THE OTAKU LIFESTYLE: EXAMINING SOUNDTRACKS

IN THE ANIME CANON

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ABSTRACT

Japanese animation, or anime, has been popular around the globe for the last sixty years. Anime has its own fan culture in the United States known as *otaku*, or the obsessive lifestyle surrounding manga and anime, which has resulted in American production companies creating their own "anime." Japanese filmmakers do not regard anime simply as a cartoon, but instead realize it as genre of film, such as action or comedy. However, Japanese anime is not only dynamic and influential because of its storylines, characters, and themes, but also for its purposeful choices in music. Since the first anime *Astro Boy* and through films such as *Akira*, Japanese animation companies combine their history from the past century with modern or "westernized" music. Unlike cartoon films produced by Disney or Pixar, Japanese anime do not use music to mimic the actions on-screen; instead, music heightens and deepens the plot and emotions. This concept is practiced in live-action feature films, and although anime consists of hand-drawn and computer-generated cartoons, Japanese directors and animators create a "film" experience with their dramatic choice of music.

This thesis examines three anime—*Death Note*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Cowboy Bebop*—for their respective choices in music. Each of these series uses a different genre of music, such as sacred classical music, Western classical music, jazz, hip-hop, and J-pop, to evoke emotion and enhance the drama. Westernization and the U.S. Occupation of Japan influenced each of the genres, with each composer in their respective anime combining Western and Japanese musical characteristics. Only by exploring the music of anime can we really understand its role in anime's artistic power and the reasons for the lasting impact of the otaku lifestyle in the Western world.

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the Conservatory of Music and Dance and

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences have examined a thesis titled "The Otaku Lifestyle:

Examining Soundtracks in the Anime Canon," presented by Michelle Jurkiewicz, candidate for

the Master of Music degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance

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CONTENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Otaku Lifestyle

> It takes an idiot to do something cool.
> That's why it is cool.
>   -Haruhara Haruko, *FLCL* (2000-2001)

Growing up in an Asian-American household provided wonderful, enriching aspects of both cultures, though I primarily identified with my mother's Asian culture. I have fond memories of my brother and me staying up well past our bedtime and, against our mother's wishes, watching the anime *Cowboy Bebop* on Cartoon Network's late-night sister syndication Adult Swim with the volume all the way down. Although we could not hear the dialogue, the visuals of *Cowboy Bebop* remained with me, showing that more than the cliché cartoons of Nickelodeon and Disney existed. From then on, I was surrounded by sagas of a far distant past, stories containing oversized robots, and tales of harmless creatures roaming the Earth, looking for everlasting friendship. When I entered high school, I realized that unlike myself, none of my peers obsessively followed the lives of magical, crime-fighting high school girls, which then cemented my status as a geek and outsider.

Fortunately, the Japanese coined the term "otaku" as an "honorific, somewhat ambiguous second-person pronoun" to describe those consumed by manga and anime.[1] And, just as with others obsessed with these Japanese genres, I questioned and pondered exactly how I had fallen into the otaku lifestyle. Perhaps it originated from watching anime and playing various video games over the past two decades. Perhaps it was identification with the characters.

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[1] Rich, "How I Learned to Stop Worrying *and* Love Being Otaku: Answering Questions of Identity and Fandom in Japan and Beyond," Tofugu, https://www.tofugu.com/japan/otaku-meaning/ (accessed January 18, 2019).

Whatever the reasons for my embrace of the lifestyle, I sympathize and agree with blogger

Rich's statement about welcoming otaku. He writes:

> My life has been enriched by a wealth of otaku activities. I and many other Western nerds were otaku before we knew the term existed. We just lacked the wherewithal to gather and create to the same degree our Japanese counterparts have been for decades.[2]

However, Rich's sentiments beg one question: why the otaku lifestyle? For Japan, anime

serves as an additional film genre, one that transcends the "normalness" of humans by depicting

instances of the unknown and the technologically advanced. Anime offers many relief from their

personal lives, providing an escape from reality. Limitations exist for standard live-action films,

and while some exist for anime, the level of content in the latter matches, and potentially even

surpasses, live-action films and television. Animated either via computer graphics or drawn

images, anime does not simply function as a child's diversion, but instead functions in Japan as a

high art form. Because of the dystopian anime film *Akira*'s success in the late 1980s, as well as

Studio Ghibli's masterpieces from the 1980s and 1990s, American production companies began

creating their own anime, mimicking the animation and directing style. In 2003, Nickelodeon

released *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, an animated series incorporating Eastern themes, primarily

from China, and partnering with MOI Animation, a Korean-based animation studio.

Additionally, Netflix rebooted the popular Japanese mecha anime *Voltron* in 2016, partnering

with DreamWorks Animation and Studio Mir, another Korean-based animation studio. Aware

of the growing otaku culture in the America, Netflix actively partners with Japanese animation

studios, re-releases the anime in English, and labels them "Netflix Originals," with *The Seven*

Deadly Sins (2015) being the most consistently recommended anime.[3]

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[2] Rich, "Otaku."

[3] Other Netflix original anime include: *Knights of Sidonia* (2014), *Ajin: Demi-Human* (2016), *Kuro Mukura* (2016), *Magi: Adventure of Sinbad* (2016), *Castlevania* (2017), *Children of the Whales* (2017), *Cyborg 009: Call of Justice* (2017), *FateApocrypha* (2017), *Glitter Force* (2017), *Kakegurui* (2017), *Little Witch Academia* (2017), *Aggretsuko* (2018), *A.I.C.O.: Incarnation* (2018), *B: The Beginning* (2018), *Back Street Girls: Gokudols* (2018), *Baki* (2018), *Devilman Crybaby* (2018),

Avatar and *Voltron* are but a few of the American anime, and though Netflix, Nickelodeon, and other American production companies utilize Korean animation studios, can these works be considered true anime, alongside *Dragon Ball* (1986-89), *Gurren Lagann* (2007), and *Bleach* (2004-12)? A fundamental aspect negates their inclusion into the exclusive Japanese genre: music. American anime and cartoons feature theme songs explicitly stating the show's premise and main cast. Cartoon Network's *The Powerpuff Girls* (1998-2005) provides a short synopsis in its opening credits with scenes depicting the accompanying narration:

> Sugar, spice, and everything nice:
> These were the ingredients chosen
> To create the perfect little girls.
> But Professor Utonium accidentally
> Added an extra ingredients to the concoction--
> Chemical X.
>
> Thus, the Powerpuff Girls were born.
> Using their ultra-super powers,
> Blossom, Bubbles, and Buttercup
> Have dedicated their lives to fighting crime
> And the forces of evil.[4]

First-time viewers of *The Powerpuff Girls* will understand the premise of the series prior to viewing a single episode. Furthermore, most music in American cartoons simply serves as supplemental material. Some shows may have recurring themes throughout each episode, such as in Nickelodeon's *Spongebob Squarepants* (1999-present), yet they often incorporate new music to fit the specific episode's storyline. Anime shows such as *Black Butler* (2008-2014) instead use the same music throughout the entire series, attaching specific songs to characters, moods, or events. Professional orchestras around the world perform compilations of prominent anime

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Dragon Pilot (2018), *Fate: Lost Encore* (2018), *Forest of Piano* (2018), *Hero Mask* (2018), *Hi Score Girl* (2018), *Last Hope* (2018), *Lost Song* (2018), *Sirius the Jaeger* (2018), *Swordgai* (2018), and *Violet Evergarden* (2018). Dates in parentheses denotes each anime's respective release date on Netflix.

[4] Thomas Chase, Steve Rucker, and James L. Venable, lyrics to "The Powerpuff Girls Main Theme," https://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/heroesandvillainsthepowerpuffgirls/thepowerpuffgirlsmaintheme.htm.

music and will even include video game soundtracks in their repertoire. Composers Yoko Kanno and Joe Hisaishi are some of the most well-known Japanese composers, because of their compositions for both popular anime and video games, which include *Cowboy Bebop* (1998) and *Spirited Away* (2002), respectively. Clearly, it is time for scholarship to consider anime's music.

Because of the enormity of the anime canon, this thesis examines the soundtracks that have had the greatest impact on Western audiences. The three series examined showcase the unique features of anime's music. Not all soundtracks can exist separately from their respective anime, and NPR Music Critic Milo Miles notes that only "a few vigorous gleaming, anime soundtracks match the imagination and action of the drawings on screen."[5] Miles offers a few examples of timeless soundtracks—*Akira* and *Ghost and the Shell* (2002)—yet the three series explored here rival Miles's choices not only for their ability to exist outside of the anime, but for their incorporation of Western music and culture into their respective anime and the series' worldwide influence.[6]

Chapter IV examines *Death Note* and its use of Western Catholic Music. By incorporating bell chimes and sacred Latin text, and borrowing elements from Western classical music, *Death Note* shows the Japanese suspicion toward monotheism—in this case Catholicism—by layering the music over an intelligent, yet self-indulged narcissist who labels himself "god." Chapter V surveys the use of Western classical music in *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, a saga starring the antithesis of a hero who fights otherworldly beings in giant mechanized robots. *Evangelion* uses Japanese popular music and Western classical music, albeit in an ironic matter, which is anempathetic toward the depressing narrative. Finally, Chapter VI considers the music in *Cowboy Bebop*, a

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[5] Milo Miles, "Robots, Romance, and Ronin: Music in Japanese Anime," in *The Cartoon Music Book,* edited by Daniel Goldmark and Yuval Taylor (Chicago: A Cappella Books, 2002), 219.

[6] Western music is most likely always featured because of the substantial impact the United States has had on Japan. This will be discussed more in-depth in Chapter II.

science-fiction western. As the only anime on this list to not have an overarching plot, *Cowboy Bebop* mixes different genres of music, ranging from jazz (generally speaking), to Western art music, to bebop, to hip-hop, to country western, and to electronic music to depict restless, wandering space bounty hunters. These chapters will not attempt to review the entirety of each series' respective soundtracks; instead, each chapter will show the depth and importance of music to the expressive power of *Death Note*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Cowboy Bebop*.

Review of Literature

To provide historical, contextual information for the above-mentioned anime, sources consulted included those detailing Japan's history and culture, which include the various genres of music and development of manga and anime. Anime is a young field in scholarship and a few sources are foundational. In *Understanding Manga and Anime,* Robin Brenner focuses on manga and anime by examining their respective origins. He surveys the background of manga and its subsequent transition to the anime. Brenner also examines the impact of World War II on manga and anime, stating that "strong antiwar messages [are] often found in postwar anime and manga."[7]

Ian Condry explores the influence of African American pop culture on Japanese pop culture in *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization*. He looks at the function of hip-hop in Japanese culture, which shows divisions in Japanese society, and questions the appropriation of African American culture by Japanese rappers. Similarly to Condry, Taylor Atkins examines the history and use of jazz in Japan in *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* and questions the authenticity of "Japanese Jazz."[8] Though published almost twenty years ago,

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[7] Robin E. Brenner, *Understanding Manga and Anime* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 6.

[8] Ian Condry, *Hip-hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Taylor Atkins, *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2001).

Timothy J. Craig's compilation *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Culture* contains

comprehensive information about all aspects of Japan's culture. He includes sections on popular

music, manga, and anime, and the subsequent reception of the aforementioned in the U.S.[9]

Crystal S. Anderson's book *Beyond the Chinese Connection*: *Contemporary Afro-Asian Cultural*

Production focuses on the use of hip-hop and African American Culture on Asian culture.

Anderson provides a basic overview of anime and the influence of Western pop culture, stating

that "anime has [developed] into a site for Afro-Asian cultural interaction" and "[features]

African American cultural expression."[10] The chapter "Scheming, Treacherous, and Out for

Revenge" provides many different examples of how various Asian movies and television shows,

including anime, incorporate African American culture. The sub-chapter "Representin' in Feudal

Times in *Samurai Champloo*" discusses how "African American hip-hop aesthetics complement

Japanese cultural expression," as the soundtrack for *Samurai Champloo* uses hip-hop and rap.[11]

Besides Anderson's contributions, little published research exists about music in anime.[12]

Milo Miles's chapter "Robots, Romance, and Ronin: Music in Japanese Anime," is brief, yet

explains the difference in anime music and American cartoon music. Unlike American "mickey-

mousing," Miles observes that anime music does not mirror the action on the screen. He

examines the use of music in *Akira*, as well as *Cowboy Bebop*, making correlations in the latter

regarding the "[jump] from genre to mode to form" as the "series' spaceships" move from "one

corner of the solar system to the other."[13]

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[9] *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture,* edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000).

[10] Crystal S. Anderson, *Beyond the Chinese Connection: Contemporary Afro-Asian Cultural Production* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 118.

[11] Anderson, 117.

[12] The majority of sources that discuss anime music consist primarily of personal blogs or threads via *Reddit*.

[13] Miles, 223.

In December 2017, Rose Bridges, a PhD student at the University of Texas-Austin, published *Cowboy Bebop Soundtrack* as part of Bloomsbury Publishing's 33 1/3 Japan series.[14] In her book, Bridges discusses the music of *Cowboy Bebop*, focusing on specific sessions and their respective genres, as well as musical characteristics for each of the characters. Her book offers insight on Kanno's compositions, focusing on Spike and Jet's musical characteristics, yet Bridges does not fully discuss Faye, who, unlike the other characters, is personified by Western art music.

Thankfully, with the limited amount of scholarship focused on music and anime, many general and interdisciplinary resources exist. Bridget Hanna, an education lecturer at the Australian Center for the Moving Image, writes about the learning opportunities *Death Note* provides.[15] She uses *Death Note* to ask challenging philosophical questions:

> Are serial killers evil if they are only targeting the bad guys?
> Is it wrong to sit back and let them continue?
> Is it bad to kill one person if you are saving multiple lives by doing so?
> How far would you go to protect yourself or those you love?[16]

Hanna states that "*Death Note* turns the familiar notions of good and evil on their heads, [and undercuts the audience's] expectations about the representation of heroes and villains by illuminating the darkness and light that reside in everyone."[17] She also includes Japanese-language and religious studies available for students.

Similarly, American scholar Susan Napier, who specializes in Japanese art and culture, examines morality in *Death Note*. Her article, "*Death Note*: The Killer in Me is the Killer in You,"

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[14] Rose Bridges, *Yoko Kanno's Cowboy Bebop Soundtrack*, ed. Noriko Manabe (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

[15] Bridget Hanna, "*Death Note* and Morality," *Screen Education* 78 (January 2015): 40-3.

[16] Hanna: 43.

[17] Hanna: 41.

states that the "overall effect of the series is…a symphony or tapestry of intentional deaths, woven into a…morally provocative, and…entertaining quest/mystery narrative."[18] Though she is solely focusing on the *Death Note* manga, her insight on specific events in the manga correlate to the same events in the anime.

Additionally, Dennis Owen Frolich provides a brief summary of *Death Note* and then focuses on the religious aspects in the series. Frohlich's article, "Evil Must Be Punished: Apocalyptic Religion in the Television Series *Death Note*," focuses on the idea of "apocalypticism" in *Death Note* and encourages readers to not confuse this idea with the genre of dystopian/postapocalyptic films such as *Mad Max* and *Waterworld*. Instead, he points readers towards the book of Revelation in the Bible. Frolich provides examples in Islam, Christianity, and other religions, and concludes that *Death Note* "not only [supports] apocalyptic religion, but [it] also [depicts] the judgement of sinners."[19] After his overview of apocalypticism, Frolich provides more background on *Death Note*. He explains that "light" in apocalyptic religion is a symbol of "goodness and righteousness," which correlates to protagonist Light Yagami's assumption that he is "god." Frolich notes the use of religious imagery throughout *Death Note*— such as the *Shinigami*, Ryuk, apples, crosses, angels, bells, and stained-glass windows.[20]

As with *Death Note*, Napier returns again with "When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and Terminal Identity in 'Neon Genesis Evangelion' and 'Serial Experiments Lain,'" discussing the anime. Napier examines the use of machines in *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, which is set in a dystopian world, stating that it "[shows] strong traces of Japanese cultural tradition" and

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[18] Susan Napier, "*Death Note*: The Killer in Me is the Killer in You," *Mechademia* 5 (2010): 356.

[19] Dennis Owen Frohlich, "Evil Must Be Punished: Apocalyptic Religion in the Television Series *Death Note*," *Journal of Media & Religion* 11, no. 3 (July-September 2012): 144.

[20] Frolich: 148.

its own "particular hallucinatory world."[21] Napier situates *Evangelion* within the history of anime as well as the Japanese culture, citing World War II and the film *Akira* (1988). She looks at the history of anime following the release of *Akira*, correlating it to the rise of technology in Japanese culture and American live-action films.[22] Napier's writings on *Evangelion* provides pertinent information about the mecha genre, stating that some critics believe the series revived anime from "what they saw as its creative doldrums in the early 1990s."[23] She further examines specific scenes from the series, chiefly the action-packed scenes, and briefly mentions the use of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" in one of *Evangelion*'s most memorable scenes.

This thesis, then, is only an opening foray into a large field, so my attempt to include the entirety of the series' soundtracks will be incomplete. Each series still possesses a considerable amount of music to discuss, and unfortunately, the anime music field possesses little scholarly research due to its dismissive nature as simply "cartoon music." However, even though minimal research exists about music in anime, it represents a new trend in musicology, and I hope my work here encourages the otaku lifestyle. This document will hopefully illuminate and inform readers about this unique, overlooked niche topic and demonstrate how the music in anime heightens viewers' experiences and causes them to empathize with the characters and storylines flickering across the screen.

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[21] Susan Napier, "When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and Terminal Identity in 'Neon Genesis Evangelion' and 'Serial Experiments Lain,'" *Science Fiction Studies* 29, no. 3 (November 2002): 419.

[22] Napier, "Machines": 420-1.

[23] Napier, "Machines": 424.

CHAPTER II

MUSIC AND CULTURE

Western Classical Music

Influence from Westernization

Before exploring the use of Western classical music in anime, we must understand the place of that music in Japanese society. Japan's history with Western music is complicated, stemming from years of forced isolation. During the Edo period (1600-1868), the Tokugawa Shogunate effectively closed Japan off from the rest of the Western world. *Sakoku* restricted Japan's involvement with other countries, affecting trade, international relations, and migration. Japan limited trade to Dutch, Indian, Chinese, and Korean traders and threatened death against any who attempted to trade with any other nationalities or who attempted to leave Japan.[1] However, as Americans sought to expand their trade, they naturally looked to Japan. First, the U.S. purchased California from Mexico, opening up the Pacific for their trade. American interests then sought ways access Japan's ports to sustain their trade and their travels. Their solution to *sakoku* came in July 1853, when Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Japan with four ships, providing a letter from President Millard Fillmore, which "called for better treatment of shipwrecked seamen, the opening of ports of refuge where foreign ships could obtain coal and stores, [and] permission to carry on trade."[2] Perry provided his own letter, stating that if Fillmore's demands were not met immediately, he would return in a few months with more ships and more troops.

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[1] Inoue Tokiko, "Western Classical Music in a Non-Western Culture: The Repertoires of Japanese Professional Orchestras in the Twentieth Century," *Poetics* 67 (March 2018): 14.

[2] W.G. Beasley, *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 191.

True to his word, Perry doubled his fleet and returned to Japan in early 1854. Seeing no escape from the imminent threat, the Tokugawa council ceded and signed Fillmore's proposal. This gunboat diplomacy not only benefited American naval forces, but also provided Dutch traders better commerce agreements and allowed the British to sign a treaty with Japan.[3] Over the following decade, Japan slowly turned into a modern state, drawing in numerous Western influences. In the 1850s and 1860s, Japan was fraught with tension, as men rioted and blamed the Shogunate for allowing their country to be overrun by foreigners. Civil wars erupted throughout Japan, and finally in January 1868, citizens accused the Shogun of ineffective leadership, forcibly ejected him from office, and turned to the emperor for security and unity. Emperor Meiji disavowed the Tokugawa family, demanding that rule be returned to the imperial family, implementing censorship laws, and reviving Japanese traditions. From the beginning of his reign until his death in 1912, a period more well-known as the Meiji Restoration, Emperor Meiji accomplished five goals:

1. He separated shrines and temples, effectively dividing Shintoism and Buddhism;
2. He established a system supporting state Shintoism;
3. He pushed for technological advancements to bolster economy;
4. He firmly established the imperial rule and modeled it after European systems; and
5. He opened all ports in Japan, as only a few had been opened per Perry's requests.[4]

Meiji also emphasized the importance of education, implementing Western studies in music. Children learned songs using Western melodies and tonal harmonies, used Western musical notation, and performed Western music. By incorporating Western musical education, people in

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[3] Beasley, 192.

[4] Other significant changes during the Meiji Restoration include the abolishment of the samurai, the adoption of Japan's national flag, compulsory public education, and the establishment of the Imperial University—now known as Tokyo University—to promote Japanese aesthetics and modern Western ideology—i.e. enlightenment. Gary Ebersole, "Meiji Restoration—Revolution," (class lecture, History 5562 J: Japanese Civilization, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, MO, April 9, 2018).

Japan could collectively sing a national anthem, the core signifier of a modern, centralized state.[5] The opening of the ports also allowed Christian missionaries re-entry, who hoped to spread their monotheistic religion among the spiritual, but polytheistic Japanese. By introducing Christian hymnals into schools, missionaries accomplished two goals: they could easily train the masses about Western music, and they could assimilate the Japanese into their religion.[6] Meiji's reception to Western ideology greatly shaped the state of Japan, transforming it into a modern contender in the arts.

The introduction of Western classical music into public education also allowed for the creation of orchestras throughout Japan. Amateur student orchestras flourished at universities, promoting the works of Ludwig van Beethoven among others.[7] Professional musicians and ensembles soon followed. Conductor Konoe Hidemaro established *Shin Kōkyōgakudan*, or New Symphony Orchestra—though it is now known as the NHK Symphony Orchestra—in October 1926. The orchestra primarily performed concerts in Tokyo, yet their music soon infiltrated the airwaves via a partnership with *Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai*, a broadcasting company. These concerts incorporated music from the Western canon: Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Richard Wagner, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and Johannes Brahms. However, the heyday of the Western classical orchestra declined as Japan and America declared war against each other in December 1941. The Japanese government not only increased domestic security, but also placed restrictions on speech and music, one of which was a ban on Western music. In accordance to wartime

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[5] Tokiko: 14.

[6] Mari Yoshihara, *Musicians from a Different Shore*: *Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 17.

[7] Student orchestras also enjoyed playing small excerpts by Georges Bizet (*Carmen*), Richard Wagner (*Tannhäuser*), and Franz Schubert *(Unfinished Symphony)*), yet they highly regarded Beethoven, calling him the ultimate authority of Western classical music. Tokiko: 15-6.

policies, the Japanese government forced orchestras to hire only Japanese conductors and to

always include one work by a Japanese composer on their programs.[8] After World War II,

orchestras once again flourished in Japan, and today, Japan possesses twenty-five professional

orchestras in thirteen of its forty-seven prefectures.[9] Similar to Western orchestras, Japan's

orchestras each fall under a specific type of management, which include:

> 1. "Patron-type" orchestras that receive full support from corporations or regional governments as sponsors;
> 2. "Independent enterprise-type" orchestras that operate primarily on funds from concert revenues; and
> 3. "Local-type" orchestras that depend partially on public support from regional governments.[10]

Unlike the U.S.'s reception to new, or "modern," orchestral works, Japan only performed

compositions outside of the canon if a patron or the government sponsored the event. Since the

1950s, Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms remain the most consistently performed composers in

Japan.[11]

    In addition to orchestras, the piano became common in Japan and the rest of East Asia.

During the Meiji Restoration, the piano came to symbolize the upper class, as only those with

wealth and status possessed them. However, after World War II, Japan focused on increasing

the economy by expanding technology. The tenacity of Yamaha and Kawai bolstered piano

production during the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, and by early 1970, Japan exceeded the U.S.'s

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[8] Tokiko: 16.

[9] Over a third of these orchestras are based in Tokyo, with Osaka taking the second highest amount—four orchestras. The dozen other orchestras exist in: Nagoya—which houses two—Kyoto, Kanagawa, Takasaki, Fukuoka, Sapporo, Hiroshima, Yamagata, Sendai, Kanazawa, and Hyogo. Tokiko: 16-7.

[10] Tokiko: 17.

[11] Tokiko: 18.

piano sales. The piano's status soon transitioned to the urban middle-class, with "Western music quickly [gaining] symbolic power as a marker of middle-class status."[12]

In addition to producing pianos, Japan also coined one of the leading methods of musical instruction: the Suzuki Method. Developed by Shinichi Suzuki in the 1930s, this method aims to start a child's musical education as early as two years old. Students under the Suzuki Method do not learn music from scores; instead, these children imitate recordings, memorizing and repeating each piece studied. The Suzuki Method also encourages group lessons and performances, placing all students at the same skill level. Since its inception, the Suzuki Method has swept the globe and is practiced by over 400,000 students in thirty-four countries.[13]

Identity

Western classical music flourished in Japan, no doubt influenced by the amateur, student-led orchestras and the prevalence of the Suzuki method, and after the devastation and humiliation of World War II, many Japanese composers disavowed their heritage, turning instead to Western culture. Many of these early Japanese composers possessed little to no formal training, relying on records for musical training. Furthermore, just as European composers embraced atonality and advanced structures in response to the horrors seen during the war, Japanese composers too turned to abstract forms and disregarded tonality. Tōru Takemitsu (1930-1996) served in World War II, and after the war, the ban on Western music lifted, providing Takemitsu ample opportunities to experience Western music via the radio. After hearing Western music, Takemitsu renounced Japanese traditional music, citing his horrible

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[12] In addition to manufacturing pianos, Yamaha and Kawai both developed storefronts, offering private instruction to amateur musicians. Young musicians could take lessons from professionals in the field, and instruction was not limited to only instrumental studies. Yamaha and Kawai also offered lessons in theory, ear training, and sight reading. Yoshihara, 33-4.

[13] Yoshihara, 38.

experiences during World War II as the fundamental reason.[14] From 1946 to early 1950, Takemitsu composed, usually with little guidance from others, referencing Olivier Messiaen as a prominent influence in his music. Takemitsu's first work *Lento in due movimenti* (1950) premiered in Kiyose, a suburb in Tokyo, as part of a series called the New Group of Composers. Despite it being his first work, *Lento in due movimenti* established Takemitsu's fundamental musical characteristics: "modal melodies emerging from a chromatic background, the suspension of regular metre [*sic*] and an acute sensitivity to register and timbre."[15] Though initially not well-received, Takemitsu's work attracted fellow composer Jōji Yuasa and poet Kuniharu Akiyama. The three remained good friends over the years, and in 1951, they, along with other musicians, artists, and writers, founded *Jikken Kōbō*, an experimental workshop for collaborations in different types of media. While in this group, Takemitsu composed many electronic works, taking inspiration from Pierre Schaeffer, a French composer renowned for his innovations in *musique concrete*. The 1950s were successful years for Takemitsu, and in the mid-1960s, he and American composer John Cage met, each admiring the other's music. However, Cage's use of the *I-Ching* and his "Zen-inspired ideas about music and the world," caused Takemitsu to reflect back on his own heritage, "recognizing the value of [his] own tradition."[16] Takemitsu spent the remainder of his life incorporating Japanese traditional music and elements into his compositions, more evident in his work *Eclipse* (1966).[17] Written for biwa and shakhuhachi, *Eclipse* served as Takemitsu's re-introduction to Japanese music, as it was the first written using

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[14] Tom Service, "A Guide to Tōru Takemitsu's Music," The Guardian, under "Culture," https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2013/feb/11/contemporary-music-guide-toru-takemitsu (accessed August 31, 2018).

[15] Yoko Narazaki and Masakata Kanazawa, "Takemitsu, Tōru," Grove Music Online, www.oxfordmusiconline.com. (accessed August 31, 2018).

[16] Service, "Guide."

[17] Narazaki, "Takemitsu."

Eastern musical techniques. He also composed *Voice* (1971), *Meguri* [Itinerant] (1989), and *Air* (1995) for solo flute, incorporating many extended techniques, such as key clicks, harmonics, and whistle tones, to convey the shakuhachi and elements of the Japanese vocal style. Despite his upbringing, Takemitsu balanced his past, present, and future in his music, showing the importance of both Western classical music and "national" music.

Popular Music in Japan

American Country Music

Besides the lasting popularity of Western classical music, Western popular music has a large footprint in Japan, and its overall assimilation into Japanese society began with American country music. That this genre was the first embraced seems surprising, yet showings of Western films in Japan were a popular source of entertainment during the U.S. Occupation of the late 1940s. These westerns featured Roy Rogers, Spade Cooley, Tex Ritter, and Gene Autry, who each "provided the musical basis for…a partial merging of the country music styles of the American south east and south west, and a resultant boost in the respectability of the redefined genre."[18] In addition to films, military radio broadcasts greatly influenced the Japanese's fascination with country music. The range of country and "hillbilly" music was limited, so Japanese musicians created their own "cowboy groups."[19] The majority of these groups were comprised of teenagers "from middle-class or upper-class backgrounds" and "aristocrats and even relatives of the Japanese royal family."[20] This high-class upbringing greatly benefited the musicians, helping them purchase equipment, apparel, and cars; however, because these musicians came from the upper class, they could not identify with the major themes in that

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[18] Michael Furmanovsky, "American Country Music in Japan: Lost Piece in the Popular Music History Puzzle," *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 3 (July 2008): 360.

[19] Furmanovsky: 361.

[20] Ibid.

cowboy music: "an answer to loneliness…another way of expressing good fellowship…[or an occurrence] in the day's work, funny or sad."[21] In place of identification, Japanese musicians focused on appearance and ordered apparel and instruments from the U.S., hoping to provide a vaneer of authenticity to their music.

Radio broadcast programs spread American country music throughout Japan, eventually to Kyoto and Osaka. Army Sergeant Ted "Cowboy" Clemens regularly broadcast *Sagebrush Symphony*, a program featuring his "folksy delivery [of] the catchy melodies of the cowboy music records he played."[22] Clemens's morning show attracted college students at Doshisha University in Kyoto who formed a group called Wild Geese. The group memorized English lyrics to songs and dressed themselves in "cowboy attire, complete with hats," performing at the university's founding day celebration in November 1947.[23] University students in Osaka created fan clubs, publishing newsletters and hosting concerts at the Osaka American Cultural Center. Universities in Japan provided a breeding ground for American country music, fostering its growth and eventually developing it into a Japanese popular music.

Post Korean war, Japanese country groups were in high demand among American military bases in Japan. The Wagon Masters, originating in 1951, became the first group "with a national audience," containing students from Seijo University and previous members of the Chuck Wagon Boys. The Wagon Masters featured vocalist Kosaka Kazuya, a high school dropout from Seijo, whose mastery of the pronunciation and memorization of the lyrics astounded Americans. Hoping to appeal to those losing interest in only hearing English songs,

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[21] N. Howard Thorp, *Songs of the Cowboys* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter Inc., 1966), 15

[22] Furmanovsky: 362.

[23] Ibid.

Kosaka decided to translate traditional country songs into Japanese.[24] Kosaka translated many famous country tunes into Japanese, including "Kaw-Liga," "Ballad of Davy Crockett," and "Yellow Rose of Texas," though his cover of Elvis Presley's "Heartbreak Hotel" glorified him as a "popular music" vocalist and fueled the Japanese *rockabiri* craze.[25] The Wagon Masters disbanded after Kosaka's 1957 recording of "Seishun Cycling" ("Youth Cycling") labeled him a pop star, yet demoted the other members to a backing band. Kosaka's success in breaking into the American music scene paved the way for Japanese popular music to emerge as its own genre, separate from American country music.[26]

<div align="center">Enka</div>

After Kosuka, the popularity of American country music in Japan developed into a new genre: *enka*. Primarily known as the love ballads of Japan, enka, "dubbed the national music," reflects the "heart and soul of the Japanese," according to Christine R. Yano.[27] Recurring themes from American country music translated well to enka, especially themes concerning unsuccessful romances and the desire to return home. However, these emotions "are characteristically Japanese, drawing upon a long history of tear-drenched sleeves."[28] Japanese separated their private, personal life from their public life, with enka providing an emotional release for many.

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[24] Other Japanese musicians, such as Eri Chiemi, combined both English and Japanese lyrics into American songs. Redd Stewart and Pee Wee King wrote the lyrics and music, respectively, to "Tennessee Waltz" in 1946, which Chiemi covered in 1952. This combination of Japanese and English lyrics would eventually translate to J-pop music, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

[25] *Rockabiri* simply translates to rockabilly music, or rock-and-roll.

[26] By the end of the 1950s, country music was universally known as "American," and Japanese songwriters and musicians could not identify with American lyrics and themes.

[27] Christine R. Yano, "The Marketing of Tears: Consuming Emotions in Japanese Popular Song," in *Japan Pop!: Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 61.

[28] Ibid.

The music is characteristically "pop," meaning it contains a small rock ensemble, yet also contains elements quintessential to Japan. Musicians followed formulas filled with set patterns to construct enka, a practice not uncommon in popular music industries. However, *kata*, or patterns, are important in "traditional Japanese arts, such as martial arts, flower [arrangements], tea [ceremonies], and kabuki [theater]," creating an understood and recognizable genre among Japanese.[29] Kata determined all aspects of enka, with the music containing "new combinations from [well-established] repertoire of musical formulas which includes characteristic scales, rhythms, guitar riffs, saxophone interludes, chord progressions, and *kobushi* [which are] vibrato-like ornamentations."[30] Additionally, songwriters consult a set collection of words frequently used and associated with enka, which include *yume* (dream), *kokoro* (heart/soul), *namida* (tears), *koi* (love), and many others.[31] The set formulas also determined the performance of enka, with

> every move…carefully choreographed, from the slow raising of microphone to mouth just before the first note is sung, to the smallest nuance of breathiness, the lifting of one heel, the facial distortion caused by emotions barely under control and finally, in some cases, actual tears streaming down the singer's face as the song reaches its climax.[32]

Enka performers rarely deviated from the formula, and even though these set conventions might appear as cliché or mundane, the tears of the words and the performance practice elicit strong emotions from both the performer and the audience.

Similar to most Western entertainment markets in the mid-twentieth century, men dominated every aspect of enka. Men found and promoted singers, wrote the lyrics, and

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[29] Yano, 62.

[30] Ibid.

[31] These stock words primarily relate to romance enka. These emotions are often fleeting, referring back to *mujō*, or mutability, a fundamental Buddhist understanding that everything in the material world is impermanent. The lyrics incorporate nature, often focusing on the impermeability of water, or will directly reference a single sexual encounter, lending to the extreme side of romance.

[32] Yano, 63.

produced enka songs. However, most enka focus on the lives and emotions of women, with the

lyrics portraying a "man who controls the action, which often consists of leaving, while the

woman passively accepts the unhappy hand that fate has dealt her."[33] It was not uncommon,

however, for men to sing songs intended for women, or vice versa, showing that both genders

could understand each other. Japan finally established a genre with which all could identify, one

that remains a popular genre today.

J-Pop

After the growing success and fascination of Madonna in the 1980s, the 1990s ushered

in more pop artists. Musicians, such as Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, captivated

audiences with their unique vocal styles supported by electronic and synthesized backing tracks.

These recordings entranced young Japanese women, mostly around twelve or thirteen years old,

who flocked to record studios. There they were groomed for years, taught how to dress, act, and

sing. Only after her seventeenth birthday was one of the girls presented to the world, giving a

concert to break into the notoriously fickle pop scene.[34] While most Japanese pop artists, or J-

pop artists, relied on others to write the lyrics and record instrumental tracks, Japanese-

American Utada Hikaru wrote all of her own music, releasing her first single "First Love" in

1999. Like her American and Japanese counterparts, Hikaru was young, only sixteen years old,

yet she enchanted audiences with her unique vocal style.[35] Even though her debut album *First

Love* targeted Japanese audiences, she also combined Japanese and English lyrics, primarily using

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[33] Yano, 67.

[34] James Stanlaw, "Open Your File, Open Your Mind: Women, English, and Changing Roles and Voices in Japanese Pop Music," in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 77-8.

[35] The album *First Love* remains at the top of Japanese record sales. Naomi Gingold, "Utada Hikaru Upended the Japanese Scene Like No One Before—Or Since, *PRI* (April 15, 2016) https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-04-15/utada-hikaru-upended-japanese-music-scene-no-one-or.

Japanese for the verses and English in the chorus.[36] In "First Love," Hikaru also sings two

different choruses, first singing:

> You are always gonna be my love
> Even if I fall in love with someone someday.
> I'll remember to love: you taught me how.
> You are always gonna be the one,

and in the second chorus:

> You will always be inside my heart.
> I always have places just for you.
> I hope that I have a place in your heart too.
> Now and forever you are still the one.

These lyrics echo sentiments heard in American pop music, such as Spears's chorus in "I'll

Never Stop Loving You," where she sings:

> From now until forever
> That's how long I'll be true
> I'll make you this vow
> And promise you now
> Until forever
> I'll never stop loving you.[37]

Both songs incorporate elements of R&B, yet Hikaru provides all vocals on her songs,

something American and Japanese pop artists did not do. Spears's song is a large-scale

production, featuring a backup choir and heavy instrumental track, while Hikaru keeps "First

Love" simple, utilizing only her voice and a simple backing track featuring piano. Hikaru's

combination of Japanese and English no doubt aided her emergence in not only Japan, but also

the U.S.; however, most Americans are familiar with the songs Hikaru recorded for video games.

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[36] By using English, Japanese women gained "an additional and different symbolic vocabulary with which to express their thoughts and feelings, but also with rhetorical power that was unknown to them previously." English "loanwords" allowed Japanese women more creativity in their music, unbound by the restrictive nature of the Japanese language. Stanlaw, 98-9.

[37] Britney Spears, lyrics to "I'll Never Stop Loving You," http://www.metrolyrics.com/ill-never-stop-loving-you-lyrics-britney-spears.html.

In 2002, Square Enix and Disney collaborated and released *Kingdom Hearts*, a role-playing game, featuring Hikaru's "Simple and Clean" as the theme song.[38]

Following the success of "Simple and Clean," Hikaru signed with American label Island Def Jam in 2002, releasing her first full-English album *Exodus* in 2004. *Exodus* garnered mixed reviews, with fans claiming Hikaru "self-consciously Americanised [*sic*] her music to pander to an American public."[39] A growing debate in J-pop is its authenticity to Japan: is it truly Japanese or does it simply resemble American music? Similarities to American pop music is feasible, especially considering the long political and cultural occupation of Japan; however, "Japanese pop wholeheartedly embraces life in all its dimensions," containing "strong [strains] of idealism, innocence," and "closeness to the ordinary, everyday lives of its audience."[40] The growth of technology in Japan also influenced J-pop, as the "production of J-pop and its empowerment on the market and the music scene…relies on the forces of the market," differing from other Asian

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[38] "Hikari," which translates to light, is the original theme song to the Japanese version of *Kingdom Hearts*. Hikaru re-wrote the song in English, naming it "Simple and Clean," which functions as the theme song to international versions of *Kindgom Hearts*. *Kingdom Hearts* adapts both versions of Hikaru's songs into an upbeat electronic number, remixed by Plaitb. *Kingdom Hearts* features Sora, a young orphaned boy transported from his island and separated from his friends, Riku and Kairi, to another universe, filled with beings called "heartless." The heartless attempt to steal hearts from everyone, hoping to fill the world with darkness. Throughout his travels, Sora encounters characters from the Square Enix universe, such as Squall, Tifa, Cloud and Cid from the *Final Fantasy* series, and from Disney, such as Jack Skellington from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*. The Square Enix characters function as supporting characters while Sora travels to each Disney film's "planet," recreating certain aspects of the respective film's plot, and during his travels, he attempts to reconnect with his friends and eradicate the world of all heartless, all with the help of Goofy, Donald Duck, and his keyblade. The bridge in "Simple and Clean" echoes the sentiments felt throughout *Kingdom Hearts*: "Hold me/Whatever lies beyond this morning is a little later on/Regardless of warnings, the future doesn't scare me at all/Nothing's like before." Hikaru's lyrics showcase Sora's willingness to save his friends, despite the hardships he may face. Hikaru also wrote "Sanctuary" for *Kingdom Hearts II* (2005), and collaborated with Skrillex on "Face My Fears" for *Kingdom Hearts III* (2019). Utada Hikaru, lyrics to "Simple and Clean," http://www.metrolyrics.com/simple-and-clean-lyrics-utada-hikaru.html.

[39] Terence Lancashire, "J-Pop's Elusive 'J': Is Japanese Popular Music Japanese?," *Perfect Beat* 9, no. 1 (July 2008): 53.

[40] Timothy J. Craig, introduction to *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 12-3.

countries whose government advocated and supported pop artists.[41] Furthermore, J-pop artists assimilated other genres into their music, presenting new sounds to Japan.[42]

<p align="center">Hip-hop and J-Rap</p>

While J-pop songs typically deal with love squabbles or friendship, hip-hop in Japan takes a different approach, modeling the style off the U.S. in the early 1980s. Moreover, hip-hop in Japan appropriates all aspects of hip-hop culture, ranging from speech to appearance. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the dance scene in Japan erupted, yet it was not until the 1983 film *Wild Style* that hip-hop came to Japan. Set in New York City, *Wild Style* features Zoro, a graffiti artist, and his confrontations with Virginia, a journalist. *Wild Style* includes many prominent rap artists from the period, such as Grandmaster Flash, Busy Bee Starski, Fab Five Freddy, and the Cold Crush Brothers, and also includes activities commonly associated with hip-hop musical culture, such as turn tabling and beat-boxing.[43] The film also incorporated breakdancing, causing people in Japan to work toward re-creating the movements and music seen in *Wild Style* and adopting the hip-hop lifestyle. DJ Krush, a pioneer in hip-hop in Japan, credits *Wild Style* for "saving him from a life in [the Yakuza.]"[44]

Over the next several decades, Japanese artists struggled to adapt Western idioms into their songs. Stress accents do not exist in Japanese, and "the Japanese literary tradition did not emphasize end-rhymes," which is a common occurrence in Western rap songs.[45] The

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[41] The Korean government strongly supports Korean pop musicians. Aska Monty, "Micro: Global Music Made in J-Pop?," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 11, no. 1 (2010): 123.

[42] This assimilation eventually developed into separate genres J-rock and J-rap.

[43] *Wild Style*, directed by Charlie Ahearn (First Run Features, 1983), DVD (Submarine Entertainment, 2013).

[44] Ian Condry, *Hip-Hop Japan* (Stanford, CA: Duke University Press, 2006), 64.

[45] Noriko Manabe, "Japanese Hip-Hop, Alternative Stories," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop*, edited by Justin A. Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 244.

discrepancies in the languages forced artists to decide if they performed in Japanese or English, with either option potentially hindering their outreach. Hip-hop artist Itō incorporated a rhyming bible into the liner notes of his albums, arguing that "the Japanese language could be transformed by rap," and the heavy use of English-derived words allowed him to make new, often irreverent associations between concepts."[46] Similarly to Hikaru's combination, Itō's mixing of the two languages allowed Japanese audiences to appreciate the rhyming scheme and for American audiences to understand portions of the song.

A growing debate in scholarship about Japanese rap is the (mis)appropriation of African American culture. Japanese rap artists darken their skin and fashion their hair into dreadlocks, which "is perhaps the most striking expression of hip-hop devotion in Japan."[47] Scholar Ian Condry notes that "hip-hop [came] to Japan above all as black music rather than American music…with racial connotations emphasized more than national origins."[48] In 1995, Japanese rapper Banana Ice recorded a song entitled "Imitation + Imitation= Imitation," criticizing adolescents for their choices in altering their appearance—i.e. as "a sign of respect toward African American musicians."[49] In the song, Banana Ice raps: "Your parents, your grandparents are Japanese/You can never be the black person you want to be."[50]

Other Japanese rap artists, such as Dabo, argue that by choosing to ignore all aspects encompassing hip-hop culture—including music, appearance, and dress—they inadvertently

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[46] Condry, *Hip-Hop,* 150.

[47] Condry, *Hip-Hop,* 25.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Condry, *Hip-Hop,* 24.

[50] Condry, "Yellow B-Boys, Black Culture, and Hip-Hop in Japan: Toward a Transnational Cultural Politics of Race," *Positions* 15, no. 3 (Winter 2007): 637.

disrespect African Americans and hip-hop. The cover to Dabo's album *Hitman* features him

holding a gun and wearing a do-rag, platinum chain, and a baseball jersey. The cover to *Hitman*

"reinforces the idea that Japanese hip-hop…superficially [copies] the styles seen on MTV and in

music magazines, [misses] the deeper significance of hip-hop, and [reinforces] stereotypes about

African Americans."[51] Dabo's misappropriation of African American hip-hop culture

miseducates Japanese youth, showing that successful African American rappers dress and behave

in a similar fashion. Uzi, another Japanese rap artist, instead "[relies] on…exotic markers of

Japanese ethnicity—namely, samurai imagery—…[claiming] descent from a samurai family."[52]

Uzi adapts hip-hop aesthetics into his own culture, refusing to misappropriate African American

culture.[53] This notion, however noble it may seem, also ignores and possibly even insults the

roots of African American hip-hop culture.

Japanese musicians defend their use of hip-hop, writing "lyrics to highlight divisions

within Japanese society [that occur] between impotent politicians and outward-looking youth."[54]

While Christopher Deis, professor at Kalamazoo College, has argued that hip-hop does not

automatically possess political ideas, Japanese rap artists consciously incorporate politics into

their songs.[55] For instance, Utamaru and DJ Oasis collaborated on "Shakai no Mado," or

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[51] Condry, "Yellow": 646.

[52] The combination of samurai culture and hip-hop will be examined in Chapter III. Condry, *Hip-Hop,* 27.

[53] Additionally, DJ Krush incorporated "Japanese sounds and aesthetics"—such as the *shakuhachi*, the *shamisen*, and music by Takemitsu—into his music, stating that if "[he] could return a track with a sound from traditional Japanese music, it would be in keeping with the philosophy of representing in hip-hop." Noriko Manabe, "Representing Japan: 'National' Style Among Japanese Hip-Hop DJs," *Popular Music* 32, no. 1 (2013): 38.

[54] Condry, "Yellow": 665.

[55] Deis believes that politics exist differently to people, and thus, we cannot assume that every hip-hop song in the United States is taking a political stance. In this instance, Western refers exclusively to hip-hop in the United States. Deis, 203.

"Society's Window." Though not explicitly voicing political ideas, the lyrics echo a worrying

sentiment:

> When something's rotten, put a lid on it
> [But] sometimes it's fun to open it up.
>
> Completely closed, the sacred inner sanctum,
> How long has it been from the last restart?
>
> The rusted zipper on the fly of the pants
> Completely rotten, in there it's big.
>
> If left alone, it's a cancer on the world.
> Do you want to make such a strong stench?
>
> I can't understand you, you shitty old men.
> Entrusted with the textbooks,
> You make up a smoldering fantasy
> On the pretext of representing Japan's "pride."
> Huh? I misheard you, you must mean blind.[56]

Utamaru believes that politicians in Japan want to ignore its troubled history. With their lyrics,

Japanese hip-hop artists influenced communities of people, creating political and social change.

Jazz in Japan

Unlike the other American popular music styles embraced by segments of Japanese

culture, Japan did not openly welcome jazz. Jazz's introduction to Japan in the 1920s come with

negative connotations: "barbarism, primitivism, savagery, and animalism," and its overall timing

made it difficult for the genre to thrive.[57] During the years leading up to World War II, Japanese

law enforcement placed bans on jazz, forbidding its creation and performance. Police labeled

jazz a "decadent drug," harassing establishments that allowed jazz performances. Artists sneakily

attempted to evade law enforcement by arranging Japanese and Chinese folk songs and melodies

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[56] Lyrics taken from Condry, "Yellow": 662.

[57] E. Taylor Atkins, "The War on Jazz, or Jazz Goes to War: Toward a New Cultural Order in Wartime Japan," *Positions* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 351.

into jazz tunes. Other artists also incorporated patriotic or nationalistic themes into their music, showing that jazz benefited Japan.[58]

Despite World War II-era Japan condemning everything anti-Japanese—especially anything resembling American culture—law enforcement still permitted jazz while forbidding the use of English or the performance of traditional American songs.[59] This action led to an increase in nationalistic musical efforts by the Japanese government, as they hired musicians to tour to battle camps and boost morale. These patriotic efforts soon influenced the government to eliminate all aspects of jazz from the Japanese music vocabulary, including setting limitations on instrumentation by removing the banjo, steel guitar, and ukulele, reducing the number of saxophones, banning the trumpet mute, and prohibiting the use microphones in venues holding less than 2,500 people.[60] Instead, touring musicians performed government sanctioned music, usually consisting of Japanese popular music, marches, and military songs. As the end of the war neared, and after realizing the coming Allied victory, Japanese military musicians ceased performing and joined in the remaining days of battle.

Despite these efforts, Japanese officials condemned jazz, and musicians quickly worked to re-structure jazz for Japan. By re-categorizing the genre as "light music," musicians could still perform jazz, albeit with restrictions. Broadly, "light music" contained:

1. music with melodies that accentuate the characteristic ethnicity of each country;
2. nimbly merry music (that is not merely riotous);
3. joking light music; and
4. lyrical music

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[58] Atkins, "War": 357-358.

[59] The government swept cafés, offering reimbursements for establishments who handed over their records. This new ordinance also created major issues regarding origin, as many popular songs in Japan had been translated from English into Japanese, and also banned other tunes, such as "Auld Lang Syne," despite their popularity in Japanese culture. Atkins, "War": 369.

[60] Atkins, "War": 378.

yet excluded:

1. music with a riotous rhythm that loses the beauty of the melody;
2. music that causes lascivious and lewd emotions; and
3. decadent or ruinous music that caused idleness.[61]

By establishing their own form of "jazz," Japanese musicians could continue performing and cultivating it.

When U.S. Military Forces occupied Japan in the late 1940s and 1950s, they attempted to stabilize Japan's economy and create a new sense of nationalism amongst the Japanese people. General Douglas MacArthur, holding the position of Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP), established bases throughout Japan, sending musicians to change the country's attitude toward jazz. U.S. military forces regularly performed variety shows for the Japanese that featured jazz; however, the number of American military musicians in Japan was low, and SCAP encouraged American musicians to find Japanese musicians who could play music. Americans taught the Japanese how to read jazz charts, as performances in clubs demanded short tunes, hoping to generate as many ticket sales as possible throughout the night.[62] Just as with American country music, jazz also infiltrated Japan through radio, yet this time with a political agenda. Influenced by SCAP, the Japanese government hired musicians to perform jazz on the radio, deeming it "democratic propaganda," as jazz during this time period "[represented] the cultural power of the victor."[63] The Japanese government also established the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA), whose sole purpose was to entertain American troops. The RAA created and funded clubs, dance halls, and bars exclusive to American troops.[64] The

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[61] Atkins, "War": 362-3.

[62] Patrick Jarenwattananon, "How Japan Came to Love Jazz," *NPR Jazz* (April 30, 2014) https://www.npr.org/sections/ablogsupreme/2014/04/30/308275726/how-japan-came-to-love-jazz.

[63] E. Taylor Atkins, *Blue Nippon*: *Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 171.

establishment of the RAA—no doubt influenced from SCAP—paved jazz's path in Japan, showcasing the nation's finest musicians to American troops, proving it to be a viable export.

<center>"Japanese Jazz"</center>

Today, Japan hosts some of the world's largest jazz festivals each year, yet one of the biggest issues surrounding "Japanese Jazz" is that of authenticity.[65] In Western studies, "authenticity" is a fraught term often used in performance practice studies as in "an authentic performance is an artistically successful interpretation of a composition." Along this vein, from the 1940s to 1960s, prominent jazz musicians deemed anything played by non-African American musicians as "fake jazz."[66] Formal jazz training was non-existent, with most musicians pursuing an apprenticeship model with those established in the field.[67] The Japanese modeled their own studies on this approach, yet instead of directly studying with a prominent jazz musician, the Japanese would listen to and study recordings.[68] However, in comparison to Western classical studies, Japanese professors and scholars attempted to persuade young musicians to treat jazz as a hobby. The emphasis on the mentorship program politicized jazz in Japan, only allowing those with prominent names attached to their resumes to perform in clubs.

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[64] The RAA called these exclusive clubs: Officers' Clubs (OC), Non-Commissioned Officers' Club (NCO), Enlisted Men's Clubs (EM), and Civilian Clubs (CC), and each club housed a specific type of music. Due to racial tensions still existing in the U.S., the RAA segregated the clubs, hoping to maintain peace. Atkins, *Blue*, 175.

[65] The Yokohama Jazz Festival, the Mount Fuji Jazz Festival, and the Tokyo Jazz Festival are but a few of the many annual festivals held throughout Japan. Additionally, several jazz clubs throughout Japan—mainly in Tokyo and Kyoto—welcome American, Brazilian, Israeli, and Japanese musicians and groups throughout the year. "Jazz and Blues," *Japan Times*, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/events/categories/music-guide/jazz-blues-music-guide/page/2/ (accessed November 1, 2018).

[66] Jarenwattananon, "Japan."

[67] This study method is also incredibly common at universities. For instance, Berklee College of Music encourages inexperienced students to transcribe solos by Chet Baker, Bill Evans, and Charlie Parker as improvisation practice. Once a student grasps a certain musician's style, they then make modifications to the original solo, which fosters guided improvisation.

[68] This study method eventually caused some jazz scholars and musicians to refer to the Japanese musicians as the "Japanese version of" a specific American musician. Some Japanese appreciated the comparison to American musicians, while others grew frustrated because of their desire to create a unique sound.

<center>29</center>

The call for originality in Japanese jazz also contributed to the overall aesthetic of authenticity. The rigorous upbringing rooted in Western classical music studies through the Suzuki Method trained Japanese jazz musicians to be skilled technically advanced, yet few possessed any originality.[69] By listening to an artist's recordings, professional Western jazz musicians can determine the nationality based on his or her style of playing, often referring to the Japanese style as bland, unoriginal, and uninspiring to jazz culture.[70] Japanese jazz pianist Yasumi Takashi corroborates this Western opinion, stating that Japanese musicians excel in technical passages, yet cannot adequately express themselves via improvisation.[71]

Many Japanese critics share Takashi's opinions of Japanese musicians. Jirō Kubota believes that jazz cannot be divided into nationalities, as all jazz is universal. Jazz arranger Keitarō Miho agrees with Kubato, stating that Japanese have no sense of nationality, and even though they could differentiate between French and American music, Japan is an "'assortment of American things and French things.'"[72] Miho further explains that Japanese people obsessively label things as "Japanese," a trait influenced by Western ideology. Other Japanese critics, such as Ryūji Kawana, however, glorify "Japanese jazz," calling the Japanese's ability to arrange folk melodies into standards as "'truly excellent Japanese jazz.'"[73] If "Japanese jazz" represents Japanese culture, does it also misappropriate African American culture? The Japanese knew the history of African Americans and understood their battle with oppression, despite the

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[69] Atkins, *Blue*, 16.

[70] This notion will be disputed in Chapter VI, as Yoko Kanno's soundtracks to *Cowboy Bebop*, each containing big band and small combo tunes, standalone outside the series.

[71] Atkins, *Blue*, 28.

[72] Atkins, *Blue*, 242.

[73] Atkins, *Blue*, 241.

abolishment of slavery several decades prior.[74] In many ways, the U.S. Occupation oppressed the

Japanese, with the latter believing that jazz could communicate their frustrations and emotions,

especially considering their society opposed emotional expression or response.[75] Regardless of

the authenticity of "Japanese jazz," it remains a viable source of entertainment in Japan and

throughout the world, influencing and impacting other mediums.

Each of these genres—Western classical music, Western country music, J-pop, hip-hop,

and jazz—still function today in Japan's society and have transcended into different mediums

including anime. J-pop artists, such as Utada Hikaru, gained popularity in the U.S. because of

their adaptation to Western ideas and feelings. The development of hip-hop and rap in Japan

established conversations between youth and politicians of the time, correlating to the

discussions already recognized in the U.S. among the African American community. The lack of

portraying emotion also garnered negative feedback from many Americans regarding the

Japanese' performance of jazz. Despite the immense Western influence, Japanese artists and

composers adapted these Western methods, theories, and ideas into their music, hoping to elicit

responses among audiences. Japanese composers could combine all of these Western-made

genres into soundtracks made for what is arguably their greatest export: anime. Anime provides

composers an opportunity to create soundtracks showing the Western world's impact on Japan's

culture, society, and music.

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[74] This was especially evident during the U.S. Occupation with the RAA establishing segregated entertainment clubs.

[75] Atkins, *Blue*, 42-43.

CHAPTER III

ANIME

A Brief History of Manga

Fifty years ago, the top recreational activity in Japan was reading, and today, it remains in the top five, surpassing movies, music, and shopping.[1] This statistic comes as no surprise, though, as the literacy rate in Japan is high, partly due to Japan being isolated for so many centuries. Because of the lack of colonization, "higher education [in Japan] was rarely conducted in European languages…[which] produced high literacy and united the populace under a common language."[2] Despite being one of the youngest Asian countries, Japan's high literacy rate also stems from its early establishment of texts. The *Kojiki*, the *Nihon Shoki*, and the *Man'yōshū*, were written in the early eighth century. These texts were written on scrolls in a modified Chinese-Japanese language. The introduction of literacy from the Chinese allowed the Japanese to write historical stories, creation myths, and poetry. China introduced Buddhism to the Japanese, and in the twelfth century, Buddhist monks used scrolls to create sequential art, which is described as a "[narrative] format that defines and shapes all comics…presented in sequence across a page."[3] Bishop Toba created *Chōju Giga*, or "animal scrolls," which showed sequences of "expressive and humorous scenes of animals, including monkeys, foxes, rabbits, and toads, acting out the activities and pastimes of members of the clergy and nobility."[4] Unlike

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[1] Kanako Honda, "How Do You Spend Your Leisure Time?—Top 20 Activities in Japan," Medium, https://medium.com/@kanakohonda/how-do-you-spend-your-leisure-time-top-20-activities-in-japan-26d9765a8c2e (accessed August 27. 2018).

[2] Oguma Eiji, "An Industry Awaiting Reform: The Social Origins and Economics of Manga and Animation in Postwar Japan," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 15, no. 9 (April 27, 2017): 3-5

[3] Robin E. Brenner, *Understanding Manga and Anime* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 1.

[4] Brenner, 2.

traditional Western text or comic strips, *Chōju Giga* scrolls read right to left.[5] Buddhist monks primarily used *Chōju Giga* scrolls as part of their cultural and religious studies, yet the practice of reading scrolls soon became public.

Yoshiwara was a "suburb" in the capital city Edo, providing entertainment and artistry through teahouses, restaurants, theaters, and brothels. Artists typically crafted *ukiyo-e* panels to depict the nightlife and beauty of Yoshiwara, and the depiction of life became essential in manga. In the Tokugawa Era (1600-1867), artists experimented with woodblock printing, creating *ukiyo-e*, or "pictures of the floating world," which are "panels of illustration…[filled with] splashes of vibrant color and pattern [which] documented the life and activities of…Yoshiwara."[6] Hokusai Katushika, an artist famous for the woodblock *The Great Wave off Konnagawa*, called his artworks "manga" (1815). Katsuhika's ability to create specific moments in life on woodblocks allowed for the mass production of early manga. Artists compiled their works into bound books, known as *Toba-e* and *kibyoshi*. *Toba-e* were modeled after *Chōju Giga*, containing numerous cartoons, while the *kibyoshi* contained stories depicting everyday life and fables. From there, artists developed more cartoons and comic strips, eventually resulting in the creation of the manga magazine *Shōnen Club* (1914), which regularly published artists' works. The popularity of these comic strips encouraged illustrators to publish books.

Authors were also inspired by *kyōyō-shugi*: "[a] belief that a thorough grounding in the liberal arts was a crucial element in self-improvement and character-building."[7] This belief

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[5] This practice became standardized in manga, with the stories beginning at the back of the book and the panels reading right to left to the front of the book. U.S. distributors initially attempted to reverse the pages so as not to confuse Americans. This practice proved tedious and often altered the readability of the manga panels. All manga, regardless of country of publication, follow the standardized format of right to left. Colette Weil Parrinello, "Manga and Anime Mania," *Faces* 34, no. 4 (January 2018): 34.

[6] Brenner, 2.

[7] Eiji: 8.

originated during the Taisho Era, no doubt influenced by the liberalness of German education. Japanese men "[regarded] western literature as the pinnacle of human cultural achievement."[8] Manga artists surveyed copious amounts of Western literature, music, and films, drawing inspiration from these mediums for their stories.

Though artists could express political disproval in their comics, the prohibitions of World War II condemned them to silence. Artists could either work for the government, by pushing pro-war comics, creating their artwork in secret, or fleeing the country. Then the nuclear bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the fallout of World War II, and the U.S. occupation of Japan all served to change artists in post-war Japan. The U.S. occupation introduced cartoons

> as part of the cultural effort to "defeudalize" Japan by exposing [them] to Western ideals of individualism and freedom. This effort included movie shows that followed the American format of the day: a newsreel, a cartoon, and a main feature. Comic books arrived more informally, in the kit bags and rear pockets of the G.I.s themselves, [and] they quickly made their way into the popular culture of Japan.[9]

As a result of these influences, artists produced red books, or tiny pocket books, which examined the "conflict between man and technology" and the "threat of apocalypse."[10]

These red books allowed artists to regain their creativity following the period of governmental control, and they responded by producing more manga and encouraging new artists. Tezuka Osamu, "heralded as the grandfather of Japanese comics," experimented with the content and format of the red books.[11] Tezuka was a doctor who incorporated history, humanism, and politics into manga. Unlike other artists, Tezuka was influenced particularly by

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Antonia Levi, "The Sweet Smell of Japan: Anime, Manga, and Japan in North America," *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 23, no. 1 (2013): 5

[10] This notion is still present today in manga, though illustrators neglect referring specifically to World War II because of the lasting emotional and physical devastation on Japan. Brenner, 5.

[11] Brenner, 6.

the cinema, particularly animated films by Walt Disney. Tezuka "was entranced by the drama that editing lent to cinematic storytelling" and mimicked those camera angles on his pages.[12] Tezuka believed this technique could be used in a variety of different genres, and instead of writing stories suspending time, he focused on "the passage of time," creating "long story arcs and in-depth character development."[13] He wrote three graphic novels, yet his most revered is *Budda*. Originally appearing in manga magazines from 1972 to 1983, *Budda* focuses on "battles and acts of heroism and tragedy, [yet] also focuses on serious 'adult' themes—love and death; the quest for truth, goodness, and the meaning of life; and…Tezuka's own humanistic interpretation of the Buddha's spirituality."[14] Unlike other manga authors, Tezuka did not use *Budda* to popularize and propagandize Buddhism in Japan. Instead, he desired to share his fascinations with audiences, hoping to engage them with an exciting, adventure-filled story.

Over the next several decades, avid manga readers began desiring more mature content. The stories by Tezuka and others were deemed juvenile, and readers—specifically men—wanted adult stories. Their wishes led to the creation of *gekiga*, or drama pictures, which "[featured] men as heroes…[incorporated] violence, sex, or crime…and embraced antiheroes as protagonists."[15] Since *gekiga* provided an outlet for young men bored with their lives, sales skyrocketed. However, women and female readers were not represented in early manga, and by the 1970s, women joined manga companies to increase manga's demographic reach and bolster sales. The

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[12] Ibid.

[13] The animation style of Western cartoons—such as Betty Boop and Mickey Mouses's iconic large eyes—also inspired Tezuka. He combined Western animation techniques with traditions from Japan's past—such as the *ukiyo-e* panels—which culminated in *Astro Boy* (1952) and *Jungle Emperor* or *Kimba the White Lion* (1954).

[13] Brenner, 7.

[14] Mark Wheeler MacWilliams, "Japanese Comics and Religion: Osamu Tezuka's Story of the Buddha," in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2000), 111.

[15] Brenner, 8.

inclusion of women in the creative process ushered in a new genre: *shōjo*. Unlike the male-dominated *gekiga*, *shōjo* incorporated "tales of a fairy-tale European past…[ignoring] realism and [adhering] to historical fact in favor of drama, romance, tragedy, and fabulous costumes."[16] These genres, including *shōnen*, dominated the manga market, and some of the finest manga would soon dominate another medium.

From the Page to the Screen

In 1937, Walt Disney Productions released *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the first full-length animated film to be in color and have sound. It was a commercial and critical success, influencing many artists to pursue careers in animation and offering a medium for families to experience cinema together. Once televisions became more standard in U.S. and Japanese households in the 1950s, production companies created short broadcasts, much of which merely contained news or advertisements. One of Tezuka's innovations was establishing a "made-for-TV format of 30-minute episodes," which is now common to anime, though these episodes lasted only twenty-three minutes due to advertisements.[17] Because of Tezuka's admiration of Disney's films, his subsequent mimicking of those movies in his drawings, and his ability to match broadcasters' short viewing times, his manga *Astro Boy* translated easily to television and broadcasted from 1963 to 1966. Set in the year 2000, *Astro Boy* features a young boy robot aiming to rid the world of crime and evil. Through the stories of Astro, Tezuka showed Japan that they had the ability to persevere after the devastation of World War II and to "re-invision their country [as] one built on technology, energized through hard work and good will, and devoted to a new world order of machines and peace."[18] Regarded as defining the mecha genre,

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Eiji, 8.

[18] Anne Allison, "Sailor Moon: Japanese Superheroes for Global Girls," in *Japan Pop!: Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, edited by Timothy J. Craig (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 262.

Astro Boy was highly acclaimed and became immensely popular, "despite the drastically simplified animation and low-grade production values."[19] Because of the success of *Astro Boy*, manga became the primary source material for anime, attracting young adult men to the growing industry.

The 1970s paved the path for manga and anime in the "underground of Western culture."[20] Fans translated the anime or simply watched it for the animation style. U.S. distributors initially translated and edited two series, *Macross* and *Mach Go! Go! Go!*, which were later renamed *Robotech* and *Speed Racer*, respectively. However, fans became frustrated with the drastic alterations U.S. distributors made—such as changing aspects of the storyline or dialogue—and the inaccessibility to many other anime.[21] Sociologist Kōichi Iwabuchi described the alteration of imported anime as "cultural odorlessness: the [effort] made to promote Japanese products abroad by reducing or erasing cultural identity.[22]

In 1988, Katsuhiro Otomo adapted his manga *Akira* into a feature film. Regarded by many as the most influential anime, *Akira* "hit like a cultural bomb in U.S. art house movie theaters…[telling] an elaborate science fiction drama featuring a post-apocalyptic Tokyo, rival motorcycle gangs, and a mysterious and mutilating government gone awry."[23] While many who watch the film are unable to describe its basic premise, *Akira* "[shocked, exhilarated,] and left audiences wanting more…anime to feed their desire for more of this newly discovered

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[19] Eiji, 8.

[20] Brenner, 11.

[21] Brenner, 12.

[22] Levi:3.

[23] Brenner, 11.

entertainment."[24] The striking visual style, filled with an array of bright colors and distorted images, astounded audiences accustomed to the simplicity of animation by Disney and Warner Brothers.[25] Building on the cult success of *Blade Runner* (1982), *Akira* provided U.S. audiences with an "otherworldly" or unfathomable scenario: the overwhelming possibility of a "future defined by government control and genetic tinkering."[26]

The next major anime boom in the U.S. was inaugurated by the 1995 film *Ghost in the Shell* by Shirow Masamune.[27] *Ghost in the Shell* focuses on Motoko Kusanagi, a female cyborg tasked with leading Public Security Section 9: a counter-cyberterrorist organization in futuristic Japan. Earlier science-fiction films, such as *Logan's Run* (1976), encouraged the fantastical world American audiences craved, which undoubtedly influenced the popularity of *Akira* and *Ghost in the Shell.* Seeing the success and cult fascination with *Akira* and *Ghost in the Shell*, U.S. film companies continued making dystopian films focusing on government control. Films such as *Total Recall* (1990) and *Gattaca* (1997) fueled this new fascination, though anime's newfound popularity in the U.S. would intensify over the next few decades. While the U.S. only has thirty-two animation studios, Japan has over seven hundred anime companies.[28] The most well-known company in Japan is Studio Ghibli, and this is partly due to writer Hayao Miyazaki's creations. His first feature film, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984), was groundbreaking for its plot,

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[24] Ibid.

[25] At this point, both companies had developed many cartoons in color. However, neither utilized rapid color changes nor colors from the brighter end of the spectrum the way that *Akira* did.

[26] Brenner, 11.

[27] This was adapted from Masamune's manga, published from 1989-1991.

[28] "How to Get a Job in Anime Industry in Japan?," Onegai-Kaeru, https://www.onegai-kaeru.jp/2014/04/27/how-to-get-a-job-in-anime-industry-in-japan/ (accessed December 27, 2018).

animation, and characters.[29] Over the next two decades, Miyazaki wrote and directed some of the most popular anime films in Japan and the U.S.[30]

Music in Anime

Unlike Western film music studies, there is a lack of introductory information for music in anime. Japanese record label Rhino released an anthology titled *The Best of Anime* in 1998, and today, two decades later, it remains the only anime music compilation. Because of the outdated anthology, most consumers scour anime fan sites, hoping to receive show recommendations.[31] The leading contender on most fan sites are Miyazaki and Studio Ghibli. The success of *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* launched a collaboration between Miyazaki and composer Joe Hisaishi, whose compositional style blends European and Japanese classical sounds, minimalism, and electronic music, using the piano as a focal point in many of his works.[32] The popularity of Miyazaki's films combined with Hisaishi's scores showing the significance of music in anime caused many composers and directors to follow suit, placing importance on the theme songs and music.

Unlike music for animation in the U.S., anime music did not mimic, or "mickey mouse," the images on the screen.[33] The music often centers on a single theme that is reiterated or re-

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[29] Though Studio Ghibli was founded just a year after the release of *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, the production company includes it in their output.

[30] These films include: *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), *Porco Rosso* (1992), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *Spirited Away* (2001), and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004). Universally thought of as Miyazaki's greatest film, *Spirited Away* won the Academy Award for Animated Feature in 2003. Today, it remains the only international animated film to win an Oscar.

[31] On most of these fan websites, three shows—*Cowboy Bebop*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Samurai Champloo*— consistently appear within the top five anime soundtracks.

[32] In addition to composing music for anime, Hisaishi most recently worked on the video game *Ni no Kuni: Wrath of the White Witch* (2010) and its sequel *Ni no Kuni II: Revenant Kingdom* (2018).

[33] "Mickey mousing" refers to "the close synchronization between music and on-screen movement."
Neil Strauss, "Tunes for Toons: A Cartoon Music Primer," in *The Cartoon Music Book*, eds. Daniel Goldmark and Yuval Taylor (Chicago: A Capella Books, 2002,: 7.

arranged throughout the anime. Because Japanese view anime as a subgenre of film—such as horror, science-fiction, or comedy—it is logical that composers would compose with the same musical material and create genre conventions. Late Japanese film critic Taihei Imamura (1911-1986) wrote *Manga Eiga Ron* (*Film Theory Book*) in 1941 and "[suggested] that there is an indelible link in Japanese animation between the traditional storytelling format and its music."[34] Film music scholar also Kentaro Imada notes that:

> The tendency in analysing [*sic*] Japanese animation music has been to compare it to a model provided by tightly synchronized Western (especially USA) feature films. As such, Japanese animation is deemed inferior, particularly in respect of its music. Although it is impossible to ignore the influence of Western animation, this may be irrelevant to most contemporary Japanese mainstream productions in terms of music production. While Japanese animation employs Western musical elements, it does so with a specific socio-historical approach and this determines a sound and style that is notably different from US and other western mainstream productions.[35]

Many anime soundtracks combine different genres of music, ranging from Western hip-hop and electronic to traditional Japanese music. This occurs because certain storylines, scenes, and/or characters require a different style of music. However, some anime focus primarily on one or two genres, which are often related to each other and the show.

Most series rely on non-diegetic music, "whose supposed source is not only absent from the image but is also external to the story world."[36] Simply put, non-diegetic refers to the background music accompanying scenes to elicit emotion within viewers. However, a common trend in anime is to create series based solely around the music, incorporating diegetic music, "whose source appears in the image, and belongs to the reality represented therein."[37] These

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[34] Kentaro Imada, "Lupin III and the *Gekiban* Approach: Western-styled Music in a Japanese Form," in *Drawn to Sound: Animation Film Music and Sonicity*, ed. Rebecca Coyle (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2010), 177.

[35] Imada, 185.

[36] Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen,* ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 73.

[37] Ibid.

series generally look at the cultural and emotional impact music has, or had, on Japanese culture. For example, Shinichirō Watanabe adapted the manga *Kids on the Slope* (2007-2012) into an anime in 2012. *Kids on the Slope* looks at 1960s Japan and the influence of jazz on youth culture. Though the series consists only of twelve episodes, each is titled after a jazz standard jazz. For example, episode one is labeled "Moanin'," which was an album and song by Art Blakely and the Jazz Messengers. More recently, anime *Your Lie in April* and *Nodame Cantabile* examine the pressure many Japanese youth undergo studying classical music. These series use classical music to fuel their storylines and to also show the cultural impact this music has had on Japan.[38]

Because directors use music to propel their stories, the melodies, harmonies, and rhythms are often simple, providing audiences an easy entrance to the anime's world. Some series use music atmospherically or aesthetically, while many will create leitmotifs, helping viewers realize important events or people throughout the show. Leitmotifs are common in Western films, with the most recent, notable, and memorable appearing in John William's music for the *Star Wars* franchise by George Lucas. Fans of *Star Wars* will understand plot twists and character developments because of the leitmotifs—such as "The Force" and "Darth Vader's Theme (Imperial March)." Anime composers collaborate with the directors, both seeking to replicate the same passion Lucas and Williams incited with their fans. Because anime episodes typically last approximately twenty-three minutes, with each series containing twenty-six or more episodes, composers will use the same leitmotifs throughout each episode, guiding viewers through plot developments.[39]

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[38] In addition to Western classical music and jazz, other shows examine the lives of pop and rock musicians. These anime include: *K-On!* (girl pop-rock group), *Detroit Metal City* (heavy metal), and *Beck: Mongolian Chop Squad* (rock). Each of these series show the struggles and reception of their musical genre.

[39] Anime films also use leitmotifs. However, the composers for these films will typically compose a single, simple melody that will then be arranged and manipulated throughout the film's soundtrack. For example, in *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), Hisaishi used a simple melodic motif that repeated in variations in new song titles. The use of leitmotifs will be discussed in a later chapter.

Unlike most modern Western television shows, theme songs in anime serve an important role. These songs, combined with a video montage, explain the premise of the series and will sometimes offer clues for events in the series. Just as with U.S. television shows, anime theme songs generally remain the same for the entirety of a series.[40] For example, the longest running anime *Pokémon* uses a catchy pop-rock tune to introduce the series to viewers.[41] Ash Ketchum serves as the show's protagonist, and after receiving a Pokémon named Pikachu from his neighbor Professor Oak, Ash travels the globe, striving to become a Pokémon master by catching, training, and befriending many different creatures. The theme song echoes this sentiment:

> I wanna be the very best,
> Like no one ever was.
> To catch them is my real test,
> To train them is my cause.
>
> I will travel across the land,
> Searching far and wide.
> Teach Pokémon to understand
> The power that's inside!
>
> Pokémon, (Gotta catch them all)
> It's you and me.
> I know it's my destiny.
> Pokémon, oh, you're my best friend,
> In a world we must defend.
>
> Pokémon, (Gotta catch them all)
> A heart so true.
> Our courage will pull us through.
> You teach me and I'll teach you
> (Po-ké-mon) Gotta catch 'em all.

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[40] However, theme songs may change mid-series due to a major plot shift, which prompts viewers to acknowledge a change in the story. For example, this occurs in *Death Note*, which will be discussed in Chapter IV.

[41] The series closely follows the release of new video games. *Pokémon* is currently in season twenty-one.

Every challenge along the way
With courage I will face.
I will battle every day
To claim my rightful place.

Come with me, the time is right.
There's no better team.
Arm in arm we'll win the fight,
It's always been our dream![42]

From the theme song alone, viewers identify Ash as the protagonist and the sole person wanting

to befriend and care for Pokémon, unlike others in the series who only want to use Pokémon for

personal or political gain. Like many other shows, *Pokémon* had the theme song, as well as many

other songs on the soundtrack, written specifically for the series.[43] Directors will also hire

popular artists in Japan to write and record theme songs for their shows. This musical placement

provides extra exposure for the artists and publicity for the anime. For example, in 2008, famous

pop-rock artist T.M. Revolution wrote "Resonance" for *Soul Eater*, an anime focusing on

students eradicating the world of evil souls, transforming their "weapons" into death scythes,

and learning how to do both at Death Academy from Lord Death. By using popular musicians,

anime studios provide exposure for these artists to a new audience, as well as promoting their

new series to the artist's fans.

Some series have theme songs that are less obvious than *Pokémon*'s, but the song still

informs viewers of the basic concept of the show. As previously mentioned, many anime discuss

Japan's past and fictionalize storylines, and directors choose certain genres of music to

emphasize important cultural events in history. For example, Watanabe also directed *Samurai

Champloo* (2004-2005), an anime set during the Edo period that focused on the story of Jin,

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[42] John R. Loeffler and John Siegler, lyrics to "Pokémon Theme," https://genius.com/Pokemon-pokemon-theme-song-lyrics.

[43] Other series that follow this route include *Sailor Moon* and *Attack on Titan*.

Mugen, and Fuu. Fuu, a waitress, was working at a tea shop when a group of samurai started to sexually harass her. Mugen, a poor wanderer, offered to save her if she gave him free dumplings, so she obliged. Mugen attacked the band of samurai, just as a young rōnin—or samurai without a leader—joined in on the fight. Mugen decided Jin was a worthy opponent, and the two began fighting. However, they inadvertently kill a magistrate's son, a crime for which they were to be executed. On the day of their execution, Fuu saves them, asking them to travel with her to find a samurai who smells of sunflowers. *Samurai Champloo* references many factual and historical occurrences in the Edo period—such as Hishikawa Moronobu, a prominent ukiyo-e painter, the persecution of Christians, and Dutch exclusivity in Japan.

Watanabe defined "champloo" as "mixed up" or "to mix"—in Ryuku dialect.[44] This definition accurately describes the mixture of hip-hop and rap aesthetics with samurai culture. *Samurai Champloo* "uses African-American hip-hop to articulate youth-driven Japanese individualism" and "addresses both ethnic and national dynamics, [reinforcing] the synergy between the two cultures."[45] This sentiment is evident throughout *Samurai Champloo*'s soundtrack. The theme song, "Battlecry," written by the late Nujabes, a popular hip-hop artist and record producer in Japan, juxtaposes hip-hop with lyrics reflecting samurai culture during the Edo period:

> Sharp like an edge of a samurai sword
> The mental blade cut through flesh and bone
> Though my mind's at peace, the world out of order
> Missing the inner heat, life gets colder
> Oh yes, I have to find my path
> No less, walk on earth, water, and fire.

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[44] Crystal S Anderson, *Beyond the Chinese Connection: Contemporary Afro-Asian Cultural Production* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 117.

[45] Anderson, 97-8.

The elements compose a magnum opus
My modus operandi is amalgam
Steel packed tight in microchip
On my armor a sign of all-pro
The ultimate reward is honor, not awards
At odds with the times in wards with no lords.

A freelancer
A battle cry of a hawk make a dove fly and a tear dry
Wonder why a lone wolf don't run with a clan
Only trust your instincts and be one with the plan.

Some days, some nights
Some live, some die
In the way of the samurai
Some fight, some bleed
Sun up to sun down
The sons of a battlecry.[46]

Nujabes included the lyric: "My modus operandi is amalgam," which directly references

Watanabe's juxtaposition of genres throughout his anime.[47] In *Samurai Champloo*, the "hip-hop

aesthetics complement Japanese cultural expression."[48] Like most hip-hop songs, their main

purpose is to address political or social issues, yet in this case, "Battlecry" examines the issue

regarding samurai culture.[49]

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[46] Nujabes, lyrics to "Battlecry," https://genius.com/Nujabes-battlecry-lyrics.

[47] Watanabe, with composer Yoko Kanno, frequently mixes several different genres in their shows, with *Cowboy Bebop* being their most well-known and popular anime. The genre mixing and popularity of *Cowboy Bebop* will be discussed in a later chapter.

[48] Anderson, 117.

[49] Besides the opening and ending theme song, *Samurai Champloo* utilizes hip-hop music in every episode. The beginning of the first episode shows a young man beatboxing in present-day (c. 2004) Tokyo, yet a few seconds later, the music and screen scratches, transporting the anime back to the Edo period, and creating a juxtaposition of hip-hop with samurai culture. Background characters also beatbox frequently throughout the series, and in one instance, day laborers hold lumber on their shoulders which resemble boom boxes. The use of rap here, especially with the boom box lumber, symbolizes the impoverished working class. In the music video to Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five's "The Message," members of the ensemble walk around Harlem with boom boxes on their shoulders as they describe the horrible living conditions. *Samurai Champloo* utilizes members of the working class, forced into servitude by the samurai, to create a connection with hip-hop culture.

The few provided examples show the absolute importance music has in anime. Japanese directors and composers work closely together on an anime's soundtrack, hoping to evoke emotional responses from audiences. The three following chapters examine the connections made in each anime, reinforcing the otaku lifestyle with each series' respective choice in music. Each series encourages the otaku lifestyle, as viewers contemplate ethical dilemmas, question their sanity and reason for existence, and carelessly journey through space. The musical choices the composers make in their respective anime reflect these emotions, creating memorable moments within storylines.

CHAPTER IV

DEATH NOTE

Introduction

Since its inception as a manga in 2003, *Death Note* has amassed a cult following, so much

so that production company Madhouse developed *Death Note* into an anime which consisted of

thirty-seven episodes and ran from 2006 to 2007. Following its success as an anime, numerous

versions of *Death Note* developed over the next decade, including a video game for the Nintendo

DS platform, three live-action films released in Japan, a live-action television drama released in

Japan, a musical, and, most recently, a live-action film released by Netflix.

In analyzing the original manga, scholar Susan Napier theorizes that *Death Note*:

has a lot to do with present-day Japan and with its current moral, social, and cultural
dilemmas, such as the use of the death penalty, the fear of crime, the problem of
bullying, and a pervasive sense of meaningless and alienation that seems to affect
increasing numbers of contemporary Japanese.[1]

Napier further notes that death is a prominent feature in Japanese society, not only in popular

culture, but also in everyday life. She elaborates that "bizarre and grotesque murder

incidents…[occurring] over the past decade" often involve juveniles.[2] It is plausible that the

creators of *Death Note* knew the dangers of teenage violence and sought to provide a warning

against committing heinous crimes. Napier states that the "overall effect of the series is…a

symphony or tapestry of intentional deaths, woven into a…morally provocative,

and…entertaining quest/mystery narrative."[3]

However, Dennis Owen Frolich, scholar of mass communications, believes otherwise.

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[1] Susan Napier, "*Death Note*: The Killer in Me Is the Killer in You," *Mechademia* 5 (2010): 358.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Napier: 356.

He finds that *Death Note* serves as a cautionary tale against cults, specifically apocalyptic religion. Apocalypticism, according to Frolich, "is the idea that the end times are intimately connected with God and the judgement of humanity."[4] *Death Note*'s main character, Light Yagami, believes he is the only reason crime and wars cease, because judicial systems often deliberate far too long. Inspired by the book of Revelation, Light views himself as god, punishing sinners who do not repent, with death being the "final and absolute punishment."[5] Light is a narcissistic serial killer who cleverly escapes the law, and viewers must decide whether to applaud Light or condemn him for his crimes against humanity. This choice aligns with the notion that despite Light killing thousands of people, it is acceptable and forgivable because of those peoples' sins or crimes.

The notion of a "Death Note" has spread since the original manga into popular culture. Adolescents create their own "Death Notes" and write the names of others who wrong them. In the United States, high school students can even purchase a "Death Note" from online retailers such as Amazon, and instead of using these books for cosplay, write down names of fellow classmates, teachers, employers, friends, and even family members. In many of these scenarios, the administration expels or reprimands the student because the "Death Notes" resemble a hit list.[6] Adolescents are highly impressionable, and an incredible number of television series incorporate mass school shootings in their plots. A week after the Columbine massacre in 1999, an episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* was delayed because it focused on a student who entered the school with a rifle.[7] In *Degrassi*, a repeatedly bullied high school student decided to shoot the

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[4] Dennis Owen Frohlich, "Evil Must Be Punished: Apocalyptic Religion in the Television Series *Death Note*," *Journal of Media & Religion* 11, no. 3 (July-September 2012): 13.

[5] Ibid, 149.

[6] "Death Note Notebook/Journal," Amazon, http://a.co/d/gZjXL3o (accessed November 27, 2017); Erin Francisco, "10 Times Teens With Death Notes Scared the Hell out of Adults," Inverse Entertainment, https://www.inverse.com/article/35589-10-places-death-note-incidents-real-life (accessed November 13, 2017).

[7] *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, "Earshot," episode 52, aired September 21, 1999.

person who falsely humiliated him in front of the entire school.[8] A similar setting occurring on the CW's *One Tree Hill* portrayed an unlikable high school student who created a list of people and brought a gun to school before ultimately ending his own life.[9] In 2008, two sixth-grade students brought a "Death Note" to school, and the local authorities promptly arrested them, despite their claims of it existing as a joke.[10] A sheriff in Birmingham, Alabama stated that "no matter what age the students are, in light of what has happened recently in…incidents around the country, we consider all threats to be a very serious matter."[11] Students possessing these "Death Notes" either use them as jokes or use them to vent about bullies and adults, the latter of which largely suffer from depression and self-harm.

Although *Death Note* remains one of the most popular anime of all time, its overall plot of mass killing and portrayal of a human as a god, combined with its ironic usage of religious music, conveys a complicated message. The varied types of religious music used in the original *Death Note* heighten Light's position as a god and creates a conversation about the role of media and cults. Viewers are then left confused as to why sacred music is used to symbolize Light when he himself is filled with sin. In this chapter, I will examine how the musical cues incorporating Catholic musical traditions, including the "Kyrie," "Low of Solipsism," "Requiem," "Teleology of Death," and "Death Note Theme" create subtexts to the onscreen action and promote the otaku lifestyle by encouraging the Western fascination with serial killers. These newly composed selections feature monophonic Latin chanting and bombastic orchestral writing, which furthers the godlike agenda. To understand these musical cues, I will provide a

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[8] *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, "Time Stands Still," episodes 66 and 67, aired October 5, 2004 and October 12, 2004.

[9] *One Tree Hill*, "With Tired Eyes, Tired Minds, Tired Souls, We Slept," episode 61, aired March 1, 2006.

[10] Francisco, "10."

[11] Ibid.

basic overview of *Death Note* before discussing the use of religious music throughout the series.

Plot

Death Note focuses on Light Yagami, an exceptionally gifted high school student who is exceptionally bored with everyday life. One day after school, Light observes a black notebook fall from the sky, and he sees an inscription with the words "Death Note" on the book's cover. Examining the blank-paged notebook, Light discovers a set of rules written on the inside cover:

> 1. The human whose name is written in this note shall die;
> 2. This note will not take effect unless the writer has the person's face in their mind when writing his/her name. Therefore, people sharing the same name will not be affected;
> 3. If the cause of death is written within the next 40 seconds of writing the person's name, it will happen;
> 4. If the cause of death is not specified, the person will simply die of a heart attack;
> 5. After writing the cause of death, details of the death should be written in the next 6 minutes and 40 seconds.[12]

Light, believing the book to be a prank, decides to test the theory on a hostage situation reported on the news. The news station shows the criminal's picture and name, so Light simply writes his name in the "Death Note." After forty seconds, the live newscast switches to footage of the hostages frantically escaping the building and the police team discovering the criminal who has been felled by a heart attack. Light realizes the "Death Note" is real and begins pondering the ethical dilemma of the notebook, ultimately deciding to act as "God" and eradicate the world of heinous criminals.

Meanwhile in a place void of life filled with decrepit wastelands, grim reapers, or *shinigami*, waste their days playing games or by watching the daily interactions of humans, waiting to write names in their "Death Notes."[13] In Japanese folklore, the *shinigami* are grim reapers or

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[12] *Death Note*, "Rebirth," episode 1, aired October 3, 2006.

[13] Unlike many Americans who practice a monotheistic religion, most Japanese practice Shintoism, a belief in multiple gods called *kami*: spirits that manifest in everyday things and objects. Shintoism is "deeply rooted in the Japanese people and traditions," believing that "nobody is perfect." A principle Shinto belief is that "humans are…fundamentally good" and evil *kami* triggers humans to act maliciously. People rooted in Shintoism do not

spirits of death.[14] Unlike the grim reapers associated with horror films today, they are merely

mediators of a person's journey from life to death. Ryuk, a *shinigami* bored with existence,

realizes that a human should have found the second "Death Note" he dropped. He descends to

Earth and introduces himself to Light, explaining the list of rules written in the "Death Note."

He notices that Light filled many pages of the "Death Note" in a matter of days, and with the

promise of someday writing Light's name in his own "Death Note," Ryuk decides to observe

and follow Light around for pure entertainment. After reports of the deaths Light has caused,

both discover the nation of Japan divided in two: half live in constant fear of their lives while the

other half admire and worship Light, who they christen Kira (killer). Interpol calls genius

detective L to investigate the Kira killings, and he forms an anti-Kira task force with Soichiro, a

local police officer and Light's father. With the stage set, the series follows Light and L's

tumultuous game of wits, with Light furthering his "God" agenda and L relentlessly pursuing

him.[15]

Title Music

Title songs hold special significance for all anime series, yet rarely do they change

midway through the show's run.[16] In *Death Note*, the original title song, "The World," performed

by Japanese pop-rock group, Nightmare, switches halfway through the series to "What's Up,

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commemorate death, as they consider it impure. In *Death Note*, Ryuk embodies an evil *kami*, preying on pure
humans to further an immoral agenda. "Shinto," Japan-Guide.com, https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2056.html
(accessed November 14, 2017).

[14] Geller, "Shinigami," Mythology.net, http://mythology.net/japanese/japanese-gods/shinigami/ (accessed August
20, 2017).

[15] *Death Note* comprises thirty-seven episodes and aired from October 3, 2006 to June 26, 2007.

[16] The title song and ending song both change in *Death Note*. However, only the title songs will be examined.

People?!," performed by Japanese heavy metal group Maximum the Hormone. The change of

the title song is significant to the plot and mirrors Light's moral and emotional development.

The first title song, "The World," consists of the following text:

In the spreading darkness I exchange a pledge for the revolution
I can't let anyone interfere with it.

The fruit of the future told me
Changing dreams into reality

It's an "ending" to everyone's desires.

In the spreading darkness I exchange a pledge for the revolution
I can't let anyone interfere with it
Someday, I will show you
A world shining with light.[17]

Nightmare's original song is much longer, but *Death Note* re-arranges the lyrics to fit the narrative

of the title scenes. The song opens as Light awakens, visually prompting viewers to perceive him

as a god emerging from his slumber (the narrative of *Death Note* could not possibly exist without

Light realizing his godlike responsibilities to pass judgment on the world). Ryuk appears, and he

and Light re-create Michelangelo's painting *The Creation of Adam*, with the latter being Adam and

the former acting as God. As they extend hands to each other, Ryuk offers Light an apple,

symbolizing the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden. Light walks along

the skyline in his town, holding onto the apple. As Nightmare sings, "It's an 'ending' to

everyone's desires," Light bites into the apple, and the scene pans over the various characters in

Death Note, including the Japanese task force, the *shinigami*, and the people Light will kill. Two

FBI members then recreate Michelangelo's sculpture *Pieta*. As the woman cradles the man,

mirroring Mary holding Christ after his death, we see a foreshadowing of the man's death in the

series. As Nightmare sings, "Someday, I will show you/A world shining," Misa walks through

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[17] Nightmare, lyrics to "The World," http://www.animelyrics.com/anime/deathnote/theworld.htm.

the rain and stumbles upon Light who extends his hand to her. On the words, "with light," the

scene changes to Light floating in front of a painting of an angel. Light's arms stretch out, and

his feet stack on top of each other, creating a connection between him and the crucifixion of

Christ. The text, combined with the visuals, depicts Light as a god before viewers even watch a

minute of *Death Note.*

The title song changes just as Light loses his memory of the "Death Note" in the series

and his plan falls into place. Instead of the hopeful-sounding "The World," "What's Up,

People?!" is quick, sinister, and crude, matching the new title scenes and the back half of the

series. "What's Up, People?!" also uses a harsher vocal timbre, as Maximum the Hormone sings:

> You're handy, handy, hurrah! Handy, handy, hurrah!
> Handy, handy, hurrah! You human (x2)
> Wanna get them mad? Get them mad? Get them mad? People (x2)
>
> WHAT'S UP, filled with uneasiness that crime can never vanish, ever
> WHAT'S UP, filled with uneasiness (Who is down in the trap of resentment?)
> WHAT'S UP, filled with uneasiness that crime can never vanish, ever
> WHAT'S UP, filled with uneasiness
>
> HEY HEY! Human paean, does love escaping make humans nervous? (x4)
>
> WHAT'S UP PEOPLE?! (X4).
>
> Are you worried?[18]

The initial visuals accompanying this song are far more disturbing than those from the first half

of the series and use oscillating color sequences overlaid on Light screaming along with the

music. The percussive aspects of the lyrics and music match scenes that rapidly flip across the

screen as members of the task force and others who stand in Light's way sporadically appear.

This new title sequence borrows from scenes where Light walks along the skyline; however,

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[18] Maximum the Hormone, lyrics to "What's Up, People?!," http://www.rizuchan.com/death-note-whats-up-people/.

Light is ghastly, depicted with red eyes. As Light walks along and Maximum the Hormone sings "HEY HEY! A hymn to humanity. Love has gone. People, are you worried?," three people Light encounters throughout the end of the series lurk in the shadows. These people—Mikami, Kiyomi (Light's college girlfriend), and Mello—die by Light's actions, though each in a different way. As Maximum the Hormone screams, "WHAT'S UP PEOPLE?!," brightly colored scenes of Light, Ryuk, people dying, and the physical "Death Note" intertwine. On the final words of the song, "Are you worried?," a glass depiction of Light shatters and transitions to Light standing alone in a decrepit wasteland, presumably the *shinigami* realm, while the "Death Note" rests in a puddle of water. Though the scenes and music prior to this depict insanity and destruction of morals, the final scene insinuates Light will soon endure his judgment. Though the two title songs and sequences differ in content, they both feature Light as a god, first as a blessing and second as a massacre.

Kyrie

Death Note's music is crafted as a pathway into the series. *Death Note* incorporates the use of the Mass Ordinary and chants from the Requiem Mass, as well as corresponding religious symbolism to develop its narrative. In traditional liturgy, the Catholic Mass consists of five sections or movements: "Kyrie," "Gloria," "Credo," "Sanctus," and "Agnus Dei." However, over time the "Benedictus" separated from the "Sanctus," which eventually led to the six-movement structure that is still in practice today. Each movement is triggered by specific moments in the Catholic service, and because the Mass's overall function was practical, it contributed to the worship of Christ.[19]

In the Catholic Mass, the "Kyrie" consists of three texts: *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie*

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[19] Robert W. Demaree and Don V. Moses, *The Masses of Joseph Haydn: History, Style, Performance* (Frankfort, MI: Classical Heritage, 2008), 110.

eleison ("Lord have Mercy, Christ have Mercy, Lord have Mercy").[20] The "Kyrie" frequently appears throughout *Death Note* with bell chimes added into the score. As a result, the music created a god-man relationship between Light and Ryuk, as seen in the Michelangelo painting referenced in the series's title sequence. Hollywood films regularly incorporate Catholic chant to create a religious atmosphere and invoke God. In 1999, Franchise Pictures released *The Boondock Saints*, a film about Irish American twins who, blessed with God's spirit, become vigilantes and decide to purge Boston of sin. The brothers believe God entrusted this task to them, and to further that connection the film opens in a church service.[21] Gregorian chant accompanies these initial scenes as the brothers pray at the altar, asking for protection and guidance during their journey. An FBI agent pursues them throughout the entire film before ultimately deciding the world will always be filled with injustice, giving the brothers his approval to kill. The religious music in *The Boondock Saints* underscores their devotion to a higher power, while the use of the "Kyrie" in *Death Note* enforces Ryuk's position as a god and forecasts Light's desire to become a god in the new world he wishes to create.

The first episode of *Death Note* begins with the "Kyrie" in the *shinigami* realm as Ryuk views the vast wasteland.[22] Nearby *shinigami* pass the time with meaningless games, and Ryuk declines their offer to join because of his boredom. The story switches to the human realm and focuses Light Yagami in the classroom. A professor says, "Listen for the voice of God then follow it. And know that in time, you will find your salvation." Light, consumed with ennui, watches other students gossip and talk in class, until the professor calls him to translate a passage into English. Light recites: "Follow the teachings of God and receive his blessings. And

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[20] "Kyrie," www.oxfordmusiconline.com (accessed August 20, 2017).

[21] *The Boondock Saints*, directed by Troy Duffy, Franchise Pictures, 1999, opening scene.

[22] *Death Note*, "Rebirth."

so it shall be that the seas will again become bountiful and the raging storms subside." Light is then shown walking home through the city, as news reports of criminals and murders play in the background. Scenes of Ryuk and Light are spliced together, both agreeing that every day is the same and concluding that "[the] world is rotten." On the word "rotten," the "Kyrie" disappears, and a screen titling the episode "Rebirth" appears. The use of the "Kyrie" here foreshadows the transfer of a god's authority, from *shinigami* to human, from Ryuk to Light.

The next day, Light's professor lectures about the extinction of certain species, and Light watches as a notebook engraved with the words "Death Note" falls from the sky.[23] Intrigued, Light picks up the notebook and reads the list of rules on the inside cover. Believing it to be a prank, Light dismisses the "Death Note," yet he still places it in his bag. He goes home after school and, consumed by curiosity, writes the name of a criminal who is holding people hostage on television. After forty seconds, reports frantically explain that the hostages are leaving the building and the criminal suffered a heart attack. Light panics, wondering if this makes him a murderer or if it was a coincidence. He goes to an after-school study session, and later, tests the notebook on a man who is harassing a young woman outside of a convenience store. The man dies from the method Light wrote in the book, and Light hurries back home. There, Light finds Ryuk who explains who he is and the powers enclosed in the "Death Note."

After a montage of Light writing many names in the book, the young man proclaims his vision and method for eradicating the world of evil. The "Kyrie" appears for the second time in the series, just as Light proclaims that his judgment decides who lives and who dies.[24] Ryuk responds that by this action, Light becomes the only evil person in the world. Light dismisses

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[23] Music featuring marimba and synthesized sounds underscores these scenes. The marimba plays repetitive ascending and descending chords, which show Light processing the validity of the "Death Note."

[24] *Death Note*, "Rebirth."

Ryuk's concern, stating that he will "become a God of the new world." The "Kyrie" here presents a dichotomy between two ideas. Light, who is now "God," can have mercy on those he deems as living pure, moral lives or show no mercy towards those he finds have vile, sinful lives. The chanting in the "Kyrie" can either be read as a song of praise for the new god, worshipping and thanking him for his compassion, or it can be heard a plea, begging god to cast forgiveness over one's crimes against humanity.

Other uses of the "Kyrie" in Japanese-inspired media can help unlock the filmmaker's intentions here. In the 2014 remake of *Godzilla*, the "Kyrie" from György Ligeti's *Requiem* accompanies a menacing scene.[25] In *Godzilla*, the titular monster and two Massive Unidentified Terrestrial Organisms (MUTO) fight in the city of San Francisco. Military forces attempt to use nuclear warheads to eradicate them but fail when one of the MUTOs shelters a warhead, which could destroy the city. As the sun sets, a U.S. Navy strike team parachutes into San Francisco accompanied by Ligeti's "Kyrie" underscored by a team member's breathing. With the exception of their flares, the sky is pitch black, and the strike team drops past the MUTOs. Here, the "Kyrie" exists not only as a warning against evil, but also as a prayer for protection. While the harmonic uncertainty of the vocal cluster chords correspond to the uncertainty of the city and people's existence in *Godzilla*, *Death Note*'s use of the "Kyrie" gives certainty to this new god and shows that the music exists as a prayer from the people of Japan.

At the start of Episode 2 "Confrontation," Light is in class again and recites "Having finally made his dream a reality, he was overwhelmed, both by the magnitude of his achievement

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[25] Ligeti wrote this movement as a fugue and incorporated his technique of "micropolyphony," with "high [levels] of melodic and rhythmic activity that characterizes the individual parts…and are at times more clearly audible…than elsewhere." Eric Drott, "Lines, Masses, Micropolyphony: Ligeti's Kyrie and the "Crisis of the Figure," *Perspectives of Music* 49, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 9; *Godzilla*, directed by Gareth Edwards, Legendary Pictures, 2014, HALO jump scene.

and by the joy and happiness that it brought him."[26] After his recitation and praise from his professor, Light sits back in his seat and a faint smile comes to his lips. Though this scene is unscored, these recitations coincide with Light's growing narcissistic, degenerate feelings, which are further heightened and highlighted through the use of the "Kyrie." The professor's dialogue and Light's recitation combined with the "Kyrie" support the moral questions the series poses, as well as highlighting Light's god agenda.

News of the frequent killing of criminals attracts the attention of Interpol and the police force throughout Japan. They discuss the murders, and many rationalize that the killings are not technically "murders" because only criminals die. After some speculation involving the FBI and CIA, a man named Watari enters the room and explains that L, an internationally mysterious genius detective, will be helping with the murders.

Shortly after this scene, Light is in his room and explains to Ryuk how and why he hid the "Death Note." News reports flood the screen, stating more suspicious heart attacks afflicting prisoned criminals and people in Japan walk the streets and voice their concerns about the killings. Light, on his computer, finds websites dedicated to him calling him Kira, which in Japanese sounds like the English word "killer." Ryuk reads the website title: "The Legend of Kira the Savior," and a bell chime signifying the start of the "Kyrie" sounds. Here, the "Kyrie," combined with the text "Christ have mercy," represents the beginning of Light's salvation or wrath. Light blissfully enjoys the praise many give him online, explaining that it is human nature to desire someone like Kira. From this point, Light exclusively refers to himself as Kira, fully believing he is the one true god who brings mercy through death.

A news report interrupts the broadcast television, and a man named Lind L. Tailor

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[26] *Death Note*, "Confrontation," episode 2, aired October 10, 2006.

identifies himself as "L." He antagonizes Light, calling Kira evil. Light forcefully responds to the television that he is justice and the only god who can decide who is truly evil. As he shouts, a choir in the background vocalizes and harmonizes on the syllable "ah," underscoring his notion of being a god. Light snatches a pen and hovers above the "Death Note," and the "Kyrie" begins again, signaling Kira's deadly mercy as he writes L's name in the book. After counting down, L visibly collapses on television, suffering from a heart attack, and the bell chime from the "Kyrie" resounds again, showing Kira's lack of mercy.[27] Only on episode two of the series, do viewers see that Light lacks compassion and will eradicate any standing in his path to creating a new world.

When Light is finally imprisoned under suspicion of being Kira, he relinquishes ownership of the "Death Note" to Ryuk, causing him to forget everything about the *shinigami* and the notebook.[28] Any human can touch the "Death Note" and see the *shinigami*, but only one true owner of the notebook can exist at any given time. Once L and the task force exonerate Light of being Kira, L asks Light to join them in their search for Kira. They determine that Kyosuke Higuchi, a member of the Yotsuba Group, is Kira and, with the Japanese police, corner Higuchi on a bridge. They obtain the "Death Note," and after L proclaims that *shinigami* do exist, Light grabs the notebook, and his memories are restored.[29] He believes that L and Watari are close to realizing who he is, so Light forces Rem, another *shinigami*, to write Watari and L's name in her death note.[30] Light cradles L's body until he dies, then runs to find Rem's remains because

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[27] Lind L. Tailor was simply a criminal masquerading as L. The real L is still alive, and this revelation will be discussed in the next section.

[28] *Death Note*, "Decision," episode 16, aired January 30, 2007.

[29] *Death Note*, "Revival," episode 24, aired March 27, 2007.

[30] *Death Note*, "Renewal," episode 26, aired April 10, 2007.

she dissipated into sand after using her "Death Note." As Light grabs Rem's "Death Note," the

"Kyrie" returns, we realize the "Kyrie" was gone while Light did not possess the "Death Note."

Accompanied by the "Kyrie," Light victoriously declares his annihilation of all things evil and

himself the true god of a new world, the one who brings death and can give mercy.

After L's death, Light deems himself the new L in Episode 26, "Renewal," and he and

the task force continue in their search for Kira.[31] Light appoints Teru Mikami as a "disciple,"

bestowing Ryuk's "Death Note" onto him. Episode 32, "Selection," centers entirely on Mikami,

his resolve for justice through the legal system, and his devotion for Kira.[32] The majority of this

episode features baroque music, even in the newly composed music like composer Yoshihisa

Hirano's "Mikami's Concertino," written in the baroque style with strings and basso continuo.

Sonata No. 4, Op. 2: I. Adagio by Michel Blavet accompanies Mikami recounting his failed

attempts as a lawyer to preserve justice; however, the "Kyrie" enters in as Mikami begins to talk

about Kira. Mikami believes that Kira has been watching over him and punishing the evil around

him. He receives a package from Kira containing a "Death Note," and Mikami is euphoric,

believing himself to be blessed and recognized by god to share his eternal power in eliminating

the world of evil. Mikami repeatedly states, "Delete, delete, delete," as he writes names into the

notebook while Ryuk lurks in the background. At this point, the "Kyrie" glorifies Light/Kira

and creates a culture of faith and belief surrounding him, borrowing the pleas of the "Christ,

Have Mercy," from the Catholic liturgy and transferring its sentiment to Light/Kira. Mikami

truly believes in the gospel of Kira, and the "Kyrie" invites others into following. He believes

Kira changed his life and gave him the power to effectively rid the world of evil, forgoing all

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[31] Ibid.

[32] *Death Note,* "Selection," episode 32, aired May 22, 2007.

other responsibilities to join Kira's "cult."

In episode 37, "A New World," the task force finally realizes that Light is Kira.[33] Various agents attempt to handcuff and subdue him, but Light wildly dodges their efforts. Once he becomes lucid, Light laughs uncontrollably and reveals himself as Kira, a god. His eyes turn red as he taunts the agents, believing that they have no power over him, no power over the one true god. Light cannot comprehend the thought of losing and the "Kyrie" accompanies his final reigning moments. However, the "Kyrie" also suggests that redemption is upon them; Kira will soon be stopped and eliminated from the world, causing everyone to rejoice and renew their faith in the true God instead of living under the fake one's wrath.

Low of Solipsism

In addition to borrowing sounds and meaning from older religious works, Hirano composed new works for the series as well. "Low of Solipsism," one such work, frequently occurs throughout *Death Note* as Light skillfully evades arrest, but in order to show how it is used, I will examine selected scenes. Solipsism refers to an idea of disregarding other's emotions, thoughts, and expressions and thinking that one's own ideas are the only conceivable emotions, thoughts, and expressions.[34] Ancient Greek philosopher Gorgias of Leontini summarized solipsism in four points:

> Nothing exists; even if something exists, nothing can be known about it; even if something can be known about it, knowledge about it [cannot] be communicated to others; and, even if it can be communicated, it cannot be understood.[35]

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[33] *Death Note,* "A New World," episode 37, aired June 26, 2007.

[34] Stephen P. Thornton, "Solipsism and the Problem of Other Minds," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed August 21, 2017, http://www.iep.utm.edu/solipsis/.

[35] "Solipsism: Do Others Exist in Your Mind Only?," Mind and Philosophy, http://mindandphilosophy.blogspot.com/2012/07/solipsism-do-others-exist-in-your-mind.html (accessed August 21, 2017).

In *Death Note*, Light decides that his belief of the world's rotten state applies to him because he and his thoughts are the only things with which he identifies. Others who are not egocentric like Light do not view the world as he does, further underscoring Light's belief that he is the one true god.

Hirano's "Low of Solipsism" starts in the low octave of the string bass section, and a harmonic cacophony of the rest of the orchestra gradually enters, culminating with a bell chime. The strings play a driving melody as the same group of sounds filter in and out, until the choir enters chanting the words "Kira, Deus Vici Canti," roughly translating to "Kira, Our God will conquer victoriously." These words repeat twice, and the initial section of "Low of Solipsism" concludes with the choir proclaiming "Kira, Deus" as the strings play the driving melody into a bell chime. The melody from Hirano's "Kyrie" enters here, and the male choir sings only on "ah," rather than the actual text of the "Kyrie." The strings accompany this section, blending together the idea of solipsism and Light's belief of being a god.

After writing two names in the "Death Note," Light initially feels remorse for killing. Ryuk explains to Light why *shinigami* have "Death Notes" and why he traveled to the human realm. He opens Light's "Death Note" and realizes that Light wrote many more names since the initial two killings. Light explains that he initially struggled with the idea of losing his soul and morals, yet concluded that the world is rotten and justice must prevail over evil. He wants the world to fear and know him and decides that no other person would be strong enough to eradicate the world of evil, leading to the first appearance of "Low of Solipsism." A montage of Light furiously writing down names in the "Death Note" occurs while "Low of Solipsism" rumbles in the background. The chanting establishes Light as a god early in the series, proclaiming he will be victorious over all others.

After killing Tailor on national television, Light laughs triumphantly until the news

switches to a screen with an elaborate "L," and the real L reveals himself through his distorted

voice. L proclaims that Tailor was an inmate scheduled to be executed and his arrest was not

announced in any reports. L baits and antagonizes Light, asking him to kill him. He also tells

Light that he knows Kira lives in the Kanto region of Japan and promises to find and kill him

for his crimes. Talking to himself and Ryuk, Light accepts L's challenge, promising to kill him

first, and the "Low of Solipsism" enters, yet again proclaiming that Kira will be victorious.

In the third episode, "Dealings," news sources inform Light that the police believe Kira

is a high school student because of the killing pattern.[36] Ryuk laughs and says Light will be

caught soon enough. Light begins to recite the rules of the "Death Note," and asks Ryuk to

confirm the rules with him, and Light realizes he can write the exact time of death, meaning he

can alter the killing pattern. The "Low of Solipsism" enters in again as Light walks to school and

participates in various activities while twenty-three prisoners succumb to heart attacks. The

police realize Kira changed his pattern and kills a new person every hour. L still believes Kira is a

student, but the killings demonstrate he can choose the method and time of death. The chanting

is particularly effective here, showing that Light will overcome any and all obstacles in search of

a better world.

Under direction from L, FBI Agent Raye Penber follows Light, hoping to uncover

evidence of the latter being Kira. Light, aware of Penber investigating his every move,

orchestrates a "random" bus jacking and obtains Penber's name in the process. Soon after, Light

disguises himself and follows Penber around a train station. Light appears behind Penber and

proclaims that he is Kira, proving it by pointing out a man sweeping outside of a local shop and

stating that he will die in a matter of seconds. After tricking Penber into writing the names of

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[36] *Death Note*, "Dealings," episode 3, aired October 17, 2006.

other FBI agents in the "Death Note," Light kills Penber. Penber's fiancé, an ex-FBI agent, becomes suspicious and decides to investigate his death.[37] Light finds her at task force headquarters, and he tells her he's been in contact with L and asks for identification. She gives him her name, prompting Light to write her name in his "Death Note" and Ryuk to laugh deviously.[38]

After forty seconds elapse, the woman does not die, and Light realizes she gave him an alias. Light feverishly attempts to stall the woman from approaching L or talking to the police, convincing her she will not have the opportunity to talk with a member of the task force. This allows him to tell her he is a member of the task force, and he invites her to become a member—but only if she provides him with a driver's license. She awkwardly tells him she gave him an alias, and "Low of Solipsism" enters. She theorizes Light is Kira, yet is uncertain of this fact, which forces her to release her identity to uncover Penber's death. In turn, Light must believe that her second name will be correct. Light feigns knowledge of this fact, ensuring her he values security. Choral chants powerfully accompany this scene as she hands over her license, at which point the "Low of Solipsism" cuts out. Light writes her name down and announces he is Kira, and the music begins again. From his perspective, Light's rise to becoming a god is undoubtedly attainable because of his intellectual confidence. The use of "Low of Solipsism" shows the progression of Light's narcissistic qualities and his belief that nothing matters except his reign over all.

After the deaths of the FBI agents, L decides to install cameras and microphones in the director's house and Soichiro's home.[39] Upon entering his room after a day of school, Light

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[37] *Death Note*, "Unraveling," episode 6, aired November 6, 2006.

[38] *Death Note*, "Overcast," episode 7, aired November 14, 2006.

[39] *Death Note,* "Glare," episode 8, aired November 21, 2006.

realizes someone was in his room earlier that day, and he quickly leaves to the bookstore. Ryuk follows him and is confused by Light's purchase of an adult magazine, but Light realizes he is under surveillance and attempts to look like a typical high school boy. Light tells Ryuk they can no longer converse inside the house nor can Ryuk eat apples since they disappear. Ryuk quickly states that he needs to eat apples or he suffers from withdrawal. Light proposes a deal: if Ryuk can find the locations of the cameras and microphones hidden in Light's room, Ryuk can have apples. They return back to Light's house, and after dinner, Light grabs a bag of potato chips from downstairs and retreats back to his room to study. In a voiceover, Light explains that he looks like a typical high school student studying, yet a small television is hidden inside the bag, and Light is able to write the names of criminals without raising suspicion, prompting "Low of Solipsism" to enter in again because Light/Kira will be victorious under any circumstance. This scene matches the montage from the first episode when Light proclaims his judgement. Nothing will stand in the way of Light's agenda for the world, and "Low of Solipsism" effectively enhances that fact.

After Misa Amane reveals herself to be the second Kira, Light decides to use her for his own personal gain.[40] She interrupts Light and L during a conversation and because of her *shinigami* eyes, she is able to see L's true name. Light tells Misa that if she truly loves him, she, along with her *shinigami* Rem, will eliminate L. Time passes, and Ryuk asks Light why L is still alive, suggesting that Light views L as his friend. Light scoffs, and "Low of Solipsism" enters, while the scene changes to Light standing over the city. His hair is a deep red as he explains how he plans to obtain information from L before his death. Because of his narcissism, Light cannot fathom the idea of having a friend or even entertain the thought of showing compassion

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[40]*Death Note*, "Confession," episode 13, aired January 9, 2007.

towards others. "Low of Solipsism" shows Light always looking towards the future and

anticipating others and reinforces his belief that he is god and the only one who exists or

matters.

Requiem

While the traditional Catholic Mass celebrates God and his glory, a Requiem celebrates

the dead, sending the departed into eternal rest. The opening lines of a traditional Requiem are:

> Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine.
> Et lux perpetua luceat eis,

which translates to:

> Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord.
> And let perpetual light shine upon them.[41]

A Requiem exists as a prayer for the dead, and while the "prayer cannot change a person's

spiritual destiny of heaven or hell…it is limited to the saved and excludes the unsaved."[42] In

Death Note, Hirano's "Requiem" consists of only voices with no instrumental accompaniment

and occurs only once in the series. The "Requiem" is tonal and polyphonic.

Once Light regains his memories of the "Death Note" in episode 24, "Revival," he

begins killing again.[43] In episode 25, "Silence," Light sees L outside in the rain and goes to

retrieve him for a task force meeting.[44] They go inside to dry off, and L wipes Light's feet as the

sun shines off on Light, a Christological connection to Jesus washing his disciple's feet. Light in

turn extends a towel towards L and attempts to dry off his hair. L apologizes and tells Light

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[41] Kees van der Vloed, "Latin Text," Requiemsurvey.org, http://www.requiemsurvey.org/latintext.php (accessed August 21, 2017).

[42] James B. Gould and Jerry L. Walls, "Surveying the Present: Prayer for the Dead in the Contemporary Church," in *Understanding Prayer for the Dead: Its Foundation in History and Logic* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 41.

[43] *Death Note*, "Revival."

[44] *Death Note*, episode 25, "Silence," aired April 3, 2007.

"[they] will be parting ways soon." Light then convinces Rem to write Watari and L's names in her death note, causing L to collapse and suffer from a heart attack. Light holds onto L as the latter realizes his theory was correct: Light is Kira. Light's face distorts devilishly, appearing almost unhuman. Once L finally dies, Light's composure changes, and he begins to scream as the "Requiem" enters. Light and the other task force members search for Rem and discover her pile of sand, and they resolve to find Kira and to avenge L's murder, with Light assuming L's role on the task force. The use of the "Requiem" glorifies L as the true protagonist of *Death Note*. No other death in the series receives a prayer, and L's death suggests the loss of the rightful advocate for justice.

Teleology of Death

Hirano's "Teleology of Death" often occurs when a *shinigami* explains the rules of the "Death Note" or makes itself known to humans. Teleology refers to the "use of design or purpose as an explanation of natural phenomena," and in *Death Note,* the "Teleology of Death" explains the use of the book. The song starts with low chanting by a male chorus, while brass and percussion augmented with piano accompany. The snare drum combined with the chanting creates a processional-like effect, reminiscent of religious rituals. The opening procession continues as the male chorus sings:

> Liber scriptus proferetur
> In quo totum continetur
> Unde mundus judicetur.

The text translates to:

> The written book will be brought forth
> In which all is contained
> From which the world shall be judged.[45]

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[45] Michael Martin, "Dies Irae: Day of Wrath," Preces-latinae.org, http://www.preces-latinae.org/thesaurus/Hymni/DiesIrae.html (accessed November 10, 2017).

and derives from the *Dies Irae*, which combines Almighty judgment for sinners with salvation for believers. In *Death Note*, the notebook is the written book and functions as the *shinigami*'s judgment. Though Light retains ownership of the "Death Note" throughout the series, Ryuk and the other *shinigami* ultimately decide the fate of humans. Ryuk allows Light to use the "Death Note" for entertainment, but Ryuk promises to end Light's life by writing his name in his own "Death Note" whenever he desires. The "Death Note" judges all, regardless of their level of sin or faith.

Ryuk tells Light the difference between *shinigami* and humans is that *shinigami* expand their lifespan by stealing the remaining years a human possesses.[46] Ryuk informs Light that he knows the exact point a human will die and knows their names because of his eyes, and for a price, Light too can gain the power of the *shinigami* eyes, inevitably resolving his predicament with L. As Ryuk reveals that in order to obtain the eyes, Light must give up half of his remaining lifespan, the "Teleology of Death" accompanies his surprising announcement. The music reflects Light's desire to control the world and everyone in it—or, the book and its encompassing knowledge.

The task force arrests Misa under suspicion of being the second Kira, so Light devises a plan, and both forfeit ownership of their "Death Notes," erasing their memories of the murders, *shinigami*, and "Death Note."[47] Once the task force clears Light and Misa from suspicion, Rem finds Misa and touches her with a piece of paper ripped from the "Death Note."[48] Because she does not possess the "Death Note," Misa does not remember any of the events surrounding the book, but she does see Rem and is visibly frightened. "Teleology of Death" enters, as Rem

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[46] *Death Note*, "Confrontation."

[47] *Death Note*, "Decision," episode 16, aired January 30, 2007.

[48] *Death Note*, "Revival."

explains to Misa who she is and that Light is Kira. Once the police and task force handcuff Higuchi, members of the task force start grabbing the notebook. "Teleology of Death" slowly enters in as members are shocked to see Rem materialize before them. This signifies the possibility of death and informs the task force and L of the existence of *shinigami* and the premise of the "Death Note."

"Teleology of Death" sounds for the final time as Soichiro makes a deal with Ryuk to obtain the *shinigami* eyes.[49] After L's death, two successors, Near and Mello, attempt to continue with the Kira investigation, though they take different approaches. Mello joins forces with the mafia and stages kidnappings, while Near forms the Special Provision for Kira (SPK) in the United States. Soichiro enters the abandoned building where Mello is hiding, and Soichiro looks at Mello and recites his name: Mihael Keehl. Mello's eyes widen as he realizes death is upon him, and Soichiro tauntingly says he is close to writing his full name in the "Death Note." Light and other members of the Japanese task force hear Soichiro's hesitation to write Mello's true name in the "Death Note," and the cue ends as a member of the mob rolls up from the ground to shoot relentlessly at Soichiro. "Teleology of Death" re-introduces the power of the *shinigami* and "Death Note," and Soichiro's death effectively ends the song's existence.

Death Note Theme

The final religious music fittingly comes from the Catholic Mass for the dead. The *Dies Irae* text is a reflection on the Day of Judgment and started as a part of the funeral Mass.[50] Judgment exists for all, as the *Dies Irae* tells us, but a glimmer of hope and redemption exists later in the text, furthering faith in God and His teachings. The *Dies Irae* often accompanies

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[49] *Death Note*, "Father," episode 29, aired May 1, 2007.

[50] Gould, 42.

malevolent scenes in films. In 2000, the trailer to Japanese dystopian film *Battle Royale* used

Giuseppe Verdi's setting of the *Dies Irae*.[51] In the film, the population in Japan consists mainly of

teenagers, and the adults decide to make them kill and fight each other. The trailer shows many

disturbing images of students shooting each other and a teacher throwing a knife at a student's

head, effectively killing her. In the 2012 Quentin Tarantino film *Django Unchained*, Verdi's *Dies*

Irae similarly accompanies one of the most striking, and disturbingly comical, scenes of the

movie. A crowd of Ku Klux Klan members arrive on horses, and they ride down a hill to the

strains of the *Dies Irae*, excitedly yelling in preparation of their raid.[52] Both of these instances use

the *Dies Irae* to promote horror and devastation.

In *Death Note,* only the first two verses are used from the *Dies Irae*, which are:

Dies irae, dies illa
solvet saeclum in favilla:
teste David cum Sibylla.

Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando judex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus!

These verses translate to:

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
shall Heaven and Earth in ashes lay,
as David and Sybil say.

What horror must invade the mind
when the approaching Judge shall find
and sift the deeds of all mankind.[53]

The "Death Note Theme" combines the first two verses of the *Dies Irae* with elements of "O

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[51] *Battle Royale*, directed by Kinji Fukasaku, Toei Company, 2000.

[52] *Django*, directed by Quentin Tarantino, Columbia Pictures, 2012, raid scene.

[53] Martin, "Dies Irae."

Fortuna," the first movement from Carl Orff's cantata *Carmina Burana* (1935).[54] "O Fortuna"

and the "Death Note Theme" both start with syllabic chanting of their respective texts, with the

former using percussion to accent the text and the latter using bell chimes (by this point in the

series clearly coded as portraying Light as god). Though the text differs between both works, the

combination of these two elements is especially significant in the following scenes.

The "Death Note Theme" makes its first full appearance in Episode 26, "Renewal," after

L dies. Light stands above the task force building while Ryuk muses about life becoming boring

again. Light disagrees, stating that he will "[show Ryuk] the creation of the new world."

Lightning flashes through the air, the scene cuts to Light flexing his hand, and the "Death Note

Theme" enters. The initial chants of the *Dies Irae* illuminate the book and Light preparing

himself to write names, creating his own Day of Judgment. The music then switches to a driving

rhythm in the orchestra, while the voices continue chanting the text from the *Dies Irae.* The

music matches Light furiously filling pages of his "Death Note" with names of criminals, those

who defied him, and members of the Yotsuba Group. As the music continues, a voiceover of a

newscaster reports that while many fear Kira, there were just as many who praise him, stating

that "Kira's will [is] the only law." At this point, the music ceases, highlighting Kira's Day of

Judgment upon those who betrayed him.

The "Death Note Theme" makes its second most prominent appearance in the final

episode, "A New World." After accompanying Light laughing and explaining to the detectives

that he is Kira and god of the new world, the music switches from the aforementioned "Kyrie"

to the chanting from the "Death Note Theme" with no instrumental track. Light explains the

world's rotten state, and he claims his responsibility of ridding the world of its crimes and

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[54] "O Fortuna" appears commonly in films, often emphasizing important revelations and, later, parodying comical, yet stressful situations.

creating a new one, no matter the cost. The monophonic chanting here suggests Light's own Day of Judgment is imminent and reflects on the judgment Light cast over many years. Light believes he is the one true judge and god of the world, yet Near disagrees, calling him a serial killer. With that stark accusation, the "Death Note Theme" concludes. A member of the task force repeatedly shoots Light as he attempts to write their names on a torn page of the "Death Note." Judgment upon Light looms, and even though Light escapes the building, Ryuk fulfills his promise, writing Light's name in his "Death Note."

Conclusion

After its conclusion as an anime in 2007, many film companies in Japan created live-action adaptions of *Death Note*. Following suit in 2017, Netflix partnered with Adam Wingard, director of horror films such as *You're Next*, to create an American live-action adaptation of *Death Note*. The premise of the story remained the same, yet in the American adaptation, Light Turner focuses more on vengeance than on fulfilling a self-indulged "God" complex. Because of Wingard's experience in indie-horror films, the music in the American adaptation of *Death Note* combines indie music, 80's music, and covers of well-known songs, but ignores the religious music that enriched the anime, and therefore omits the religious subtext.

The opening title music in Wingard's film is the song "Reckless" by 1980s rock band Australian Crawl. The chorus, "So, throw down your gun/Don't be so reckless," potentially conveys the recklessness of Light and Mia as they kill hundreds of people. The opening sequence of the film shows Light and Mia at high school, with the former helping a student cheat on his homework. Australian Crawl's song lessens the horror aspect of the film and promotes it as a tragic teen romance, an aspect that Ohba's original story did not contain. In the anime, Light manipulates Misa, promising her romance and a life together, yet uses her to further his own agenda. Light is also extremely confident in himself and his plans, unlike

72

Wingard's Light who second guesses himself and relies on Mia to murder people mercilessly. Both title songs in the anime reflect Light's confidence and show the dichotomy of questions presented to viewers: do they condemn Light for his actions or cheer him on? Wingard's film heightens the teen romance aspect with his choice of music, while the anime skillfully uses religious music to further Light's role as god.

Catholicism in Japan accounts for less than one percent of the population, the result of 400-year-long persecution.[55] People in Japan practiced Catholicism in secret, living in fear of execution. During the Meiji Restoration, Catholic missionaries returned to Japan when the ports re-opened, but Catholicism failed to establish itself, as many Catholics remained in hiding.[56] Because of Shintoism's long history, the Japanese mainly disregard Catholicism or any other monotheistic religion. Christianity highlights following the Bible and God's teachings, which will grant salvation and provide many blessings. Shintoism, however, does not follow the teachings of any God, but instead presents a common understanding of a world filled with spirits.[57]

Death Note combines Shinto beliefs with Catholic music. Shintoism refutes evil *kami*, and the destruction Light creates, with subtle guidance from Ryuk, could result only from something unknown, such as Catholic music. Ryuk's presence alone can trigger sin in anyone, and luckily, only Light sees the "Death Note" falling from the sky. As aforementioned in the introduction, teenagers across the globe worship Light and *Death Note*, while adults fear its "teachings" and

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[55] Alexander Martin, "Catholicism Fails to Take Root in Japan," The Wall Street Journal, https://blogs.wsj.com/japanrealtime/2014/08/13/catholicism-fails-to-take-root-in-japan? (accessed November 14, 2017).

[56] Anthony Kuhn, "Driven Underground Years Ago, Japan's 'Hidden Christians' Maintain Faith," https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/10/11/446865818/driven-underground-years-ago-japans-hidden-christians-mainta8in-faith (accessed January 7, 2019).

[57] Studio Ghibli and director Hayao Miyazaki released *Spirited Away* in 2001, a Japanese animated film about a young girl transported to a spirit world who must return her parents back to their human forms and save the other spirits. The young girl purifies many spirits who inhabit nature, and in doing so, she attempts to preserve the integrity of humanity.

underlying messages. The use of Catholic music, and its corresponding relationship to Western culture, could potentially cause the Japanese people to fear the ideas of monotheistic religion showing the destruction and horror one god can create.

The music in *Death Note* encourages viewers to support Light's manipulative and sadistic intentions. Furthermore, because of Netflix originals such as *Making a Murderer* and podcasts including "My Favorite Murder," Western audiences crave stories about serial killers, not for the horrible acts men and women committed, but for learning their origin stories. *Death Note* completely fits this cult fascination with serial killers, with the only difference here being that audiences often support Light's scheme. This creepy, unusual obsession with serial killers lures viewers into the otaku lifestyle and provides a new medium to indulge in these horrifying tales.

CHAPTER V

NEON GENESIS EVANGELION

Introduction

Neon Genesis Evangelion, regarded as one of the most influential anime from the 1990s,

redefined the mecha genre and the anime art form. Animator Anno Hideaki, who gained

prominence in the 1980s for his work on the ending scenes to Hayao Miyazaki's film *Nausicaä of*

the Valley of the Wind, unfortunately suffered from clinical depression, a condition that manifested

in his later works.[1] Hideaki disapproved of the otaku lifestyle of the Japanese regarding anime

and manga because of its obsessive nature. This critique, along with his depression, resulted in

Evangelion: a series filled with "simple but dark graphics and photo montages, disturbing

voiceovers, and disorienting music."[2] Released in 1997, *Evangelion* enraptured young audiences

because of its incorporation of J-pop and Western classical music in the mecha canon, rivaling

Sunrise's *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* (1979-1980).[3] The final two episodes of the series

disappointed fans, and their persistent death threats and letters of disappointment caused

Hideaki and Gainax to re-imagine the ending of *Evangelion*, the resulting in two films: *Death and*

Rebirth and *The End of Evangelion*.

Death combined the first twenty-four episodes of *Evangelion* into a seventy-minute long

movie. To create a feature film out of eleven hours of material, *Death* comprises four sections,

each focusing on one of the main characters: Shinji, Asuka, Rei, and Kaworu. Each section

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[1] James Gates, "Evangelion, Depression, and Why Hideaki Anno is the Lars Von Trier of Anime," Cultured Vultures, https://culturedvultures.com/evangelion-depression-hideaki-anno-lars-von-trier-anime/(accessed October 25, 2017).

[2] Susan Napier, "When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and Terminal Identity in 'Neon Genesis Evangelion' and 'Serial Experiments Lain'," *Science Fiction Studies* 29, no. 3 (November 2002): 428.

[3] Though released nearly two decades prior, the soundtrack to *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* mostly incorporates pop, rock, and jazz. Some tracks contain influence from Western classical music, but Takeo Watanabe and Yushi Matsuyama composed each song, differing greatly from *Evangelion*'s use of pre-existing Western classical music.

depicts its character playing a string instrument, which ultimately allowed Hideaki to conclude

Death with a string quartet. Hideaki spliced and re-told events from the first twenty-four

episodes of the series to show the psychological and emotional turmoil each character faces.

Rebirth consists of twenty-seven minutes of new animation and also serves as the first part of *The*

End of Evangelion.

Still receiving pressure from fans, Hideaki and Gainax worked on the *Rebuild of*

Evangelion: four feature films retelling the original story with a new ending. The project began

with *Evangelion 1.0: You are (Not) Alone* (2007), and the films *Evangelion 2.0: You Can (Not) Advance*

and *Evangelion 3.0: You Can (Not) Redo* followed shortly after in 2009 and 2012, respectively. The

fourth and final film in the series *Evangelion 3.0 + 1.0* is still in production with an unknown

release date. Because of the length and magnitude of the *Evangelion* saga, I will focus on the first

two films—*Death and Rebirth* and *The End of Evangelion*—and their use of Western classical music

and influence from popular music. The musical choices made in *Evangelion* effectively shows the

emotional and mental turmoil characters face throughout the series.

Plot

As with *Death Note*, *Evangelion* is wholly apocalyptic, set in 2015 after a catastrophic event

known as the Second Impact annihilated most of the world.[4] Shinji Ikari is a teenage boy who

receives an invitation from his estranged father, Gendo, who is the commander of an

organization called NERV, to live with him. Immediately after his arrival, Misato Katsuragi, a

NERV employee, escorts Shinji into an Evangelion Unit (EVA), a mechanized robot created by

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[4] The Second Impact resulted from an expedition to Antarctica, led by members of NERV, who attempted to retrieve Adam, the first Angel and creator of Angels three through seventeen. Their attempts resulted in an explosion that shifted the Earth's axis, destroying the polar ice caps, yet NERV still managed to secretly transport Adam back to Tokyo.

NERV to fight the Angels.[5] The Angels are massive lifeforms who descend to Earth, hoping to instigate the Third Impact: an apocalypse to rid the world of single human existence and to instead merge all lifeforms together. Each of the seventeen Angels manifests itself in a different shape and are "said to be 99.89 percent compatible with human DNA," and NERV created the EVAs to destroy the Angels.[6] Unlike other heroic mecha series, such as *Mobile Suit Gundam*, Shinji is a less than ideal protagonist. Only after receiving death threats from his father does Shinji reluctantly fight in the EVA and defeat an Angel. Two additional teenagers, Rei Ayanami and Asuka Langley, also pilot EVAs, and NERV deems them, along with Shinji, "children," descendants of Lilith, the second Angel and creator of Lilin, or humans.[7] Throughout the series, Shinji, Rei, and Asuka fight the Angels in the hopes of saving humanity.

Title Music

Like many other anime, the theme song to *Evangelion* contains influence from J-pop. However, Hideaki initially wanted to use an excerpt from Alexander Borodin's *Polovetsian Dances* because he felt it matched the mature and complex ideas in the anime. Because *Evangelion* broadcast during daytime television for children, the network thought a mecha anime with Western classical music would confuse teenage audiences. TV Tokyo requested an upbeat song, and Toshmichi Ōtsuki composed *Zankoku na Tenshi no These* or "Cruel Angel's Thesis." The original version of the song included a male chorus, yet Hideaki requested a female voice to

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[5] With the exception of EVA Unit-01, which Shinji pilots, all other EVA units derive from Adam, making the EVAs more "humanlike" rather than robots.

[6] Napier: 425.

[7] Christian symbology, especially the cross, frequently occur throughout the series: Lilith resides underneath NERV headquarters on a cross; near the finale of *The End of Evangelion*, Third Impact begins, and the manufactured EVA units revolve around Shinji, each in the shape of a cross; and when Lilith merges with the EVA units, Shinji's EVA is crucified on a cross, turning into a Tree of Life.

"emphasize maternal affection," as a major theme in the series is a desire to reunite with one's mother.[8]

The montage of scenes in the opening title sequence are mild, and instead splice together the different characters throughout *Evangelion*. A single disturbing image exists in the title sequence: a quick shot of Shinji's EVA unit's hand covered in blood. Despite this single image, the title sequence, accompanied by "Cruel Angel's Thesis," promises an action-packed mecha. The music is upbeat, based in a major tonality and a standard four-piece rock band ensemble with a small brass band. As the music gains traction, images flicker on the screen, matching the rhythmic hits of "Cruel Angel's Thesis." Furthermore, the lyrics to "Cruel Angel's Thesis" are hopeful:

> Young boy, like a cruel angel's thesis,
> Live up to be a legend!
>
> Even though clear blue winds
> Beat on the door of my heart,
> You just smile, looking straight at me
> Too involved in yearning for
> Something to hold on
> The innocent eyes still know nothing of fate yet.
>
> But someday you will notice
> On those shoulders of yours
> There are strong wings
> To guide you to the far future.
>
> A cruel angel's thesis
> Will someday fly high from the window
> If memories are betrayed by
> The overflowing, burning emotions.
> Holding the sky in your arms,
> Young boy, shine like a legend.[9]

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[8] Hideaki Anno, liner notes to: *Refrain of Evangelion*, Yoko Takahashi, Geneon 5250.2, CD, 2003.

[9] Oikawa Neko, lyrics to "Cruel Angel's Thesis," http://www.animelyrics.com/anime/eva/ngetnshi.htm.

The lyrics tell Shinji that he has the power to change the world, therefore he should depend less on others. The pair of "strong wings" to guide him through life represent the EVA unit Shinji pilots, which contains his mother's soul, the result of an unfortunate scientific experiment.[10] The fate of the world and human existence rests solely on Shinji. During one of the final scenes of *The End of Evangelion*, Shinji changes his mind and does not want to fade from existence, believing that pain and joy are both important in life. Because of his rejection of the Third Impact, Shinji fades back into existence with Asuka lying beside him. Shinji fears being alone in the world, and despite his complicated relationship with Asuka, he craves her companionship and strangles her, hoping to "revive" her and have "something to hold [onto]." He fears Asuka's rejection but ultimately decides fear and heartache are necessary in life.

It could be said that Lilith, or his mother, sings to Shinji. Lilith inhabited Earth and created Lilin to populate the land, and because she created Shinji, she wishes for him to succeed and to accept mankind's flaws. Shinji hardly remembers his mother, Yui, and despite everything his father puts him through, he still craves Gendo's affection and approval. After years of ostracizing Shinji, Gendo invites him to live with him, yet Shinji realizes that his father merely wants to use him as an EVA pilot. Asuka and other classmates cannot fathom why Shinji receives preferential treatment. Like Asuka, Shinji lacks confidence not in his talent, but in his ability to please others.

Western Classical Music

The String Quartet

Because Hideaki re-worked twenty-four episodes into a feature film, he needed a link to weave the main characters' stories together. His initial desire to have a nationalistic Russian

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[10] This occurred in the aforementioned Second Impact. After creating EVA Unit-01 from Adam, NERV embeds Yui's soul into the EVA.

classical composition at the forefront of *Evangelion* culminated in a soundtrack containing

Western classical music.[11] Furthermore, the Western classical music chosen for *Evangelion* is

firmly at the center of the Western canon. Regarded as the "father" of the string quartet, Franz

Joseph Haydn established the four-piece string ensemble because string instruments are often

the "most representative of the human voice, with their singing, expressive nature—as the

quartet combination encompasses the four standard ranges of the human voice used in choral

writing: sorprano, alto, tenor, and bass."[12] As previously mentioned, each of the characters plays

a tune before the start of their string quartet rehearsal, signifying the coming of a performance

that will bring the destruction of the world. The use of each character's respective choice of

instrument "elliptically [comments] on the characters' interrelations and on their functions

within a group."[13]

      After showing a brief summary of the events to occur in *Death*, Shinji walks into an

auditorium, and text appears, stating he is "cello, fourth string." As the credits roll, Shinji plays

Johann Sebastian Bach's Suiten für Violoncello solo Nr. 1, G-dur, BWV. 1007, I. Vorspier until

the first launch sequence of his EVA. The cello's timbre is dark and lush and often gets

compared to a human voice.[14] In fact, Shinji misses his mother and plays the cello as an attempt

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[11] However, the majority of the soundtrack contains music composed by Shirō Sagisu. Born in Tokyo to a manga artist and animator, Sagisu composed many soundtracks to various anime, such as *Bleach*, *Attack on Titan*, *Berserk*, and all of the films in the *Evangelion* canon. Neil Z. Yeung, "Shiro Sagisu," AllMusic. https://www.allmusic.com/artist/shiro-sagisu-mn0001319511/discography (accessed November 2, 2018).

[12] Bradley Strauchen-Scherer, "Happy Birthday to Papa Haydn, Father of the String Quartet," TheMetMuseum, https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/of-note/2014/haydn-birthday (accessed November 2, 2018); Kelly Michaela Curran, "Postmodernism and the Professional String Quartet" (bachelor's thesis, Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts: Edith Cowan University, 2010), 5.

[13] Dani Cavallaro, *The Art of Studio Gainax: Experimentation, Style, and Innovation at the Leading Edge of Anime* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2009), 79.

[14] "Cello—Sound Characteristics," Vienna Symphonic Library, https://www.vsl.co.at/en/Cello/Sound_Characteristics/ (accessed November 2, 2018).

to connect with her. Scenes of Shinji's first outing in an EVA appear, and the "story" shifts to Misato. Shinji lives with her, and it is often thought that Misato replaces his mother. More of Shinji's personality arrives after Misato's backstory, showing the former acknowledging his misgivings. Shinji runs away, only to return to NERV and Misato, apologizing and saying that he will unwillingly pilot the EVA, prompting Misato to tell him he can leave and that no one is forcing him to be there. The cello returns now, with Shinji playing the opening solo in the first movement to Antonín Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B Minor, op. 104. Dvořák's concerto contains lush melodic and harmonic lines and features the technical prowess of the cello. By adding in Dvořák's masterpiece, viewers see that Shinji's love for the cello is the only aspect of his life he can control. The reconstruction of Shinji's storyline in *Death* depicts him as the calmest character, rivaling the distraught psyches of Asuka and Rei.

Asuka then enters the auditorium, greets Shinji and tells him that cellos are easy because they only have to play arpeggios, prompting the text: "violin, second string" and Bach's Partita III für Violino Solo, E-dur, BWV. 1006, III. Gavotte in Rondo. Most are familiar with the first movement, Prelude, with the third movement being the second most popular of the suite.[15] Throughout the course of the series, Asuka struggles with her independence and her competitiveness with others. She constantly tries to impress Shinji with her abilities, and many describe her as "self-absorbed, egotistical, and twisted." In the first scene of her section, Asuka lies in a bathtub after slicing her wrists, stating that she "[cannot] be the second child anymore," because she cannot fathom the idea of being second to anyone, as in the string quartet. Asuka is "constitutionally hell-bent on asserting her superior worth…[seeing] music as just another means

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[15] Scott Workman, "J.S. Bach's Lute Suite BWV 1006a: A Study in Transcription," *Indiana University Graduate Research Journal* 1 (2014): 109.

of flaunting her skills."[16] By playing a spirited, high-energy piece, Asuka shows her determination to outshine others—the first violin or other children—yet also shows the psychological toll she endures. Asuka's section depicts her declining pride, as she continuously falls second to Shinji and Rei.

Asuka's section ends on a conversation between her and Rei about the former's failure as an EVA pilot, and the scene switches to Rei walking into the auditorium for quartet rehearsal. She is "viola, third string," and unlike her two teammates, Rei simply plays a tuning note, and the scene quickly shifts to her story. By only playing a tuning note, Rei asserts herself as "habitually compliant," ready to accomplish the task set before her.[17] The viola is often underrated and overlooked in classical music, correlating to Rei's treatment in the series. It is revealed that Rei too is a clone of Shinji's mother, Yui. Gendo combined Yui's DNA with Lilith, and multiple clones of Rei exist in NERV, all of which are empty vessels should Rei fail during a mission. Rei questions her memories and thoughts, wondering if they are hers or another Rei's, and she rejects Gendo's dream of the Human Instrumentality Project, instead deciding to reunite with Lilith and start the Third Impact. In an attempt to save Shinji's life from an Angel attack, Rei sacrifices herself, blowing up the EVA she pilots. She wakes up in a hospital as Shinji visits her, and she states she does not remember anything and must be the "third one," or third clone. Rei emotionally detaches herself from Shinji and Asuka, and her playing the viola shows that she is useful when necessary, but does not need to exist.

Kaworu, the final member of the string quartet and the fifth child, arrives at the auditorium. He will be "violin, first string," and after a quick tuning note, he asks, "Shall we

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[16] Cavallaro, 79.

[17] Ibid.

begin?" Shinji starts playing Pachelbel's *Kanon, D-dur*. Pachelbel's polyphonic canon shows how intertwined the four children are. The others join in, and a montage of the high school occurs. The ensemble ends after zeroing in on classmate Toji Suzuhara. Toji and Shinji fight during the beginning of the series, but they soon become friends and confide in each other. Though Toji is not a member of the string quartet, he is the fourth child and pilots EVA Unit-03. Unfortunately, the thirteenth Angel infects Toji's EVA, taking over its control system, prompting NERV to order Shinji to eliminate the EVA. Shinji, though unaware of Toji residing inside the EVA, refuses to fight, as EVA Unit-03 exists as a "sibling" to his unit. Gendo overrides Shinji's EVA unit, causing it to go into berserk mode and annihilate Toji's EVA. Filled with grief over possibly killing Toji and losing his only friend, Shinji visits a nearby crater. Kaworu emerges and presents himself as a true friend to Shinji. Even though Kaworu was an Angel in disguise, he guided Shinji and left a lasting impression on him, a prominent feature of a first violinist. Because of Kawuro's guidance, Shinji gains the confidence to save the human race, convincing himself that life has meaning and people can change for the better.

Ode to Joy

Towards the end of *Death*, Shinji feels lost and depressed after inadvertently injuring one of his classmates. His relationships with Asuka and Rei are strained, and his with his father is non-existent. While visiting a crater and musing about life, Shinji hears someone, Kaworu, humming Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" from the final movement of his ninth symphony. Kaworu says the song he was humming "is good" and "singing brings joy and revitalizes the human soul." They exchange pleasantries, and for the first time, Shinji feels appreciated by another person and develops a strong friendship with Kawuro, with the two spending many hours together. When NERV calls on Shinji and the other pilots for synchronization tests with their EVA units, alarms sound throughout the control room, and Kaworu reveals himself to be the

seventeenth angel, synching with Asuka's EVA as she lies in a hospital bed. The vault leading to

Terminal Dogma, the "sanctuary" that Kaworu believes houses Adam, opens, prompting

Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" to spill forth. Many films incorporate Beethoven's masterpiece in

moments of fulfillment and resolution, including a similar scene in the 1988 film *Die Hard*.[18] The

film stars Bruce Willis as NYPD Detective John McClane, who, along with other citizens, is held

hostage at the Nakatomi building by German terrorist, Hans Gruber. Gruber interrogates the

building owner for the access codes to the vault, which houses millions of dollars. Throughout

the film, McClane attempts to subdue the Germans, and due to the persistence of the FBI, a

utility worker shuts off power to the Nakatomi building, effectively opening the vault to Gruber

and signaling "Ode to Joy," as the Germans have reached their destination.

> Once Shinji is sent to stop Kaworu, the baritone on the soundtrack sings:
>
> Oh friends, not these sounds!
> Let us instead strike up more pleasing
> and more joyful ones!
>
> Joy!
> Joy![19]

The placement of this text corresponds with Shinji's disbelief that his one true friend is an Angel

and Kaworu's plan of luring Shinji into Terminal Dogma. Kaworu believes he is helping Shinji

by eradicating the world of humans by starting the Third Impact. The baritone continues to sing:

> Joy, beautiful spark of divinity,
> Daughter from Elysium,
> We enter, burning with fervor,
> heavenly being, your sanctuary!
> Your magic brings together
> what custom has sternly divided.
> All men shall become brothers,

---

[18] *Die Hard*, directed by John McTiernan, Gordon Company and Silver Pictures, 1988, Nakatomi Vault Opening Scene.

[19] All text translations in the "Ode to Joy" section are taken from the provided subtitles on the DVD. *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Death and Rebirth*, DVD (Manga Video, 2002).

wherever your gentle wings hover.

as the other members of the choir join. Kaworu explains that the EVA units and Angels both derive from Adam, the first Angel. One of the primary goals of the Third Impact is to absolve all human lifeforms into one stream of consciousness. Kaworu states that "this is mankind's fate," and "the thread of human hope is spun into practice."

They continue their descent into Terminal Dogma, yet Kaworu realizes Lilith resides underneath NERV headquarters, and humans, known as Lilin, derive from her. After eliminating Asuka's EVA, Shinji grabs Kaworu and questions him about his betrayal. The music shifts, and as Kaworu explains his meaningless existence, the choir sings:

> Be embraced, you millions!
> This kiss is for the whole world!

He tells Shinji that death is his only freedom and wishes for Shinji to kill him. If not, Kaworu will initiate the Third Impact, effectively ridding the world of worthless humans and restoring power to the Angels. He believes humans need the future and need freedom in order to survive. He thanks Shinji, stating his life has meaning since meeting him. The choir then sings, "Brothers, above the canopy of stars/Must dwell a loving father." Tormented with the idea of killing someone who reciprocates his love, a still image of Shinji's EVA holding onto Kaworu fills the screen for a full minute. Shinji must decide if Adam and the Angels should return to their rightful place on Earth, and as the choir asks, "Do you bow down Before Him, you millions?," Shinji kills Kaworu. When Kaworu first decided to enter Terminal Dogma, he wanted to unite everyone, effectively stating that "all men shall become brothers," yet he realizes that humans have more to live for than his single existence. Because only one of the lifeforms can exist on Earth, it is assumed that Adam, the "loving father," can be forgiving of humankind and allow them to remain. Shinji killing Kaworu on those final words suggests a desire to live and hope for

humankind's improvement, refusing to "bow down before [Adam]" and wanting to continue through life's labors.

Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" holds special significance to the Japanese, a significance that enriches its use in *Evangelion*. Introduced by German prisoners of World War I, the song's text and sense of accomplishment attracted Japanese audiences. They regularly began touring "Ode to Joy" at festivals around the country, effectively placing it in the "Japanese canon" by the 1960s. Today, thousands of Japanese people, ranging from amateurs to professionals, congregate each winter to sing "Ode to Joy," as it "[honors achievements] and [the] overcoming of hardships throughout the year."[20] By incorporating "Ode to Joy" in *Evangelion*, Hideaki establishes a rapport with the Japanese people, showing that even though the events unfolding seem disastrous, Shinji will prevail and overcome anything.

<u>Air</u>

After Kaworu's death, Shinji falls into a deep depression, and Asuka remains in the hospital. However, SEELE, a secret organization that funds NERV's research, grows tired of the latter's progress and attacks their headquarters, sending out nine EVA units manufactured by them in hopes of triggering the Third Impact. The idea is that members of SEELE would merge with their respective EVA and once the Third Impact occurs, they would remain, effectively becoming gods of a new world. NERV members place Asuka in her EVA unit and plunge her into the bottom of a crater, and after her constant pleas to escape death, she realizes her mother also resides in her EVA. The plug connecting her EVA's power supply to NERV separates,

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[20] Otter Lee, "A Japanese Choir of 10,000 Sings Beethoven for the Holidays Every Year," AsianCrush, https://www.asiancrush.com/japanese-choir-of-10000-sings-beethoven-for-christmas/ (accessed November 2, 2018).

giving Asuka only five minutes to destroy all nine SEELE EVA units. At this point, Bach's "Air" from his third orchestral suite plays.

"Air" is more well-known as *Air on G String* in an arrangement created by August Wilhelmj. *The End of Evangelion* uses Wilhelmj's popular rendition. *Air* consists of a simple melody, with the focus residing in the bass line, which provides harmonic motion. While Asuka fights the SEELE EVA series, Gendo and Rei enter Terminal Dogma, preparing to merge with each other and Lilith. Ritsuko Akagi, a scientist at NERV and former lover of Gendo, awaits their arrival and prepares to kill him with the help from her mother, Naoko. Like Shinji's mother, Naoko exists in Casper, a section in a computer system called the MAGI. This computer system controls NERV and maintains the EVA series, and Ritsuko plans to blow up NERV with help from the MAGI. However, the MAGI—her mother—fails her, and Ritsuko ultimately blames that failure on Naoko's love for Gendo. He shoots Ritusko, and the music fades out.

The simplicity of *Air* anempathetically accompanies Asuka mercilessly slaughtering the SEELE EVA units. French film critic Michel Chion refers to anempathetic music as music that "seems to exhibit conspicuous indifference to what is going on in the film's plot, creating a strong sense of the tragic."[21] Furthermore, anempathetic music emerges from watching an individual's story develop, causing it to appear "mechanical or robotlike in its failure to adjust to changes in the surroundings."[22] Although Asuka physically appears crazed, her psyche is calm, matching the calmness of *Air*. As mentioned in the string quartet section, Asuka, in fantasy or reality, is second to all others. She desperately tries to become "first," reflected in the choice of

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[21] Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, edited and translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 221.

[22] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 160.

Air. Shinji hides near his EVA as Asuka struggles to save NERV from SEELE's EVAs. *Air* serves as her defining moment, a chance for her to prove her worth not only to Shinji, but also herself. She realizes she has the confidence to be "first violin" and to forge her own destiny. To create continuity, *Air* fades into the background as Ritsuko encounters Gendo in Terminal Dogma. In the world of *Evangelion*, once Asuka achieves confidence and success, Ritsuko must fail, and *Air* is her lament. Ritsuko believes that she constantly lives in Naoko's shadow, unable to obtain Gendo's love and the ability to refine the EVAs.

Jesu, meine Freude

Shinji decides that the world would be better without any pain and does not care if he or anyone else exists, and with this decision, the animation ceases and switches to live-action, a startling move for anime in the 1990s. This section opens on an empty concert hall, a reflection of the string quartet performed in *Death*, followed by a montage of everyday life in Tokyo accompanied by Bach's *Jesu, meine Freude*, or "Jesus, My Joy." Bach adopted Johann Franck's hymn into a funeral motet, and *Evangelion* uses a piano arrangement of the work.[23] The text of *Jesu, meine Freude,* written as if a person is addressing Jesus, asks for His protection against danger and death, and for His blessings:

> Jesus, my true pleasure,
> Of my heart the pasture,
> Jesus, my delight,
> Ah how long, how long now
> Is my heart made anxious
> As it longs for thee!
> God's true lamb, my bridegroom thou,
> More than thee to me on earth now
> Shall nought be more treasured.[24]

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[23] The piano holds special significance in Japanese culture, as many households possessed a piano. See Chapter II "Music and Culture."

[24] Johann Franck, text to *Jesu, meine Freude*, http://www.uvm.edu/~classics/faculty/bach/BWV227.html.

Even though the music is purely instrumental, the text and meaning behind *Jesu, meine Freude* is significant. Shinji decides everyone should dissolve into liquid and no longer exist individually, and scenes of only Tokyo's buildings, trains, and empty swings accompany the music.[25] After a minute-long montage, a dense crowd of people walk on the street, and Shinji asks, "what are dreams?" The concert hall returns, yet this time, it is filled with people, and the music fades out as Shinji tells Rei he is unsure of reality and how to achieve happiness. Rei, who joined with Lilith, now serves as God to humans and guides Shinji through his realizations. The others who dissolved accepted their fate, yet Shinji still struggles with life's purpose. *Jesu, meine Freude* remembers those who left Shinji, but also serves to remind him that God—Rei/Lilith—will always be there for him.

Komm Süsser Tod

Translating to "Come Sweet Death," the newly composed *Komm Süsser Tod* occurs as the Third Impact begins. Hideaki wrote the following lyrics:

> I know, I know I've let you down.
> I've been a fool to myself
> I thought that I could
> live for no one else.
> But now through all the hurt and pain,
> It's time for me to respect
> the ones you love
> mean more than anything.
>
> So with sadness in my heart
> I feel the best thing I could do
> is end it all
> and leave forever.
>
> What's done is done, it feels so bad

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[25] This section is similar to a scene in 1991's *Terminator 2*: *Judgement Day* directed by James Cameron. The sequel follows Sarah O'Connor's efforts to save her son, John, and deter Skynet's mission of initiating the apocalypse via a terminator. Midway through the film, Sarah dreams of children playing at a playground, only to be wiped away from a devastating explosion: the apocalypse initiated by Skynet. *Terminator 2* also shows the devastation and emptiness of the apocalypse, albeit in a disturbing, catastrophic way. *Terminator 2*: *Judgement Day*, directed by James Cameron, TriStar Pictures, 1991, Playground Scene.

what once was happy now is sad
I'll never love again
my world is ending.

I wish that I could turn back time
'cause now the guilt is all mine, can't live without the
trust from those you love.

I know we can't forget the past,
you can't forget love and pride,
because of that, it's killing me inside.

It all returns to nothing,
it all comes tumbling down.
It all returns to nothing,
I just keep letting me down.

In my heart of hearts,
I know that I could never love again.
I've lost everything
everything, everything
that matters to me,
matters in this world.[26]

Despite the pessimistic lyrics, *Komm Süsser Tod* contains an upbeat melody and cheerful

accompaniment, filled with standard pop music harmonies and instrumentation. Upon reading

the title of the song, many recall Bach's "Komm Süßer Tod," an aria from the *Musicalisches*

Gesangbach celebrating the transition from death to heaven. *Evangelion*'s *Komm Süsser Tod* reflects

death positively, albeit in a setting of negative text. The lyrics match Shinji's irrational fear of

unrequited affection, while the music reflects the positive aspects of death. *Komm Süsser Tod*

encapsulates heartache, as Shinji lost all those he loved, including his mother and Kaworu. Rei,

as Lilith, cannot understand how humans can inflict pain on each other, and she decides to

eliminate the human race, effectively returning them back to a sheltered state in which they

could no longer harm others. Rei creates a Tree of Life out of Shinji and his EVA and begins

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[26] Shirō Sagisu, lyrics to *Komm Süsser Tod*, http://www.animelyrics.com/anime/eva/kommsusser.htm.

dissolving the human lifeforms into liquid. Still unable to handle rejection from Asuka or others, Shinji decides it is best to "end it all and leave forever." As the others dissolve into liquid, they are met with memories of their loved ones, transitioning them through Third Impact. However, in Gendo's case, he is ultimately "killed" by Shinji in his EVA since he failed him as a father. The world "turns to nothing" as humans cease to exist.

Though it is probable that Bach wrote *Komm Süßer Tod* introspectively, reflecting on a personal tragedy, he wrote it at the behest of the church.[127]However, the same cannot be said for Hideaki. His mental state shows in the lyrics, through the words "I just keep letting myself down." Because of the pressure from fans to re-do the ending to *Evangelion,* Hideaki used *Komm Süsser Tod* as a plea for forgiveness. The first two lines of the song, "I know, I know I've let you down/I've been a fool to myself," potentially reflects Hideaki's disappointment in himself towards his fans.

Conclusion

Evangelion has maintained a lasting effect on anime fans across the globe over the past two decades. Many watch the series out of devotion to the mecha genre, while others watch it for its powerful exploration of psychological and emotional issues it deals with. Hideaki's decision to splice the original twenty-four episodes into seventy minutes of material was risky and created continuity issues in the overarching plot, but it allowed viewers to understand *Evangelion* on a much deeper level, with the string quartet section offering insight into the characters' minds. Most anime broadcasted throughout the 1990s contained little to no classical music and *Evangelion* references the two most prominent composers in the Western world as a signal of its artistic aims.

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[27] Walter Emery and Christoph Wolff, "Bach, Johann Sebastian," Grove Music Online, www.oxfordmusiconline.com (accessed November 2, 2018).

The music of Bach and Beethoven, considered foundational to the Western canon, continues to be performed throughout the world, often with their music serving as a person's introduction to classical music. Viewers of *Evangelion* may not necessarily enjoy listening to classical music, but know of Bach and Beethoven. Hideaki desired to create a memorable series, one that pushed the boundaries of the traditional mecha genre with its use of classical music. Fans of *Evangelion* may not be able to fully explain the meaning behind the series, but they can remember and identify Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and Bach's *Air*, which remain culturally significant in popular culture.

The popularity of *Astro Boy* and *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* introduced audiences to the mecha genre, yet *Evangelion* transcended this genre entirely. By using classical music, especially that of Bach and Beethoven, Hideaki heightened and transformed the mecha genre from people heroically saving the world to people who struggle with their innermost desires. Upon first-watch, viewers may be unable to describe the overall plot of *Evangelion* but they enjoy seeing giant mechanized robots fighting. This fascination also stems from the Japanese-American *Transformers* franchise which features seemingly ordinary cars transforming into giant robots. Despite its complicated and psychological undertones, *Evangelion* invites viewers into the otaku lifestyle and shows them that a series can simply be more than giant fighting robots.

CHAPTER VI

COWBOY BEBOP

Introduction

Twenty years after its initial broadcast, Shinichirō Watanabe's *Cowboy Bebop* and its music by Yoko Kanno remains one of the most influential anime of all time, one that has influenced animators, composers, and musicians.[1] Watanabe believes music in media should support the narrative and this belief is evident not only in *Cowboy Bebop*, but also in other works such *Samurai Champloo,* which features hip-hop and rap accompanying samurais living in the Edo period, effectively showing the "trappings of modern western culture."[2] Watanabe has called himself and his staff "bebop musicians" because "[they] didn't want to make anime in a pattern that was already set."[3] *Cowboy Bebop* combines tropes from science-fiction and westerns: a futuristic space world filled with spaceships and life on other planets and bounty hunters. Because of Watanabe's desire to create a new genre unlike other science-fiction western anime, "*Cowboy Bebop* freely samples from martial arts movies, crime thrillers, cyberpunk novels, film noir," and classic country western films rooted in science-fiction.[4] Because these genres contain elements of wandering, Kanno's decision to score *Cowboy Bebop* primarily with bebop, a genre filled with wandering through different harmonies, textures, and timbres, is justifiably sound.

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[1] John Bull, "Yoko Kanno: The Greatest Composer You've Never Heard of," Medium*,* https://medium.com/lapsed-historian/yoko-kanno-the-greatest-composer-youve-never-heard-of-b452f64acc72 (accessed May 28, 2018).

[2] Rose Bridges, *Yōko Kanno's Cowboy Bebop Soundtrack*, ed. Noriko Manabe (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), 12.

[3] Bridges, 7.

[4] Crime thrillers and film noir are especially evident in the opening sequence to *Cowboy Bebop*, as well as the theme song "Tank!" S. Andrew Granade, "'Some People Call Me the Space Cowboy': Sonic Markers of the Science Fiction Western," retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/38629097/_Some_People_Call_Me_the_Space_Cowboy_Sonic_Markers_of_the_Science_Fiction_Western?auto=download: 21.

Cowboy Bebop utilizes different genres of jazz throughout the series, calls episodes "sessions," and borrows many album or song titles, such as Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody," for the titles of those sessions. Watanabe's choice to call them sessions further "[indicates] their affinities with improvisatory jazz performances."[5] Throughout *Cowboy Bebop*, the characters revisit their past memories, with Spike's history being the most prominent, providing a leitmotif for the concept of memory. The series also parodies well-known films and their respective music, yet mocks them to offer comedic relief before serious developments in the storyline. Session 11 "Toys in the Attic," mimics Ridley Scott's 1979 film *Alien,* yet combines the science-fiction and horror genre with comedy. The incorporation of Western country music also supports the narrative of *Cowboy Bebop*, showing the dichotomy of restless, space-bound bounty hunters. In this chapter, I will examine country western music, music coded to nostalgia and tranquility, music accompanying Faye, and the corresponding film and musical parody existing in "Toys in the Attic."

Plot

Cowboy Bebop follows bounty hunters Spike and Jet as they travel around space in their ship "Bebop." Along the way, they encounter and befriend many who travel through space, including Ein, a corgi; Faye Valentine, a woman with a gambling problem and troubled past; and Edward, a young child who excels in internet hacking. Unlike *Death Note* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Cowboy Bebop* contains no "true" plot; instead, it focuses on Spike wandering from story to story, much like traditional cowboys who never settle in one place for long. Only two storylines hold significance in *Cowboy Bebop*: the first revolves around Spike's search for his lover Julia and his attempt to outrun Vicious, a gang member of the Red Dragon Syndicate. Spike's

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5 Bridges, 8.

story encompasses the mid-season finale—Sessions 14 and 15—and the finale—Sessions 25 and 26. The second storyline focuses on Faye and her quest to discover her repressed memories, which resulted from being frozen after a tragic accident. Her story is told through many sessions towards the back half of the series. Both storylines serve to highlight the general concept of memory, as it is a common theme in Faye and Spike's backgrounds.[6] Though *Cowboy Bebop* contains no "true" plot, each session contains music that furthers its internal storyline and characteristically develops "Bebop's" crew.

Title Music

The lack of plot in *Cowboy Bebop* correlates with its erratic theme song. Kanno's "Tank!" is arguably one of the most memorable anime theme songs of all time, situating itself as a favorite among anime fans and a standard for jazz bands across the country. Kanno scored "Tank!" for a 1930s swing band, including acoustic guitar, double bass, bongo, and shaker. Kanno and her band The Seatbelts recorded "Tank!" originally as background music, but Watanabe decided to use it as the title song because of its "[vigorous]…spirit of brass bands," and because "Tank's!" bombastic nature presents *Cowboy Bebop* as a hip, action-packed series.[7] *Cowboy Bebop* uses an abridged version for the title sequence. "Tank!" combines elements of bebop and pop culture, specifically those of the noir film genre.

"Tank!" begins with the ensemble rapidly playing a series of notes, resolving into a drum fill and walking bass line. A male voice then intones:

> I think it's time we blow this scene.
> Get everybody and the stuff together.
> Okay: 3, 2, 1, let's jam!

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[6] Memory—and its respective song—reflect Spike's nostalgia for Julia, especially in the first half of the series. However, once Faye begins seriously questioning her past and identity, the concept of memory shifts to her. It is also possible that Faye existed in *Cowboy Bebop* as a potential love interest of Spike, yet he was lost in the memory of Julia.

[7] Yoko Kanno, email exchange with Noriko Manabe, with questions from the author, December 4, 2016.

after which, the winds return with rhythmic phrases, interjecting every so often with series of rapid notes. As with bebop musician Charlie Parker's "Anthropology," "Tank!" is highly erratic, with instruments playing in extreme registers and syncopated phrases occurring every few measures.[8] As images of Spike, "Bebop," and others flood the screen, lines of text shift through these scenes. The title sequence splices the text, but reconstructed it reads:

> Once upon a time, in New York City in 1941...at this club open to all comers to play, night after night, at a club named "Minston's Play House" in Harlem, they play jazz sessions competing with each other. Young jazz men with a new sense are gathering. At last they created a new genre itself. They are sick and tired of the conventional fixed style jazz. They're eager to play jazz more freely as they wish. Then...in 2071 in the universe. The bounty hunters who are gathering in spaceship "BEBOP" will play freely without fear of risky things. They must create new dreams and films by breaking traditional styles. The work which becomes a new genre itself will be called…COWBOY BEBOP.

This text, combined with the opening male narration, demonstrates the correlations between bebop musicians and the "Bebop" crew, helping viewers recognize Watanabe's goal of the series: to create a new genre outside standardized anime. The storyline of *Cowboy Bebop* precisely matches the opening narration. Spike, Jet and Faye create their own destiny and path in the series, much like bebop musicians in the 1940s. Though the entirety of "Tank!" does not play in *Cowboy Bebop*, an alto saxophone solo occurs while the rest of the ensemble maintains the driving rhythmic material. This solo is highly improvisatory, rapidly progressing through harmonies, much like the solos in Parker's "Yardbird Suite." Watanabe wanted *Cowboy Bebop* and its characters to be independent and "improvisatory," and he achieves this goal by associating Spike, Jet, and Faye with bebop musicians.

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[8] Parker's compositions often feature fast-paced passages on the saxophone. Though an abridged version of "Tank!" occurs in the opening credits, the full version showcases an alto saxophone solo rapidly moving through different progressions.

Cowboy Bebop's title sequence is reminiscent of the opening sequence to the 1962 James Bond film *Dr. No*, which consists of three parts. At the beginning of *Dr. No*, the screen takes the shape of a gun barrel, and, after the initial hits of the theme song and main melody, the barrel's opening morphs into a circle, which then transforms into the words "Dr. No." These words then erratically shift around the screen, matching the theme song's rhythmic trumpet hits. The words resolve back into the original circle, and associated shapes move around the screen as the title credits continue. The theme song ends abruptly, just as the circles consume the screen entirely. At this point, women in various colored silhouettes dance to various drums, their movements comprising the second part. The final part shows three older men walking with canes as the song "Kingston Calypso (Three Blind Mice)" accompanies them. The inclusion of this Jamaican ska number provides information about the film's setting, creating a standard for future Bond films.

Likewise, *Cowboy Bebop*'s title sequence consists of multiple sections which splice together to create a visual spectacle. Like *Dr. No*, the opening credits to *Cowboy Bebop* are also monochromatic, often using similar shades of the same color with the characters and text remaining in black or white. After the initial brass hits accompany flashing words, the groove settles down into the double bass, as lines shift and move around the screen. Though the lines fade away to create blocks of images, they divide the blocks into many different rectangles or squares. After introducing the main melody, the brass hits return, and shooting pistols accompany each of these hits, showcasing the guns' barrels at the end of the phrase. Near the end of the song, Jet holds a gun, showing the audience the gun's barrel again, and colored rectangles and squares flood the screen, accompanying silhouettes of, presumably, Spike and Faye dancing. Elements of parts one and two from *Dr. No*'s sequence are evident here, especially with Faye's "Bond-girl" inspired dancing. Though we do not see the full *Dr. No* gun barrel

sequence in *Cowboy Bebop*, the mere presence of the gun triggers associations with action-packed films. With *Dr. No*, viewers look through the barrel of the gun at Bond, and they assume the role of the assassin or antagonist of the film. Bond shoots the assassin, and the screen and gun barrel fill with red, presumably killing the assassin and informing viewers that Bond will be victorious in his missions. Spike is the protagonist of *Cowboy Bebop*, yet he does not hold a gun at any point during the title sequence. Though the majority of the characters remain as silhouettes during the title sequence, their faces are sketched in periodically. Spike, however, is the only character who shows his full face during the opening. A hand extends a lighter to Spike, and the flame illuminates his face until his cigarette is lit. Throughout *Cowboy Bebop*, characters smoke to cope with troubling news, or in one instance, to enjoy it before death. These facts potentially foreshadow Spike's fate in the series, contrasting the implied victory of Bond in *Dr. No*. Just as "Kingston Calypso (Three Blind Mice) informs the audience of Bond's nemeses and the plot of *Dr. No*, "Tank!" enlightens viewers to the premise of *Cowboy Bebop*, promising an erratic, fast-spaced story.

Examining the Soundtrack

Country Western Aesthetic

Cowboy Bebop centers on wandering space bounty hunters, making Kanno's choice to integrate country western music and tropes throughout the series valid.[9] While Spike and company lazily wait in "Bebop" for new bounties, the tv show *Big Shot* occasionally interrupts their daily activities. *Big Shot* features a man and a woman dressed in "traditional" cowboy garb, broadcasting new bounties throughout the galaxy. Each episode of *Big Shot* opens with a gun

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[9] Because of the magnitude of Kanno's country western compositions, only "American Money" and "Go Go Cactus Man" will be examined because of their exclusivity and relevance in *Cowboy Bebop*. Additional country western examples exist in "Waltz for Zizi" and "Spokey Dokey," both of which occur frequently throughout the series.

shooting the screen, which then displays the show's title accompanied by "American Money." The song begins with a bugle call and a three-piece ensemble comprising banjo, tuba, and drum set play a rapid, simple tune reminiscent of music played in country western saloons. "American Money" incorporates sound effects characteristic to cowboys and bounties: gunfire and casino slot machines. "American Money" and *Big Shot* parody the country western aesthetic, focusing on the stereotypes generally associated with cowboys.

Session 22 "Cowboy Funk" borrows tropes—albeit in a comical manner—from spaghetti westerns produced in the 1960s to 1970s. Throughout "Cowboy Funk," Spike chases after a bounty, only to be constantly deterred by Andy von de Oniyate, a Japanese man who dresses and acts like a cowboy, riding around on his horse, Onyx, in search of bounties. Unlike others in the universe, Andy uses a barrel pistol and lasso, customary cowboy gear. "Go Go Cactus Man" is Andy's theme song, and it appears only in "Cowboy Funk." The song begins with whistling, reminiscent of old country folk tunes, adds in a "boing" sound, then returns to a whistling duet of the main melody. Kanno slowly builds in more "country" instrumentation, adding in a drum set—played with brushes—and then guitar. She also adds in gunshot sounds and horse neighs, resembling the country western aesthetic. At this point, the whistling ceases, and an electric guitar takes over the melody.[10] The electric guitar symbolizes the chaos surrounding Andy; even though cowboys are often level-headed and contemplate their actions, Andy—much like Spike—jumps into situations with little to no thought or preparation, making the choice to score "Go Go Cactus Man" with an electric guitar, rather than an acoustic guitar, justifiable.

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[10] The whistling returns towards the back half of the tune, with Kanno layering all sound effects and instruments together.

In the beginning of "Cowboy Funk," Spike apprehends the "Teddy Bomber" and removes one of the bombs, only to discover that the culprit planted multiple explosives. As the bomber reveals more bombs, Spike asks, "Why do you want to blow everything up?," to which the bomber replies, "Because, Spiegel. That's how I deliver a warning. I'm sounding the alarm, alerting the masses. You better listen up while you still can." As the bomber delivers his speech, faint whistling appears in the background, only to intensify once Andy breaks through the window and the bomber calls out his name.[11] The whistling returns, only to cut out as the screen shifts to Spike who questions, "Andy?" Andy replies, "You can call me Wyatt Earp," and the *boing* sound enters in as he pulls out his pistol, points it at Spike, and says, "Reach for the sky, Teddy Bomber!"[12] During the confusion, the real bomber blows up the building, the electric guitar enters, and Andy lassos Spike and rides off into the distance.

Spike tells the rest of the crew about Andy, and they are in complete disbelief about a cowboy existing. The crew then go undercover at a party, only to find the Teddy Bomber dressed in a bear costume. When Spike and Jet apprehend the bomber, Jet asks him why he's obsessed with bombs, and, again, as the bomber starts to tell his story, whistling enters, and he ceases talking and lets out a groan. The screen moves around the room, showing the concerned looks on the partygoers' faces, only to zoom in on the elevator as Andy rides out on his horse. *Cowboy Bebop* has established whistling as Andy's musical cue, adding a meta-diegetic level to the sound. The music cuts out as Andy rides into the room, only to re-emerge once an employee

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[11] The whistling serves as an homage to spaghetti western *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* (1966). Composer Ennio Morricone scores whistling throughout the opening title song.

[12] Andy's choice of words borrows from Disney-Pixar's *Toy Story* franchise (1995-2019). The protagonist of *Toy Story* is Woody, a cowboy doll who constantly attempts to please his owner, Andy—though, the introduction of new toys and environments constantly derail Woody. During any confrontation with a new foe—or when someone simply pulls on the cord on his back—Woody proclaims, "Reach for the sky," telling his foes he will defeat them. Though Andy in *Cowboy Bebop* dresses in all white, he wears a red handkerchief around his neck, mimicking Woody from *Toy Story*.

complains about the presence of the horse. Yet again, Andy mistakenly identifies the bomber as Jet, and chaos ensues as the real bomber succeeds in his plan, signaling the electric guitar.

Spike becomes increasingly annoyed with his failed attempts at catching the Teddy Bomber despite his crew's resigned efforts. The bomber delivers a letter to *Big Shot*, calling for those who laughed and wronged him to meet him by the fountain. Spike finally corners the bomber, and as the bomber starts to criticize Spike for arriving late, whistling enters, and Spike interrupts him only to turn around and see a regular man walking and whistling. The bomber then continues with his speech, stating that he will end Spike's life, while the whistling returns, prompting Spike to quiet the bomber, and both turn and greet Andy. Spike and Andy quarrel, which angers the Teddy Bomber as he is yet again unable to utter his manifesto. The whistling duet enters as Spike and Andy chase after the Teddy bomber together, showing that they have more in common than they thought. The Teddy Bomber then tricks them into going into a locked elevator that he rigged with explosives. While trapped, both Andy and Spike explain that they anticipated the bomber's tricks and altered the security codes to the elevator. The elevator rises to the top and explodes, with Spike and Andy surviving the explosion. Both attempt to outrun each other to catch the Teddy Bomber, yet they fail to realize that Faye already apprehended him.

Spike and Andy rush up to the rooftop, and the screen pans over them in a shoot-out, initiating "Go Go Cactus Man." They fight on the rooftop, and the music cuts out as Spike punches a nearby desk, shattering the rooftop and plunging Andy to a nearby ledge. Andy admits defeat—bringing back "Go Go Cactus Man"—and gives Spike his hat, telling him he is the one true cowboy. Spike questions Andy on the next phase of his life, to which the latter replies that he will figure it out, ending with a cheeky, "See you space cowboy," delivered to a dismayed Spike. Andy rides off into the distance on Onyx, transitioning to Spike eating dinner

with Jet and talking about Andy. The screen shifts back to the Teddy Bomber in a police van, and only after the officer questions the bomber's true intentions does he finally have the opportunity to provide his *modus operandi*. During his speech, the police officer screams, and the camera shifts to the outside where Andy, now dressed in samurai garb, complete with ponytail and sword, rides alongside on Onyx. A Japanese *koto* enters the sonic space, and the bomber calls him Andy, to which he replies, "Call me Musashi!," prompting the return of the whistling and guitar riff in "Go Go Cactus Man." Andy's brief storyline in *Cowboy Bebop* is significant. His transition from a traditional cowboy to a traditional samurai in a single session provides "a sense of the freewheeling genre mixture occurring in each [session]" of *Cowboy Bebop*.[13]

Memory

Cowboy Bebop's narrative focuses on bounty hunters calling themselves cowboys, who, by their very nature, reflect on their past experiences. Each character struggles with his or her past, especially Spike. Haunted by memories of working for the Syndicate, he dreams of reuniting with Julia, a fellow assassin and former lover. Before joining "Bebop," Spike and Julia arranged to leave the Syndicate, promising to be with each other without fear of Vicious, Spike's rival from the Syndicate. Vicious hopes to rule the Syndicate, yet fears Spike will undermine his plans and take over the syndicate himself.[14] Vicious learns of their arrangement and tells Julia she will die unless she kills Spike for him. Unable to kill her lover, Julia misses the rendezvous with Spike and goes into hiding. Spike, meanwhile, vainly attempts to erase her from his memory, as an artificial eye allows the past to always haunt him.[15]

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[13] S. Andrew Granade, "Sonic Markers of the Science Fiction Western," in *Re-locating the Sounds of the Western,* edited by Kendra Preston Leonard and Mariana Whitmer (New York: Routledge, 2018), 80.

[14] The ending titles' images also show Spike and Julia planning their escape and their failed attempt at the hand of Vicious.

[15] Session 6, "Sympathy for the Devil," opens with doctors standing in a circle, surrounding a man with his eye forced open by pliers. The screen splices to medical tools, computers, organs, and a fish, only to revert back to a

Session 1, "Asteroid Blues," opens with two superimposed flashbacks. The first focuses on the aftermath of Spike's missed rendezvous with Julia, with the second focusing on a shootout involving Spike. In the rain, Spike smokes a cigarette, holding a bouquet of roses, ultimately dropping a single red rose into a puddle. Viewers learn later in *Cowboy Bebop* that Spike attempted to meet with Julia in a cemetery on a rainy day, and he brought a bouquet of roses to this meeting. The second flashback focuses on Spike involved in a gunfight with other assassins, undoubtedly sent by Vicious. The assassins repeatedly shoot at Spike, bringing him to the brink of death.[16]

A song titled "Memory" accompanies the opening of "Asteroid Blues." Despite its bluesy sound, "Memory" plays on a music box, a prime signal of nostalgia.[17] Throughout the series, "Memory" primarily plays when Spike remembers Julia. For instance, in sessions 12 and 13, "Jupiter Jazz, Part 1 & 2," Faye befriends Gren, an accomplished saxophonist and war veteran. During their first meeting at a bar, "Memory" faintly plays in the background on piano, shifting its timbre to fit the environment. Gren informs Faye that he served with Vicious during the Titan War, and Vicious gave him a music box belonging to Julia. We discover here that Julia is "Memory." Although the song occurs non-diegetically in *Cowboy Bebop*, Spike presumably possesses a music box of Julia's because of its association with her.

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full-body shot of the man—presumed to be Spike—lying on an operating table. The images splice together again, yet this time, they end on a glass eye that lowers onto Spike, prompting him to awaken from his flashback and focus on a harmonica player in a bar.

[16] In session 5, "Ballad of Fallen Angels," a series of flashbacks reveals that Spike survived the shootout and was nursed back to health by Julia.

[17] In session 5, "Ballad of Fallen Angels," Spike recalls: "The music box is broken. Or is it? It starts to play and a haunting music fills the air. I awake suddenly from my dream; there is no music box and yet…there it is. A tiny one nestled in my hand. And I awake from my dream again, as if I were peeling an onion. It's a dream, no matter how far I go, I can never reach reality. I'm trapped in an endless nightmare." Spike's feelings towards the music box and "Memory" shows the haunting impact Julia imparted on him. "Nostalgic Musicbox," TvTropes, https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/NostalgicMusicbox (accessed January 19, 2019).

"Memory" returns in the beginning of the two-part series finale, "The Real Folk Blues." So far, *Cowboy Bebop* has only shown Julia through Spike's flashbacks. He, along with many others, believe her to be dead, no doubt at the hands of Vicious. The finale opens with Julia walking incognito on the streets. "Memory" switches from a music box and is arranged for a small jazz combo, comprising female vocals, piano, acoustic guitar, double bass, and drum set. The vocalist sings:

> My love for you
> Burns deep inside
> So strong.
>
> Embers of times we had
> And now here I stand
> Lost in a memory
> I see your face and smile.[18]

At this point in the series, Kanno renames "Memory" as "Adieu," with the lyrics foreshadowing the bittersweet reconciliation between Spike and Julia. Because Julia finally presents herself a tangible being in the series, "Memory/Adieu" gives her a voice, communicating her undying devotion to Spike.

After helping Julia escape the Syndicate, Faye informs Spike that Julia waits for him in "their spot." With a bouquet of roses, he meets Julia in the cemetery, only to see that she holds a gun on him. "Adieu" fades out as Spike and Julia talk, only to enter again as Julia explains Vicious's plan. As Julia questions Spike's love for her, flashbacks of their relationship filter in, further showing the paired relationship of "Memory" and Julia.

In style and chord progression, "Memory" is reminiscent of Claude Debussy's *Clair de Lune*. Debussy based his work on French author Paul Verlaine's poem "Clair de Lune," which reads:

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[18] Brian Richy and Yoko Kanno, lyyrics to "Adieu, http://www.animelyrics.com/anime/cbebop/adieu.htm.

Your soul is a moonlit landscape fair,
Peopled with maskers delicate and dim,
That play on lutes and dance and have an air
Of being sad in their fantastic trim.

The while they celebrate in minor strain
Triumphant love, effective enterprise,
They have an air of knowing all is vain, —
And through the quiet moonlight their songs rise,

The melancholy moonlight, sweet and lone,
That makes to dream the birds upon the tree,
And in their polished basins of white stone
The fountains tall to sob with ecstasy.[19]

Debussy fills *Clair de Lune* with fully-diminished seventh chords, and Kanno's "Memory" uses chords with the same structure and overall sound.

Arguably, "Memory" can also be thought of as describing the premise of Verlaine's poem, as Spike knows that "all is vain." Whenever a character mentions Julia's name, Spike drops everything and attempts to locate her. Spike is unable to forget Julia or his past, believing that he is "stuck in a dream." Even though he befriends Jet, Faye, and Edward, Spike still considers himself to be alone in the world. Spike and Julia attempt to escape Vicious's assassins and although Spike successfully kills all of them, a stray bullet strikes Julia in the back, killing her. Seeking revenge, Spike decides to go after Vicious and end their feud, yet he stops at "Bebop" for a final meal with Jet. Upon realizing his intentions, Faye pleads with Spike, telling him to forget the past, move on with his life, and live with his "family." Spike tells her he does not intend to die, instead deciding to go see Vicious to "find out if [he's] really alive." For the entirety of *Cowboy Bebop*, Spike believes he lives in a dream, especially after Julia dies moments after being reunited. Her last words to Spike were "it's all a dream," signifying that she and Spike

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[19] Paul Verlaine, "Clair de Lune," *All Poetry,* https://allpoetry.com/poem/8538095-Clair-De-Lune-by-Paul Verlaine (accessed on April 4, 2018).

were meant to be together and death is intangible. *Clair de Lune* creates a "dream world" and gives "Memory" a dream-like existence to end the show, with Spike joining Julia in death.

Faye

Cowboy Bebop intertwines three different genres of music and people together, with only Faye lacking a recurring musical motif. Faye is cunningly mysterious for the first half of the series, keeping viewers unaware of her intentions. In session 15, "My Funny Valentine," viewers learn Faye's backstory: she was cryogenically frozen for over fifty years due to an untreatable medical condition. She amasses an enormous debt which causes her to develop a gambling addiction. After joining "Bebop," Faye often steals money or works with Jet and Spike locating bounties. In session 18, "Speak Like a Child," the crew finds an archaic videotape and after locating a VCR player, they discover that the tape shows Faye's childhood memories. Faye obsessively watches the videotape in session 24, "Hard Luck Woman," and she attempts to uncover her repressed memories by venturing to Earth. The tape reveals that Faye grew up comfortably in a loving home. "Memory" often accompanies her scenes, but Western art music, reminiscent of Franz Schubert's lieder, is her primary motif, suggesting she deserves a richer, fuller, more cultured life than the one she currently lives. Each one of those moments allows the music to tell us something about Faye.

Session 15, "My Funny Valentine," opens with men in spacesuits recovering a woman in a tank full of water. It transitions to present time, with Ein waking up Faye and the latter deciding to tell the dog her troubled story. The narrative then reverts to the past, revealing Faye was cryogenically frozen for over fifty years. She awakens, unaware of who she is or why exists. Faye shockingly discovers that by being cryogenically frozen, she amassed an unmanageable medical bill. She meets with lawyer Whitney Haggis Matsumoto, who consoles Faye, treats her to luxuries, and "falls in love" with her. Over a montage of Whitney and Faye's interactions, the

song "Flying Teapot" enters. It begins with arpeggiating chords in the piano, and a female voice

sings the following lyrics:

> Sometimes I think,
> Oh, yes, I'd move to where
> All the shooting stars are gone.
>
> With all of our wishes
> How could they bear
> Oh, no, to carry around the stupid human hopes?
> So I'm going to help.
>
> I will give me a key to lock the door
> To the secret paradise.
> There are so many queueing up
> And, I won't let them in.
>
> Look at them
> They are cheeky
> They are never worthy to be saved.
>
> Lay your heart, lay your soul
> Upon my magic carpet.
> Now we are flying
> To Venus just to kill some time for tea, ok?
>
> Remember, surrender
> There's nothing you can do
> 'Cause love's such a joke
> Like a little Jack-in-the-box.[20]

The lyrics, matching the montage of events, reveals that Faye developed a romantic relationship

with Whitney, her "prince." Towards the end of the song, debt collectors find Faye and

Whitney, and he tells her to run away. Faye manages to escape, but she sees an explosion in the

distance, implying that Whitney died. Faye meets with the doctor who revived her, and he

notifies her that Whitney wrote her into his will, effectively leaving her with not only her own

medical debts, but with Whitney's personal debts. The episode switches to present day, and

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[20] Yoko Kanno, lyrics to "Flying Teapot," http://www.animelyrics.com/anime/cbebop/cbft.htm.

Spike questions the validity of Faye's story and tells her they have a new bounty imprisoned. Faye recognizes the bounty as Whitney, who has aged and grown substantially in size. He explains that he, along with the doctor, scams patients with amnesia to assume their debts. Faye steals Whitney from "Bebop" in an attempt to discover her true identity, ultimately deciding to surrender Whitney to the police. Faye truly believed Whitney was her love, and the lyrics in "Flying Teapot" foreshadows the "joke" of their relationship. "Flying Teapot" gives Faye a voice when she cannot provide one.

Session 18, "Speak Like a Child," begins with Faye at the horse races and Spike fishing with Ein. Both are unsuccessful in their respective endeavors, and a Schubert-inspired art song called "Adieu" accompanies these scenes. In "Adieu," a male vocalist sings:

> Been a fool, been a clown
> Lost my way from up and down
> And I know, yes, I know.
>
> And I see in your eyes that
> You really weren't surprised at me
> At all, not at all.
>
> And I know by your smile
> It's you.[21]

"Adieu" presents a dichotomy: the lyrics suggest the unfortunate life Faye endured, seemingly forced to live a life addicted to gambling. However, the musical style hints at a more elite life for Faye. The title, "Adieu," also proposes that Faye will detach herself from her gambling and devious ways in search of a more meaningful life.

In session 18, Faye watches video diaries of herself as a child, cheering on herself in the present and future. Child Faye greets the camera, muses about life ten years in the future, and states that "knowing [her], [she's] sure [she will trouble] a lot of different people." She then

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[21] Richy, "Adieu."

performs an uplifting cheer routine, telling her future self to "not lose" and to "do [her] best."

She proclaims afterwards:

> I am no longer here.
> But I'm here today
> And, I'll always be cheering for you right here.
>
> Cheering for you,
> My only self.

"Poor Faye (High Socks)" accompanies these scenes, entering shortly after the camera shows a piano in Faye's childhood bedroom. Kanno composed "Poor Faye (High Socks)" for sustained chords on solo piano in a quasi-waltz style. Yet as the song progresses, the rhythms subdivide to contain quarter notes which circle around repeated harmonies. Spike, Jet, and Faye watch the tape, mesmerized by the images shown as the camera focuses on Faye's face as she questions the validity of the tape and her identity. The timing of "Poor Faye (High Socks)" and its instrumentation suggests that Faye desires to forge her own path and to overcome her flaws.

Finally, in session 24, "Hard Luck Woman," Faye showers after an eventful day in the universe and, triggered by the water, she remembers the beach, fountains, socializing with friends, and the tragic accident that claimed her parents' lives and forced her into cryogenics. "Poor Faye (Lip Cream)" accompanies her memories, written for piano in a style similar to "Poor Faye (High Socks)." However, this cue is livelier than "High Socks" and contains modal harmonies. "Poor Faye (High Socks)" introduces viewers to Faye and circles around simple, repeated harmonies, whereas "Poor Faye (Lip Cream)" uses shifting harmonies to provide Faye with more information about her past.

Presumably, Faye merely acts how viewers expect her to act—deviously reckless. *Cowboy Bebop* presents Faye as a femme fatale, clothing her in promiscuous outfits and letting her use her sexuality to obtain information about bounties. *Cowboy Bebop* characterizes Spike with energetic bebop music and Jet with country and blues, yet it neglects to provide a genre for Faye. From

the beginning, viewers know Spike and Jet are bounty hunters, yet possess no knowledge of Faye or her background. Only after Faye investigates her past is *Cowboy Bebop* able to identify her musically. With the exception of "Flying Teapot," Faye's music is relaxed and melancholy, and *Cowboy Bebop* strictly only assigns her Western art music, a sign of her refinement. Faye's music is calm and collected, which differs greatly from Spike's music, and it reflects her calm and calculated engagement with others throughout the series. Her music also symbolizes her desire to live a more fortuitous life, as she spends the majority of the series in limbo, unsure of finances and livelihood. The Western art music provides Faye a voice, one that she can hopefully use in her future endeavors.

Musical Parodies

Anime series utilize "filler episodes," which consist of plots and/or characters that do not serve the main storyline. "Filler episodes" serve to extend the show's broadcast time and to offer comic relief before major events in the series. Most anime originate from their respective manga, yet *Cowboy Bebop* began as an anime and was developed into a manga only after its finale. Because *Cowboy Bebop* lacks a structured plot, the "filler episodes" instead function as parodies of well-known films and genres. For one example, session 11, "Toys in the Attic," parodies science-fiction film *Alien* (1979).

"Toys in the Attic" contains four lessons each told by Jet, Faye, Edward, and Spike. Each crew member, including Ein, succumbs to a mysterious figure, or alien, who bites them. Spike is the only character not bitten by the alien, and with the help of thermal goggles, he attempts to hunt and kill the lifeform. His lesson is last, and he remembers that a year ago, he purchased a Ganymede Rock Lobster and hid it in the storage room's refrigerator. Upon opening the refrigerator, Spike sees that the lobster morphed into an alien-like figure, and after being bitten and succumbing to illness, he manages to launch the refrigerator into space. The

music in "Toys in the Attic" mimics Jerry Goldsmith's music in *Alien*, with both featuring timbres and harmonies that make audiences unsure of the creature that plagues them.

"Toys in the Attic" opens with a mysterious figure shifting in the dark through "Bebop." Jet narrates the first lesson and creates a diary entry, much like those made by Ripley in *Alien*. After losing a game to Faye, Jet walks into a storage room and sees a refrigerator. The camera zooms in, and a low electronic drone enters until the mysterious figure in the dark returns. An alarm rings through "Bebop," and Spike and Faye race to the storage room where Jet claims he was bitten. Spike concocts an herbal drink to treat Jet, yet he collapses and a purple mass pulses on Jet's neck, signaling the drone. The drone mimics the low sounds heard in *Alien* when the xenomorphs present themselves. Thanks to the cinematic musical codes developed by Scott's film, the presence of the drone automatically suggests an alien-like figure torments the crew of "Bebop." The screen shifts to Spike sitting at a computer, examining the mass's similarities to other known diseases, as the music switches to a two-note motif. The first note is longer than the second, which is a half-step lower than the first note. The lengths of the two notes is irregular, much like the "Alien" motif in *Alien*, which consists of a long note, followed by a short note, before returning back to the original note. The length of the notes is irregular, much like the motif used in *Cowboy Bebop*. Within the two-note motif, a higher pitched triplet figure emerges. It persistently maintains the same rhythmic value, resolves upwards, and repeats itself. This triplet figure imitates the "Stalking" motif in *Alien*, which consists of a triplet figure surrounding two pitches. Unlike the triplet figure in *Cowboy Bebop*, the "Stalking" motif occurs in the low brass. The "Stalking" motif derives from the "Alien" motif, consisting of two notes separated by a half-step. *Cowboy Bebop* reproduces the "Alien" and "Stalking" motif from *Alien* to insinuate that an otherworldly creature haunts them on "Bebop."

The drone returns, along with high-pitched electronic sounds, when Spike discovers the creature bit Ein. The music intensifies as Spike, with thermal goggles on, sees the creature crawl towards him, and ends abruptly as Spike falls down a ladder. The intensity of the drone, with the addition of the high-pitched electronic sounds, shows that Spike is near the end of his quest to discover the creature's identity. Spike finds Edward's electronic transmitter, deducing she succumbed to the creature's attack, and it transmits the two-note motif and triplet figure. Spike, with thermal goggles and Edward's transmitter, hunts for the creature, while the two-note motif and triplet figure continue. The drone from earlier joins these motifs until the music cuts out completely once Spike fights the creature. Spike has finally found the creature haunting "Bebop," and while he knows the creature is otherworldly, he cannot accurately discern who or what it is, effectively ending the musical narrative.

After burning the creature, Spike likens its smell to food he cooked earlier in the session. He questions if more of it exists in the fridge, and the camera circles around his face as the high-pitched electronic sounds return. Spike ventures to the fridge's storage room, narrating about his forgotten Ganymede Rock Lobster. The music intensifies as Spike opens the fridge's door and ends abruptly as he shuts it. The harsh high-pitched sounds shows Spike knows the identity of the creature, yet merely forgot its existence. He decides to eject the fridge into space by shutting off the ship's gravity, yet the fridge door opens, and the creature bites him. Repeated chords in the piano and rapid rhythms on a hi-hat fill the screen, only slowing at the end as the fridge successfully leaves "Bebop." This manipulation of sound here poses the question: are the noises diegetic or non-diegetic? Robynn J. Stilwell believes that these are separated by a thin line called the "fantastical gap." The fantastical gap can refer to the "sense of unreality that [we] always [obtain] as we leap from one solid edge toward another at some unknown distance and some uncertain stability…[and] it can also mean, musically, an improvisation, the free play of

possibility."[22] By creating a fantastical gap, viewers are unsure if the sounds follow the rock lobster as he haunts "Bebop," or if the sounds merely exist inside each crew member's mind.

Throughout the series, bebop jazz accompanies Spike as he pursues or fights bounties. The relentless nature of bebop shows his reckless and improvisatory behavior, proving that Spike will use any means necessary to capture his bounty. While the music here does not contain a full jazz ensemble, it still suggests a battle between Spike and the rock lobster. Even after getting bitten, he endangers his life by successfully opening the ship's door, waiting until it closes to breathe again. As the door closes, Spike falls, hitting his head against the closed latch. In a voiceover, Spike states the real lesson: "Don't leave things in the fridge." Pyotr Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers" from *The Nutcracker* accompanies as the "Bebop" crew and fridge float in space.[23] *Alien* uses the first movement from Howard Hanson's Symphony No. 3 as Ripley successfully launches the xenomorph into space. Hanson composed his third symphony in 1936, near the end of the Great Depression. The first movement contains lush, uplifting phrases, suiting Ripley's accomplishment. Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers" also occurs in Walt Disney's 1940 film *Fantasia*. In Disney's film, various fairies flutter through nature, changing the seasons and types of flowers with them. The scene is elegantly delicate, matching the nature of Tchaikovsky's music. Additionally, Stanley Kubrick's *2001*: *A Space Odyssey* uses Johann Strauss's *The Blue Danube Waltz* to accompany the "waltz" of the space satellites. In *Cowboy Bebop*, "Waltz of the Flowers" offers comedic relief to an ironic horror episode.

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[22] Robynn J. Stillwell, "The Fantastical Gap Between Diegetic and Nondiegetic," in *Beyond the Soundtrack*: *Representing Music in Cinema*, eds. Daniel Goldmark, Richard Leppert, and Lawrence Kramer (Berkeley: University of California Press, Ltd., 2007), 187.

[23] Echoes of Stanley Kubrick's film *2001*: *Space Odyssey* (1968) are evident here. Kubrick used *The Blue Danube* by Johann Strauss II to show the shuttle floating through space.

<center>**Conclusion**</center>

In April 2018, *Cowboy Bebop* celebrated twenty years since it first aired, prompting fans

and critics to publish articles online via personal blogs and magazines in professional print

publications. Other science-fiction anime emerged over the last two decades, so why the

persistent obsession with *Cowboy Bebop*?[24] The bombastic nature of *Cowboy Bebop*, filled with

almost sixty songs, provides a wide array of cinematic and musical genres, attracting and building

different fanbases. *Cowboy Bebop* incorporates all genres of popular music in Japan, further

appealing to the masses. [25] "Tank!" remains a favorite among many, remaining within the top

five on many websites' "Best Anime Theme Songs of All Time" list.[26] People still dress up as

Faye at anime conventions, proving that her character possesses more depth than merely

existing as a sex symbol. Faye tempts people into the otaku lifestyle as her storyline provides

viewers closure, showing that the demons of your past can remain there. Faye's struggle with her

existence ceases once she realizes that "Bebop" is her home.

Cowboy Bebop truly transcends the anime standard, especially considering the relationship

between "film" and music. Unlike many other cartoons or television shows, Watanabe consulted

with Kanno on the music, with the latter often contributing music prior to receiving footage. In

an interview with *Dot and Line*, American musician Steve Conte recalls his reaction to a

conversation with Yoko Kanno:

> [Yoko said], 'There's this new series that they're making, called *Cowboy Bebop*, and what
> they're gonna do is they're gonna do the animation to our music,' instead of the other
> way around, like a lot of anime or cartoons or movies in general. They make the film and
> then they get a composer later to look at the film and score the film to what's already

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[24] Science-fiction anime in the canon include *FLCL* (2000), *Ergo Proxy* (2006), and *Gurren Lagann* (2007).

[25] The exception to this is the lack of hip-hop and rap. However, session 17, "Mushroom Samba," focuses on Ed's search for drug-laden mushrooms and incorporates African Americans into the storyline, and includes songs such as "Mushroom Hunting," which combines samba and funk together, with the bass guitar driving the funk line.

[26] Such websites include *Ranker*, *The Daily Dot*, *MyAnimeList*, and *Buzzfeed*.

<center>114</center>

been made, the visuals that are already there. But this was gonna be done the opposite way. They're gonna be inspired by the way the music sounded to create the visuals.[27]

Watanabe's decision to write and animate the series around the music culminated in a rewarding experience for viewers, as this had not been practiced in other anime.[28] Each of Kanno's soundtracks to the series stand alone, and the jazz tunes—especially—have a profound impact on the jazz canon, eliminating the aspect of "Japanese jazz." In 1994, the Israeli Philharmonic, under the direction of Anthony Inglis, performed Kanno's score to *Macross Plus*, a mecha and military science fiction anime also directed by Watanabe.[29] Recalling his experience, Inglis states:

> [*Macross Plus*] made a change from usual "squeaky gate" music that I have had to conduct, which is music written by a composer for a select group of his friends. Music like that annoys me, because I want the listeners to enjoy the music and go through motions while listening to it. Which is where [the music to *Macross Plus*]…where you have challenging rhythms and harmonies, is exciting and it plays on your emotions. I would love to conduct more music like this…[The score to *Macross Plus*] was also apparently the first time [Kanno] had ever orchestrated for an orchestra. Which if it is true, I have no reason to doubt it, she is a genius.[30]

The Western canon deems certain composers geniuses—namely Beethoven—yet rarely are any popular musicians given the same moniker. The immense variety Kanno incorporates into these soundtracks—ranging from pop to country western, electronic music to bebop—shows the incredible impact and extent of *Cowboy Bebop* and perhaps should earn her the same sobriquet.

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[27] Eric Vilas-Boas, "Steve Conte Looks Back on 'Bebop' and Working on Soundtracks with Yoko Kanno," DotAndLine, https://dotandline.net/cowboy-bebop-steve-conte-interview-878447420d43 (accessed October 15, 2018).

[28] This concept is not unfamiliar to American filmmakers. In 2012, Wes Anderson directed *Moonrise Kingdom*, a film about childhood, innocence, and love, and Anderson filmed many of the scenes around musical selections by British composer Benjamin Britten.

[29] The primary director on *Macross Plus* was Shōji Kawaori.

[30] Bull, "Yoko Kanno."

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Despite some Westerners believing that enjoying and obsessing over anime deems one a "weirdo," the otaku lifestyle is no different than the fascinations spread throughout the U.S. People congregate at restaurants, wear brightly colored, oversized shirts, and scream at televisions showing men tackling one another. Others spend large amounts of money to stand in an arena for hours and find themselves openly weeping as they see their idol. And, some merely scroll mindlessly on their phones, double-tapping as quickly as their thumbs can manage. While otaku has attached itself to manga and anime, Westerners have their own obsessions and mediums, giving them their own "otaku" lifestyle. Just as it is difficult for some Americans to imagine a life without football, it is difficult for others to imagine not having anime. This quirky genre introduced me to a new lifestyle and obsession but just as importantly, music. The music from the series I have watched—and continue to watch—remain with me and serve as listening material throughout everyday life.

To this day, the music from *Death Note*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Cowboy Bebop* are incredibly significant in our understanding of the anime and their continued relevance to otaku. Countless fan websites debate Light's fate at the end of *Death Note*: did he truly deserve death if he simply wished to create a crimeless world? The use of Western Catholic music establishing Light as a god encourages audiences to cheer for an anti-protagonist's downfall. *Neon Genesis Evangelion* prompts viewers to reflect on their inner selves: am I being all that I can be and am I worth it? By anempathetically combining glorious music by Bach and Beethoven with chaotic and psychotic scenes, viewers contemplate existence and their own ideas regarding humanity and perseverance. The wide array of music in *Cowboy Bebop* engages audiences, and leaves them

wondering: what kind of show am I watching?[1] The soundtracks, filled with fast-paced jazz numbers, heavy metal songs, and soothing waltzes, shows viewers that even though they do not live in a fantasy world with spaceships, life contains many different opportunities, just as the storyline and music of *Cowboy Bebop*.

The anime canon is substantial, with *Death Note, Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Cowboy Bebop* firmly holding their places. These series ended between twelve and twenty years ago, so why examine these "archaic" shows? Renowned American musicologist Charles Seeger offered principles to follow regarding his field, stating that musicologists "can establish the study of music in a position of give and take with the great studies of our day."[2] Though presented almost a century ago, his statement holds true with this document. The field of anime music can flourish if and only if we establish seminal works, just as scholars Phillip Brett and Susan McClary pioneered the field of gay musicology by studying Benjamin Britten and Madonna. Anime fanatics obsess over the anime explored here, writing fan-fiction, cosplaying as specific characters for conventions, and contributing to forums with the sole purpose of engaging in meaningful conversation. *Death Note* encourages the bizarre fascination with serial killers and gives audiences a glimpse of the anime horror genre.[3] *Neon Genesis Evangelion* re-defines the mecha genre, showing that characters struggle with more than training with their robot.[4] The vast variety of storylines and music in *Cowboy Bebop* offers tales and tunes for any individual, all in

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[1] This is mostly prompted by Netflix's recent announcement of creating a live-action adaptation of *Cowboy Bebop*. Joshua Rivera, "What is *Cowboy Bebop* and Why is Netflix Making Another One?," GQ, https://www.gq.com/story/what-is-cowboy-bebop-and-why-is-netflix-making-a-new-one (accessed November 30, 2018).

[2] Charles Louis Seeger, Jr., "On the Principles of Musicology," *The Musical Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (April 1924): 250.

[3] Other anime supporting this cult fascination include *Black Butler* (2008-2014) and *Psycho-Pass* (2012-2014).

[4] Other anime resembling *Evangelion* include *Gurren Lagann* (2007-2008) and *Knights of Sidonia* (2014-2015)

the great open universe.[5] Besides Rose Bridges's scholarly contributions of *Cowboy Bebop*, no musicologist focuses on anime studies, leaving the field open to either flourish or wane.

Throughout this document, I offered other anime ripe for a similar treatment. *Samurai Champloo* is rich with connections between African American and Japanese samurai culture, which explains why the resources in the field do discuss the music.[6] The entirety of the Studio Ghibli catalog contains lush, melodic orchestral writing.[7] There also exists an incredible amount of musical anime, with each incorporating a different style of music. Much like the characteristic free-form spirit of jazz that *Cowboy Bebop* adopts in calling its episodes "sessions," *Nodame Cantabile* labels its episodes as "lessons," as each lesson employs a significant Western classical composition. Beethoven, Mozart, Ravel, and Bach are but a few of the composers who make an appearance, giving audiences a glimpse of the Western classical music canon.

Many universities offer film music courses and spend a considerable amount of time examining the history of film music. Fortunately, the Department of Music at Stanford University currently offers a course titled "Decoding Anime," which "explores the eponymous Japanese animation style through a multimedia analytical framework focused on four major components: narrative, music, images and Japanese aesthetics."[8] Professor Francois Rose believes all components combine together to create an enriching experience for anime viewers. By dedicating an entire semester to anime studies, Stanford is helping define the canon and shows the growing importance of studying anime music.

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[5] Other space-opera or science fiction anime include *FLCL* (2000-2001; 2018) and *Space Dandy* (2014).

[6] Ian Condry and Crystal S. Anderson both discuss *Samurai Champloo* in their respective books.

[7] The music of Studio Ghibli does appear in some scholarly articles, no doubt influenced by *Spirited Away*'s momentous Academy Award win.

[8] Emily Wan, "Classy Classes: MUSIC 25 Offers New Approaches to Anime," The Stanford Daily, https://www.stanforddaily.com/2018/10/30/classy-classes-music-25-offers-new-approaches-to-anime/ (accessed November 3, 2018).

With the exception of Stanford, the other many universities should not be faulted for their exclusion of anime from the film music canon. The literature simply does not exist. The research does not exist. A limited amount of time exists in academia, preventing professors from conducting the research and restructuring syllabi to support this trend. However, the resources are there. Because of anime essentially existing as its own genre of film, the countless film music books provide excellent source material to conduct research. Japan does not treat these as cartoons, therefore neither should we, in the Western world. It is with great hope that others indulge in the obsessive otaku lifestyle, look for these connections, and initiate meaningful conversations about these timeless anime. There is so much more to be said about the abundance of outstanding anime music, and this document barely shows a fraction of what exists.

See you, Space Cowboy.
Spike Spiegel, *Cowboy Bebop* (1998)

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VITA

Michelle Jurkiewicz was born on January 28, 1992 in Misawa, Japan. She graduated from Warrensburg High School in Warrensburg, Missouri in 2010. She attended the University of Central Missouri, also in Warrensburg, Missouri, and received a Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance in 2014. During her undergraduate career, Ms. Jurkiewicz also attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts from 2011 to 2012. Her primary flute teachers have included Lorraine Miller, Frank Fenley, Mia Olson, Wendy Rolfe, and Mary Posses.

After graduating with her Bachelor's, Ms. Jurkiewicz began pursuing a Master of Music in Flute Performance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, adding a Master of Music in Musicology shortly after. Since 2016, she has worked in LaBudde Special Collections at UMKC's Miller Nichols Library, where she has served as a student archival assistant. Also since Fall 2017, Ms. Jurkiewicz has served as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for the Musicology Department. In 2017, she presented at the UMKC School of Graduate Studies Community of Scholars Conference and discussed the use of Benjamin Britten's music in *Moonrise Kingdom.* In 2018, she presented at the same conference and discussed the use of Western religion and music in the anime *Death Note*, receiving second place for her presentation. Ms. Jurkiewicz also presented at the inaugural Midwest Music Research Collective at the University of Kansas in April 2018. In addition to her fascination in anime and film music, she is also interested in the music of the World War eras, which includes the interwar period (1914-1945).

During her spare time, Ms. Jurkiewicz coaches and choreographs for local Missouri and Kansas color guard teams.