through violin 1, in the style of Norwegian Hardanger or Hardingfele fiddle (in relation to the thematic material portrayed in the film itself).

"Romantic Flight" utilizes ethnic instruments and the central ballad is surprisingly major, but fits with the overall tone of the movie, which is one of lighthearted fun. "Across the Stars" is more of a sweeping orchestral theme, pitched in minor to appropriately mirror the futility of the relationship/love in question, but beautiful despite that.

Atmospheric

Atmospheric music is ambient sounds, not necessarily in the form of conventional Western forms or of Western composition techniques, but essential in accompanying the moving image in more discreet ways. This element of movie music is essential to the movie-going experience because it represents the thematic and mood in a subtle tonal analog. These are the specific elements typical of atmospheric movie music: Atonal or of many varying keys; Highly post-produced; Transparent, highly varied instrumentation; Use of electronic, or sampled sounds.

Atonality

Atmospheric music is most effective in the context of immersion, and is more dictated by the movie sound engineers than the actual composer. To achieve the effect of ambience, long passages of sustained, layered non-chord tones dominate, moving against a low drone. There are no cues or dramatic effects present in atmospheric music, and the tonal center shifts up or down depending on the particular scene. This emphasis of free-form composition over longer periods of time is what achieves a sustained mood-enhancing aural effect.

High level of Post-Production Effect

Though every modern soundtrack is recorded and then overturned by sound engineers before being fully synched with the accompanying visual, ambient music requires the most post-

production because of the extensive use of electronics. Because of the distended nature of ambient music, sustain on Western instrumentation is impractical, and electronic sounds are used to achieve a more subtle, controlled drone or tone. Many of these effects are added after the studio recording.

Transparent, highly varied Instrumentation

Ambient music is the most reliant on sound recognition within a movie-going audience to achieve its desired effect.

Deep tribal drums present in the ambient Avatar sound bank reinforce the native tone and the natural elements stressed throughout the film. The Last Samurai reinforces its visual imagery with the quiet, meditative strum of Japanese mandolins and the somber tones of a synthesized bamboo flute. Fast, deep percussion rumbling in the backdrop conveys inherent energy and lends a scene once devoid of tension full of excitement.

Conversely, sustained drone of synthesized wind instruments moving atonally and in contrasting motion against each other over whole minutes build a more peaceful atmosphere.

Electronic and Sampled Sounds

As mentioned above, electronic and sampled sounds dominate atmospheric music almost completely because of their ease of use. Rarely, atmospheric music is recorded in the studio with the rest of the more evidently thematic material. More and more, modern atmospheric music is another aspect of post-

production for the film as a whole. Adding synthesized sounds-- which are more natural/realistic than ever--is more cost efficient than re-recording with additional studio musicians, more closely achieves the desired effect, and is easily manipulated and re-worked to fit the particular scene.

Atmospheric music is less common in mainstream action/adventure or romance movies simply because its presence either detracts from the current scene and takes away from the acting, or ought to be replaced by truly thematic material in the form of either the **ballad** or the **anthem**. However, atmospheric music has found a permanent home (it seems) in the horror movie genre, as well as the current production of video games, which are becoming more and more cinematic and reliant on scoring and atmospheric immersion for high ratings. Horror movies are comprised of almost purely atmospheric, thematically-void music heavily punctuated by aural cues that closely accompany visual stimuli or enhance the tension on screen in some way. A horror movie without an appropriate soundtrack loses much emotional and psychological impact. Consider a classic horror scene: dimly lit hallway, protagonist sidling forward knowing that evil is lurking around the corner. Without the rumbling groan of low strings or an electronic dissonant pulse the scene loses tension. In this case, the music is a

character in and of itself, because it fills a huge role in the goal of the movie.

Appropriate Atmospheric Tracks:

- "The Guise of Man" *Diablo III: Reaper of Souls*
- "Noah Visits" from *The Village*
- "Through the Bamboo Forest" from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

Overarching Techniques

Differentiated use of gender-specific voice

Much of the reasoning behind the tremendous effect movie music has on viewers is the assumption of a few basic stereotypes predominantly held in Western culture. Two such assumptions are used to great effect in a variety of soundtracks: 1) The *wailing* of the female voice epitomizes sorrow, and 2) The *vigour* of the male voice epitomizes challenge. Common mainly in ballads ("Shutting Down Grace's Lab" 0:51-2:36, "Diablo III Overture" 0:00-0:34) the dissonance via suspension of two female voices ascending represents the mounting grief of the protagonist and/or pain whereas the chanting of male voices at the beginning of "Duel of the Fates" from *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* evidence conflict or tension.

Modulation

Modulation is an effective technique to quickly and transparently alter the energy of a piece of music; it is accompanied visually by a raising of stakes for the protagonist. This can be best seen in "Up is Down" from *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, which modulates M3 up multiple times as the scene becomes more and more hectic. Modulation is easily identified by a general audience as a change in the music, while the recognizable melody remains intact, albeit in a different

key. The M3 and m2 relation predominates movie music modulations, as well as pop music.

Movie music is a natural fusion of two starkly contrasting traditions of composition in order to meet the diversifying demand of a consumer base who have come to expect certain elements and motifs to be present for a night at the movies.

This aural experience becomes as much a character as those acting on screen, and the best soundtrack is the one that best fits its film, thematically, tonally, and emotionally.

Structurally similar to Western Pop music while borrowing from the compositional background and orchestration of Western classicism, movie soundtracks are a meeting of expectations, stereotypes, and motifs that culminate to afford something familiar yet fresh for moviegoers.

Appendix i --Visual-Audio Analysis:

Up is Down - Hans Zimmer

The antagonists, Will Turner and Elizabeth Swan, along with the feared Captain Barbosa and his once-immortal skeleton crew have gone to great lengths to rescue Captain Jack Sparrow from Davey Jones' locker. They are trapped aboard the Black Pearl amidst a sea of calm with only a strange rotating map to lead them out and back to the world of the living. Captain Jack, quirky as he is, realizes that the only way to get the crew and the ship out of Davey Jones' locker is to flip the ship upside down the moment the sun sinks below the horizon. The song, Up is Down, is reflective of the frantic nature of the crew, but reflects the lightness of the scene, especially highlighted by the comical characters Pintel and Ragetti, as well as Captain Jack's humorous attempts to get the ship overturned by tricking the crew into flipping it over.

Noticed: most things happen in even 2 meas. Increments - increased toward the end of the piece as tension builds and the ship finally flips over.

Meas. 3 - "Realization"



At the first hit on the unison D, Captain Jack looks up. This takes place after a D open 5th A chord pp cresc. to ff in clarinet, bassoon, horn, trombone, bass trombone, and tuba. The shaker starts here, noted "ad lib" and will continue throughout

Meas. 4 - "Cptn. Barbosa looks up"



Violoncello

Double Bass

Vc. And Db. Run scalar up to Bb (III in dm) and hit on beat 1 of meas. 4, coinciding visually to Cptn. Barbosa looking up, at Jack

At the first hit on the unison D, Captain Jack looks up. This takes place after a D open 5th A chord pp *cresc.* to ff in clarinet, bassoon, horn, trombone, bass trombone, and tuba. The shaker starts here, noted "ad lib" and will continue throughout

Meas. 4 - "Cptn. Barbosa looks up"

Vc. And Db. Run scalar up to Bb (III in dm) and hit on beat 1 of meas. 4, coinciding visually to Cptn. Barbosa is looking up at Jack.

Appendix ii -- Romantic Flight:

I - IV - I
V - I - IV - V
I - IV - IV⁷ - IV - I⁴⁻³ - IV -

B - E - B
F# - B - E - F#
B - E - Emaj7 - E - B4-3 - E

Violin solo - melody

Soprano and alto voice as harmonic support, outlining chords in parallel 5th

Flute as textural support, flourishing on top

Heavy string presence throughout

Alternation between pizz and arco

Bass voice 8va on tonic

Walking bass outlines harmonic movement

Clarinet and Bassoon on offbeat

Rhythmic drive

B - E - G# = Ab Common Tone

B - E - the fourth pops up a lot

Arrival = meas. 32

- Triplets in harp outlining harmonic structure
- Cymbal crash
- Melody in Violin
- Ornamented melody in flute
- Eights provide rhythm
- Quarter establish descending chordal structure
- E → Ab: modulation M3 up

Brass is held off until biggest moments in this type of lyrical piece

Pizz. in strings descending 5-3-1 outlining chords

Modulation harmonic structure:

I - V - IV - V

I - V - IV - ii⁵ - VII - IV - VII - IV - v

Ab - Eb - Db/Ab - Eb/Ab

Ab - Eb - Db - Bbm - Gb - Dbm - Gb - Ebm

Gb - Db - Ab - Db - Ab - Db - Bbm - Gb - Ebm - Ab4-3 - Ab

Ab - Db - Ebm7 - Bbm

Seven-tuplet line running as connective tissue

I - IV - I I - V - IV - V
V - I - IV - V I - V - IV - ii⁵ - VII - IV - VII - IV - v
I - IV - IV⁷ - IV - I⁴⁻³
- IV -

The Scene (setup): *The protagonist, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III is a Viking who, unlike his fellow Vikings, does not like killing dragons. He has blatantly thrown his Viking societal values to the wayside when he captures a dragon and befriends it. The protagonist's love interest, a violent-minded Viking girl names Astrid - who vehemently hates dragons and trains every day so that she can slay them - has been suspecting Hiccup's strange walks in the woods and odd absences from daily Viking life on the island of Berk. Astrid goes looking for Hiccup when he ventures into the woods to spend time with his dragon friend, whose name is Toothless. Astrid happens upon Hiccup, is attacked by a only mildly-tamed Toothless, but is saved in the end. Astrid cannot believe that Hiccup has befriended a dragon, and tries to escape, even though Hiccup just saved her life. As she flees, Hiccup, mounted on Toothless, picks her up and begs her to understand, and says that she'll see his point of view if only she were to open her mind. Astrid relents, but Toothless, not liking Vikings other than Hiccup, shoots into the air and spins around, dunking himself in the ocean and doing everything possible to cause Astrid discomfort, much to Hiccup's dismay. She begs them to stop the spinning and twirling and aerial acrobatics, and Toothless relents and levels out. This is the beginning of "Romantic Flight."*

Meas. 2



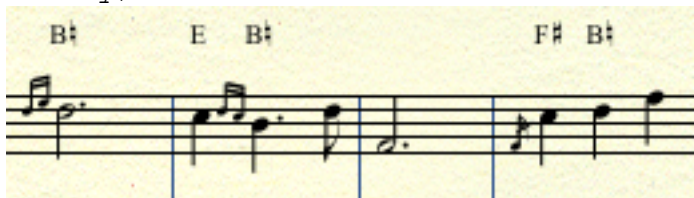
(Solo violin, accompanied by SSA voice)



Meas. 4



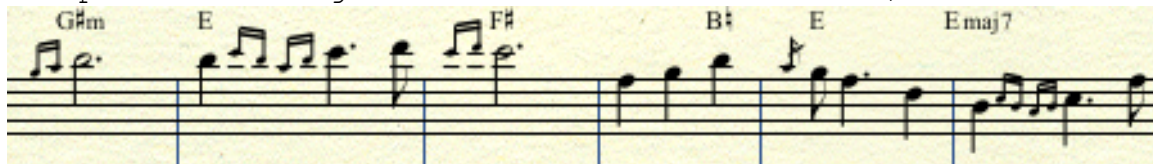
(The voices accompany, outlining these chords: B - E - B - F# - B) Astrid starts to calm down, in response to the peaceful melody)



Meas. 8



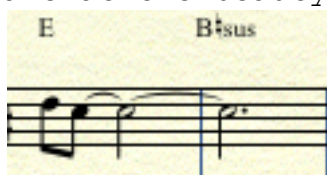
(The choir crescendos from G#m to F# and settles back down as the pair float higher on the back of Toothless)



Meas. 14 & 15



(Right before the scoring becomes thicker, we have a suspension accompanying the glide over the surface of the clouds, almost in awe at the beauty of the scene)



Meas. 15 - 19



Horn, bassoon, clarinet, and Cello take melody from solo violin as Astrid is instilled with confidence and safety. The warm tone reinforces this, and the folk melody still portrays a sense of wonderment and lightness demonstrated in the grace notes and swells in dynamic. Contra bassoon and string bass provides harmonic support, outlining chords.

Handwritten annotations: a6, 15, 17, 18

Meas. 23



Trombone joins, Astrid is having more fun, and Toothless drops down with the decrescendo to *mf*

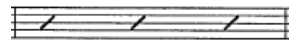
Meas. 25



(Dynamic swells to *f* and the music peaks at 25 (E Maj) as Astrid lifts her arms in joy and excitement.)

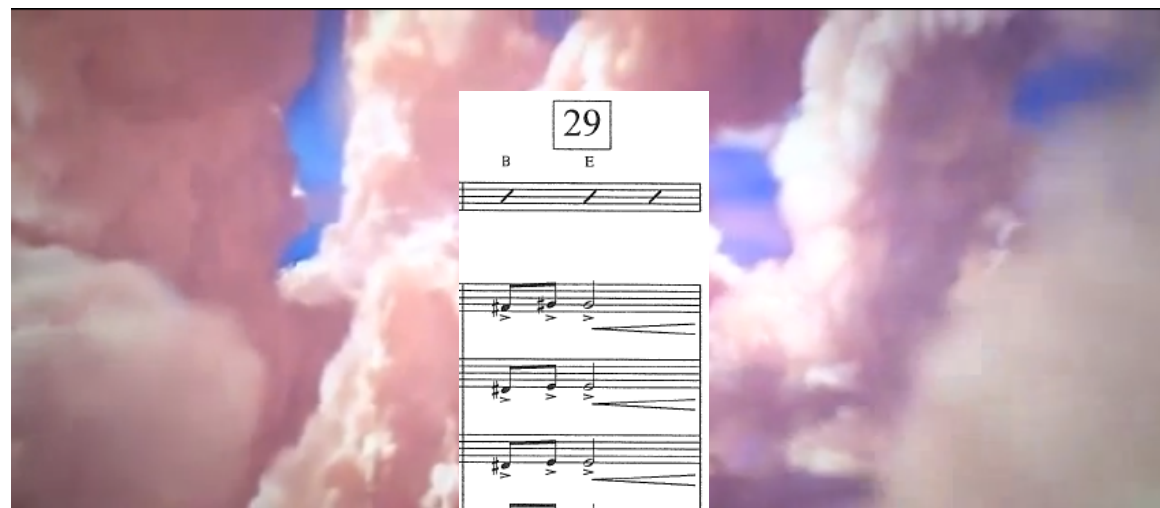
28

B E



Musical score for measures 28. The score consists of nine staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is marked *mf*. The second staff has a bass clef and is also marked *mf*. The third staff has a bass clef and is marked *mf*. The fourth staff has a treble clef and is marked *mf*. The fifth staff has a treble clef and is marked *mf*. The sixth staff has a bass clef and is marked *mf*. The seventh staff has a bass clef and is marked *mf*. The eighth staff has a bass clef and is marked *mf* with the instruction "Pizz" (Pizzicato). The ninth staff has a bass clef and is marked *mf*.

Meas. 29



(B - E repeats, louder

this time as the camera

Continuation of the musical score for measure 29. The score consists of seven staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is marked *f*. The second staff has a treble clef and is marked *f*. The third staff has a treble clef and is marked *f*. The fourth staff has a treble clef and is marked *f*. The fifth staff has a bass clef and is marked *f*. The sixth staff has a bass clef and is marked *f*. The seventh staff has a bass clef and is marked *f*.

Meas. 30



(B - E repeats, fully orchestrated crescendoing to *ff*, with triplet ascending run in Glock. And 7th tuplet run in Flute 1.2 , staying on E)

Meas. 31 - crescendo/triplet ascending runs



Meas. 32 - 35



(Modulation From B - Ab, leaping melody in violin, *ff cantabile* marking throughout. Chord structure: Ab - Eb - Db/Ab - Eb/Ab)

32 33 34 35

Ab Eb Db/Ab Eb/Ab

Meas. 36 beat 1



(Astrid, Hiccup and Toothless burst from the clouds and into the night sky, aurora borealis glittering in the backdrop. Dreamworks moon in full view. Ab is repeated strongly on the descending line, reinforcing this new harmonic “home” and highlighting the change in colour in setting and in mood).

36

Meas. 36 beats 2 & 3



(The shot closes in, on Astrid and Hiccup, who are both enthralled by the night sky.)

Meas. 40 - 41



(Pan out, focusing on the Aurora Borealis. Gb highlights this difference.)

Later, harp: Db - C - Bb/Eb - F - Gb - Ab

ostinato in Vln. II and Vla. Chords: Gb - Db - Ab - Db)

44 45 46 47

Gb Db Ab Db

ff con amore

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

Meas. 48/49 - 51



(THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART! At the climax of the musical theme, the love-interest/ romance flourishes in the form of Astrid putting her arm around Hiccup and settling her head on his shoulder, smiling. 8va throughout.

Chords: Ab - Db - Bbm - Gb - Ebm - Ab(sus4) - Ab)

The image shows a musical score for measures 48 through 51. At the top, a chord progression is listed: Ab - Db - Bbm - Gb - Ebm - Ab(sus4) - Ab. The score consists of eight staves. The first staff is a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, showing chords for each measure. Measures 48, 49, 50, and 51 are marked with boxes containing their respective numbers. A yellow star is placed over the first staff in measure 49. The second staff is a vocal line with a 'sust' (sustained) marking above it. The remaining six staves are piano accompaniment, with a forte 'f' dynamic marking at the beginning of each staff. The music is in a minor key, indicated by the flat signs in the notes and chords.

Meas. 51



(Ab(sus) - Ab sixteenth note runs throughout, accompanying the heroes soaring in and amongst the sea-lights near Berk, with the soon-to-be addition of the SSA choir in meas. 52.)

51

Allegro Ad



Meas. 52



(Pan out, with an additional 16th note run to Ebm7, with a crescendo. Addition of the SSA choir b. 3 of meas. 52. The heroes soar above a crashing wave, into meas. 53).

52 53

A^b Db Ebm⁷

Meas. 56



(Pan out farther. Highlight of Berk and statuaries. Chord settles out into Db, with melody line gliding on F on b. 2 with

decrecendo).

56 57 58 59

D \sharp D \sharp G \flat D \flat /A \flat

Meas. 57



(8th notes throughout, with a descending line and decrescendo to *mf* which is visually accompanied by Toothless gliding toward the ground.)

Meas. 62 - 66



("All right - I admit it: this is pretty cool (pause) he's amazing.") The music settles down, as Astrid compliments Hiccup and praises Toothless. Fl. 1.2 & 3 play triplet figures to *pp* ostinatos. The harp accompanies in the decrescendo on the same chords, though in 8th note figures. The Vc. And Sb. End on a pizz. syncopation as Toothless lands. End on *pp*.)

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