

# The Time and Space

*Score Analysis and reflections on WALL • E*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Title: **WALL-E**

date: **2008**

Directed by: **Andrew Stanton**

Music by: **Thomas Newman**

Director Andrew Stanton conceived the idea of WALL • E in 1994, during a meeting which led, subsequently, to the creation of *A Bug's Life*, *Monsters, Inc.* and *Finding Nemo*. The idea of Stanton revolved around a small robot that remains on Earth, while the entire population abandoned it for five years, so that the Earth could be cleaned of the garbage and made habitable again. In the words of Stanton:

*What about the last robot on Earth? Everyone's left and this machine just doesn't know it can stop and it keeps doing it forever. That's really where it started. All the details weren't there, there wasn't a name for the character. We didn't even know what it would look like... We had no story... It was sort of this little Robinson Crusoe kind of character.<sup>1</sup>*

The robot's face was inspired by a pair of binoculars that Stanton studied while attending a baseball game. In Stanton's screenplay the name WALL • E is an acronym for a Waste Allocation Load Lifter-Earth Class.

WALL • E "lives" in a deserted Manhattan and spends his lonely days compacting trash; he spends his nights in an improvised home in the back of a truck studying various found objects, including videotapes of old movies. The script also features a space probe with feminine traits named EVE (an acronym for Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator), who is dispatched to Earth

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<sup>1</sup> Laurence MacDonald, *The Invisible Art of Film Music: A Comprehensive History* (New York, N.Y.: Ardsley House Publishers, 1998), page no. 505

in a robotic spacecraft in an attempt to discover any signs of plant life. WALL • E meets her and becomes fond of her. Thus, when EVE boards the spacecraft he clings to the outer hull and returns with her to the Axiom, an orbiting space station which encloses Earth's former inhabitants.

The film includes vocal sounds created by sound designer Ben Burtt, who designed the robotic sound for all six Star Wars films. Burtt created the "voices" of several characters in WALL • E by recording his own vocal sounds and filtering them.

One of Burtt's most ingenious sounds is the slightly off-key humming of "*Put on Your Sunday Clothes*", the Jerry Herman song from *Hello Dolly!* Director Stanton had this song in mind while creating the first draft of WALL • E's screenplay in 2003. With the phrase "out there" in its lyrics, this song became a key element in the film, along with "*It Only Takes a Moment*".

Two more songs are heard in WALL • E. The first is a Louis Armstrong recording of "*La Vie en Rose*"; the other is the Oscar-nominated "*Down to Earth*", which Thomas Newman wrote with Peter Gabriel, who sings the song during the film's closing credits.

Taken altogether, Ben Burtt's vocal sounds, the interpolated songs, and especially Thomas Newman's music inject a human element into a film that suggests that even robots need affection and companionship.

The first hour of Wall-E is a crazily inventive, deliriously engaging and almost wordless silent comedy of the sort that Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton used to make. In almost 100 minutes of movie there are about 80 minutes of music. My analysis focuses mainly on the styles used by Newman and his aesthetic approach to this amazing score.

## 2. SYNOPSIS

Year 2805. It has been 700 years since WALL • E, the latest in a series of robot left on Earth, continues his work as a street cleaner in the world, day after day, by storing and compacting trash cubes that he then stacks on each other to form hundreds of huge skyscrapers of trash. In the evening, having finished his work, he returns to his "home", the trailer of a truck where, before they became out of order, one after another, all robots WALL • E "rested" on the shelves like furniture. The shelves, which are now empty, are used by WALL • E to put his items in strict order. They used to belong to humans and he finds them during his cleaning. One of these objects is an old videotape of the movie *Hello, Dolly!*. WALL • E is in love with this film, that makes him dream, one day, to find a mate, hold her hand, dance with her, and no longer be alone.

To break this age-old routine, one day a rocket descends from the sky and settles on the planet, with a very special robot. The robot is a female high technology robot, able to fly, named EVE. Together at his home, he shows her a plant he has found in the rubble. Being the only sign of life on a dead planet, EVE takes it, closes it inside her and shuts down: her mission was to find a life form on a planet that is believed dead. WALL • E is therefore facing a lifeless robot, but continues to take care of her in hopes of her waking. Shortly after, the rocket comes back to pick her up, but WALL • E does not want to let her go. Trying to retrieve her, he clings to the rocket while it is going to take off. The rocket takes him on to mega-spaceship Axiom, where mankind has survived for seven hundred years in a luxurious environment, without making the slightest physical exertion to the point of becoming obese and unable to walk independently. People in

Axiom move on floating chairs (never walking) through which they can also feed themselves and communicate through holographic screens. In a brief overview the Captain's cabin photos can be seen of her and her five predecessors, taking the command of the Axiom.

EVE arrives on the ship and is re-activated electrically and tries to go to the captain of the Axiom to inform him that she has discovered that the planet Earth can regrow life. It is, therefore, finally time to bring humanity home. The robot that drives the ship, Auto, however, on the basis of a decision taken in 2110 by Shelby Forthright, president of BnL, remains convinced that life on Earth remains unsustainable and that it is better for humanity to remain in space. The commander, however, is able to understand the real situation and, after boldly raising up (something which has become almost impossible because of his severe obesity), he takes control of the ship redirecting to Earth. Unfortunately, WALL • E is left badly damaged while trying to save the plant on the ship and EVE can reactivate him once on Earth by exposing him to sunlight (which is how the robot is reloaded when he was in use, compacting trash). WALL • E awakens, but does not remember anything or even acknowledges EVE. She stubbornly succeeds in giving him back his memories. So WALL • E and EVE can finally be together and mankind can start over, 700 years later, a new life on Earth.

### **3. THE COMPOSER**

#### ***Thomas Newman (1955)***

Thomas Newman, like many other composers of the past, comes from a multigenerational family of musicians and composers. His father, Alfred Newman, was not only a film-music pioneer but also the patriarch of a musical family that includes his younger brothers Emil and

Lionel, his nephew Randy Newman, and two sons, David (b. 1954) and Thomas (b. 1955).

Thomas has had the good fortune of composing many of the most critically acclaimed films of the 1990s and 2000s.

Thomas Newman is native from Los Angeles and received an early musical education. After years of piano and violin lessons, Newman became involved in performing music. After high school he spent two years at the University of Southern California, where he studied with Frederick Lesemann and David Raskin. Raskin had helped the Thomas' father (Alfred) to write the score to *Chaplin's Modern Times*.

Thomas then transferred to Yale, where he studied music composition and orchestration with Jacob Druckman, Bruce McCombie, and Robert Moore. After receiving a Master's degree, Newman became a keyboardist in rock bands such as the *Innocents* and *Tokyo 77*.

Stephen Sondheim, an important mentor in his early career, was so impressed with Newman's talent that he used some of his compositions for a theater piece entitled *Three Mean Fairy Tales*. In 1984 film producer Scott Rudin hired Newman to score *Reckless*.

After this roaring start Newman was asked to compose the music of *Desperately Seeking Susan* (1985) and *Gung Ho!* (1986).

In 1991 Newman took on three projects - *The Rapture*, *The Linguini Incident*, and *Fried Green Tomatoes* - that helped define his style as a mix of orchestral and electronic sounds, which often added the vibrant and aggressive sounds of guitars, mandolins and oud. In 1994 Newman had two scores nominated to an Oscar - *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Little Women*. Then came *Unstrung Heroes* (1995), *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), and two acclaimed 1999 films, *The Green Mile* and *American Beauty*.

As he continued to compose, Newman experienced a method to choose its sounds, which

he called "Trial and Error". He later explained as follows:

*“In terms of starting, you may assign a color. You may say, ‘What instrument would be interesting, a plucked instrument, or a bell instrument, or a low woodwind?’. You’d be surprised at how much you can learn by the simplest allocation of music against image”.*<sup>2</sup>

His career continued to grow and make Newman one of the most acclaimed composers of the new millennium, with great works such as *The Road to Perdition* and *Cinderella Man*, in addition to the HBO TV production of Tony Kushner’s play *Angels in America*.

Director Andrew Stanton hired Newman for the film *Finding Nemo* (2003), because he loved the sound of the marimba used in *American Beauty*, and he thought it would be perfect to describe the underwater world of Nemo.

The latest scores written by Newman are *WALL • E* and *Revolutionary Road* (both Oscar-nominated), *The Help* and *The Iron Lady* (2011), and *Skyfall* (2012).

#### 4. OVERALL MUSIC IMPRESSIONS

I expected to hear a cohesive, hard-hitting score, with easily recognizable themes and a well marked development of the characters, as can be heard in recent Pixar films.

Instead I was incredibly impressed by the art of Newman to describe everything with great moderation, and his exceptional ability to imitate the characters even better by using orchestration instead of using real melodic themes.

In almost every cue there are instruments that are plucked or hit, percussions and electronic sounds. Often woodwinds and brass are presented in a light, jaunty way, with slight staccato

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<sup>2</sup> MacDonald, *The Invisible Art of Film Music: A Comprehensive*, page no. 506



underlining the robotic mechanisms.

Newman uses all the sounds of the orchestra, but we can hear a real TUTTI only on a few occasions and for no more than 30 seconds.

The use of the electric bass and keyboards is sometimes reminiscent of a certain Danny Elfman style. Thematically, WALL • E is devoid of strong colors and a distinctive character. The reason, I guess, is to be found in the choice of the director of using two very strong and recurring themes as *Put on Your Sunday Clothes* and *It Only Takes a Moment*. However, there is a short and nice theme for WALL • E and a love theme, written with Peter Gabriel, for the robot EVE. In both cues Newman gives greater emphasis to the texture of the score rather than the melodic lines.

## 5. FROM “HELLO DOLLY!” TO PETER GABRIEL

It is thanks to the videotape of a 1969 musical, *"Hello Dolly!"* resisting for centuries among the heaps of garbage that WALL • E finds out about love and acquires consciousness of his loneliness.

It is against this background that the filmmakers were going to implicate the audience, building a love story between two robots. To accentuate the emotional impact of this aspect of the film, it is contrasted against the decline of humanity and defined by the romantic song taken from the end of *Hello, Dolly!*

The songs that we hear in the film are *Put on Your Sunday Clothes* and *It Only Takes a Moment*, two songs written by Jerry Herman and performed by Michael Crawford. Through this, two songs of this musical become a part of the film, and also, their constant repetition and

alternating becomes a key piece for the storytelling of the movie.

In fact, these two songs are the only ones that are repeated constantly throughout the film. The rest of the tracks are repeated at most twice, and this is a small idea that represents the genius of composer Newman.

It is interesting to note a coincidence: the instrumental soundtrack of the musical *Hello, Dolly!* was composed by Lionel Newman, Thomas Newman's uncle. The songs from this musical are *diegetic* in the film, meaning that the sound is always felt by the characters within the narrative.

The director wanted to choose music that contrasted with the futuristic look of the film. At first he thought about French swing music of the 30's, but the same idea was behind the animated film *The Triplets of Belleville*, released in 2003 (during the processing of WALL • E). Then the director opted for a musical from Broadway. The song that struck him most in *Hello, Dolly!* was *Put on Your Sunday Clothes*. The lyrics in this song begin with the words "out there", according to the director they were the ideal opening words for a movie set in the space.

Another song caught the attention of the director: *It only takes a moment*, the romantic theme of the film. Showing in EVE the scene related to this song WALL • E has a chance to say "I love you" while not knowing how to speak. That was enough for Andrew Stanton to confirm his choice of *Hello, Dolly!* as the core of this love story set in space.

From *Hello Dolly!* to Peter Gabriel. To this great musician was given the task of writing the music for the closing credits. He created a beautiful theme, with rich images, deep colors and a great artistic impact. A perfect conclusion and a wave of optimism at the end. Past and future come together again. Humanity's evolution is seen through various schools of painting.

*Down to Earth* is a song written by Gabriel along with Newman, it is a beautiful and charming

pop song, which blends perfectly with the moods and themes addressed in the film. Besides being a perfect piece for the end credits of a movie like WALL • E, it is also an excellent song in terms of music quality and topics covered. I'm quite shocked that this song was written before the movie. It is a message about the wonders of our planet and the need to preserve it by learning to live and work with it rather than destroying it. Peter sings calmly and his timbre merges with the meaning of his words. *Down To Heart* begins gently with soft percussion and harp, gradually building up to incorporate percussion and choirs but without losing its beauty.

*Hello Dolly!* and Peter Gabriel combine as the perfect cover of a book that contains a great Pixar movie.

## 6. STYLE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCORE

**Time and space**, this is the secret recipe that Newman used throughout the score. The music is used to paint large landscapes or emotions tied to particular places, or to the time when these places are located. The concept of time passing by is that such passing becomes the cure and medicine for the pollution generated by the mankind.

When I began to analyze the music of WALL • E, I could not see all the themes perfectly. But the more I listened to it and found similarities with the pictures, the more I came to realize that there were some small themes in miniature. Even the little green plant has a small four notes motif:

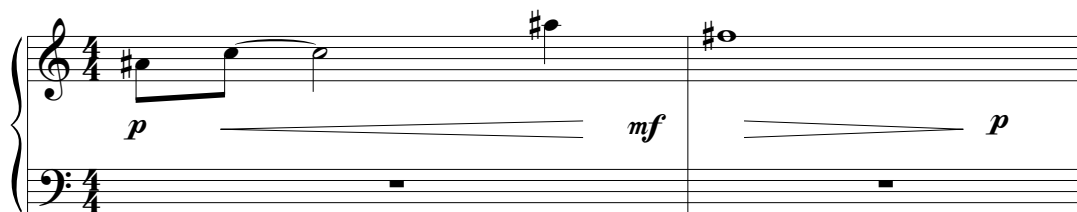


Figure 1. Four notes plant motif

What I found, however, was that most of the themes (apart from the music of *Hello Dolly!*) are rarely repeated.

I enjoy this movie a lot, but after analyzing Thomas Newman's music in detail, I discovered that I felt some deeper appreciation of the story. Music has allowed me to see some patterns of the story and its meanings in a full clarity that I had completely overlooked.

Newman's style of composing is very different from many of the composers I have been studying this year. Many of them had, as main objective, the creation of a theme for each character. Newman does not really have a character theme. What Newman does is: associate a character and their behavior to some instrumentation and small motifs. This technique allows the music to add another dimension to the story as the characters' feelings can be expressed through music when the action or words are not there. Newman describes certain emotions that WALL • E is feeling, through certain instrumentation.

For example, whenever WALL • E is exploring his surroundings, being curious, or whenever Newman wants to promote sheer innocence, an oboe motif followed by a whistle is heard. (00:10:14 / 4m1 - *Wall-E theme*). This whistle (0:10:32) is also heard when WALL • E is sharing his favorite things with EVE, and she becomes curious about these objects and acquires a childlike wonder sense of innocence (0:24:38 / 9m1 - *Bubble Wrap*). Therefore, whistled along with the rhythm section of this theme, the theme is repeated when WALL • E tries to teach another robot how to say hello, which in itself brings out the childlike innocence of the robot (00:43:25c / 15m1 - *Typing Bot*).

## 7. CUE LIST

It was difficult if not impossible, to find information, scores or even the cue list for this movie. But thanks to this I had to work even more deeply on this soundtrack, analyzing, cataloging, and finding the connections of all the music. I built from my own the following cue list, with reference to the audio tracks of the CD and other times having to invent names for the cue in relation to what was happening on the screen. The "unofficial" names are shown in *italic*.

n.	Composer	Cue	Title	MX IN	MX OUT	Duration
1	Jerry Herman	1m1	<b>Put On Your Sunday Cloths</b>	0:00:46	0:02:00	0:01:14
2	T.Newman	1m2	<b>2815 A.D.</b>	0:03:22	0:06:45	0:03:23
3	Bill Bernestein / T.Newman	2m1	<b>BNL</b>	0:03:51	0:03:59	0:00:08
4	Jerry Herman	3m1	<b>Put On Your Sunday Cloths &amp; It Only Takes a Moment</b>	0:06:45	0:09:19	0:02:34
5	T.Newman	4m1	<b>WALL - E</b>	0:09:28	0:12:17	0:02:49
6	T.Newman	5m1	<b>The Spaceship</b>	0:12:17	0:13:50	0:01:33
7	T.Newman	5m2	<b>Thrust</b>	0:14:07	0:14:45	0:00:38
8	T.Newman	5m3	<b>All that Love's About</b>	0:15:27	0:16:02	0:00:35
9	T.Newman	5m4	<b>The Rocket Leave</b>	0:16:10	0:16:18	0:00:08
10	T.Newman	5m5	<b>EVE</b>	0:16:38	0:17:35	0:00:57
11	T.Newman	6m1	<b><i>Eve at work</i></b>	0:17:57	0:19:00	0:01:03
12	T.Newman	6m2	<b>All the Love's About (reprise)</b>	0:19:17	0:19:35	0:00:18
13	David / Guglielmi / Louiguy / Édith Piaf - feat L. Armstrong	7m1	<b>La Vie En Rose (song)</b>	0:19:35	0:21:09	0:01:34
14	T.Newman	8m1	<b><i>Eve at work 2</i></b>	0:21:11	0:21:24	0:00:13
15	T.Newman	8m2	<b>The Storm</b>	0:23:35	0:24:47	0:01:12

16	T.Newman	9m1	<b>Bubble Wrap</b>	0:24:35	0:25:23	0:00:48
17	Jerry Herman	9m2	<b>Put On Your Sunday Cloths (reprise)</b>	0:25:34	0:26:28	0:00:54
18	T.Newman	9m3	<b>Eye Surgery</b>	0:26:28	0:27:06	0:00:38
19	T.Newman	9m4	<b>All that Love's About (reprise)</b>	0:27:16	0:28:33	0:01:17
20	T.Newman	9m5	<b>Worry Wait</b>	0:28:33	0:29:49	0:01:16
21	T.Newman	10m1	<b>First Date</b>	0:29:50	0:31:03	0:01:13
22	T.Newman	11m1	<b>EVE Retrive</b>	0:31:33	0:33:40	0:02:07
23	T.Newman	12m1	<b>The Axiom</b>	0:33:44	0:36:05	0:02:21
24	T.Newman	13m1	<b>Foreign Contaminant (part1)</b>	0:36:09	0:37:13	0:01:04
25	T.Newman	13m2	<b>Foreign Contaminant (part2)</b>	0:37:59	0:38:33	0:00:34
26	T.Newman	13m3	<b>Repair Ward (intro)</b>	0:38:44	0:38:55	0:00:11
27	T.Newman	14m1	<b>Foreign Contaminant (reprise)</b>	0:39:27	0:39:43	0:00:16
28	T.Newman	14m2	<b>72 Degrees and Sunny</b>	0:39:47	0:42:53	0:03:06
29	T.Newman	15m1	<b>Typing Bot</b>	0:43:10	0:43:57	0:00:47
30	T.Newman	16m1	<b>Captain Room</b>	0:44:05	0:44:22	0:00:17
31	Jerry Herman	16m2	<b>Put On Your Sunday Cloths (reprise)</b>	0:44:22	0:44:53	0:00:31
32	T.Newman	16m3	<b>Septualcentennial</b>	0:45:45	0:45:57	0:00:12
33	T.Newman	16m4	<b>Positive</b>	0:46:38	0:47:12	0:00:34
34	T.Newman	16m5	<b>President's speech</b>	0:47:21	0:48:12	0:00:51
35	T.Newman	16m6	<b>Operation Manual</b>	0:48:36	0:50:58	0:02:22
36	T.Newman	17m1	<b>Analysis</b>	0:51:20	0:51:53	0:00:33
37	T.Newman	17m2	<b>Repair Ward</b>	0:51:53	0:53:56	0:02:03
38	Jerry Herman	17m3	<b>Put On Your Sunday Cloths (reprise)</b>	0:53:56	0:54:23	0:00:27
39	T.Newman	18m1	<b>Free Robots</b>	0:54:31	0:56:04	0:01:33
40	T.Newman	20m1	<b>All that Love's About (reprise)</b>	0:56:14	0:56:25	0:00:11
41	T.Newman	20m2	<b>Bubble Wrap (reprise)</b>	0:56:45	0:57:07	0:00:22

42	T.Newman	20m3	<b>Gopher</b>	0:57:08	0:57:44	0:00:36
43	T.Newman	20m4	<b>WALL - E's Pod Adventure</b>	0:57:50	0:58:51	0:01:01
44	T.Newman	22m1	<b>First Kiss</b>	0:59:32	0:59:50	0:00:18
45	P.Gabriel / T.Newman	22m2	<b>Define Dancing</b>	0:59:50	1:02:09	0:02:19
46	T.Newman	23m1	<b>No Splashing No Diving</b>	1:02:18	1:02:58	0:00:40
47	T.Newman	23m2	<b>No Splashing No Diving (reprise)</b>	1:03:04	1:03:21	0:00:17
48	T.Newman	24m1	<b>Plant found</b>	1:03:40	1:04:35	0:00:55
49	T.Newman	24m2	<b>All that Love's About (reprise)</b>	1:05:25	1:06:03	0:00:38
50	T.Newman	25m1	<b>M-O</b>	1:06:06	1:06:51	0:00:45
51	T.Newman	25m2	<b>Recovered</b>	1:06:51	1:07:51	0:01:00
52	T.Newman	25m3	<b>Directive A-113</b>	1:08:08	1:10:15	0:02:07
53	T.Newman	25m4	<b>Mutiny!</b>	1:10:16	1:11:42	0:01:26
54	T.Newman	26m1	<b>Inside the garbage</b>	1:12:20	1:13:20	0:01:00
55	T.Newman	26m2	<b>Fixing WALL - E</b>	1:13:49	1:14:57	0:01:08
56	T.Newman	26m3	<b>Rogue Robots</b>	1:14:58	1:17:57	0:02:59
57	T.Newman	27m1	<b>Teamwork</b>	1:17:58	1:19:05	0:01:07
58	T.Newman	27m2	<b>Taken</b>	1:19:10	1:19:17	0:00:07
59	T.Newman	28m1	<b>March of the Gels</b>	1:19:19	1:22:06	0:02:47
60	R.Strauss	29m1	<b>Also Sprach Zarathustra</b>	1:22:06	1:22:56	0:00:50
61	T.Newman	29m2	<b>The Holo-Detector</b>	1:22:56	1:24:00	0:01:04
62	T.Newman	29m3	<b>Hyperjump</b>	1:24:01	1:25:02	0:01:01
63	T.Newman	30m1	<b>Desperate EVE</b>	1:25:29	1:26:22	0:00:53
64	T.Newman	31m1	<b>Static</b>	1:26:40	1:28:15	0:01:35
65	Jerry Herman	31m2	<b>It Only Takes a Moment</b>	1:29:12	1:30:18	0:01:06
66	P.Gabriel / T.Newman	32m1	<b>Down to Earth (song)</b>	1:30:18	1:36:10	0:05:52
67	T.Newman	32m2	<b>Horizon 12.2</b>	1:36:10	1:37:20	0:01:10
				<b>Tot. Music</b>	<b>1:19:28</b>	

## 8. SOME CUE ANALYSIS

As well as studied in class during the past six months, I found interesting analyzing the structural development of someone of these cues. Even more than the harmonic/melodic set up. Scrutinizing the outer structure is a good exercise to look at the "big picture" from a greater distance and to try to understand the construction and aesthetics of composition used by Newman.

**CONCEPT: Earth, before and after**

**CUES: 2815 A.D. - The Axiom (part A) - Horizon 12.2**

I already said that there are so many themes in miniature, but there are also some great themes that are used as backbone of the film and that are invoked rarely and with great care. Newman often divides the Cue in two completely different moments, that seemingly have nothing in common with each other, but are closely linked with other Cues. Sometimes in an unequivocal manner, sometimes in gentle way.

We can find an example of that in the Cue *2815 A.D.* (1m2). This is a fundamental part in the key of reading this score. I divided into two parts.

*Part A* - The music takes us immediately into a strange and gloomy setting, something strange is happening. The public realizes for the first time that the planet Earth is covered with skyscrapers of junk. Throughout the piece we realize the insulation of WALL • E, his work, and his discontent of living in this place. This track is absolutely fantastic and in a few minutes it



manages to describe very well the whole atmosphere of melancholy linked to the sites.

The song begins with a melody introduced by the harp (as many other cue from Newman) against the strings legato and, together with the sound effects, reverb and echo effects that contribute to create an eerie atmosphere.

Misterioso  $\text{♩} = 70$

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 70$ . The key signature is G minor (two flats). The score is divided into four systems, each containing two staves (treble and bass). The melody in the treble staff is a descending eighth-note line. The bass staff provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. Dynamics range from piano (*p*) to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The score includes a triplet of eighth notes in the second system and a change in time signature to 4/4 in the second system.

Figure 2. 2815 A.D. - part A

This Cue represents the planet Earth sick, and damaged by mankind, and the only other time that this issue comes up is when WALL • E must temporarily leave EVE (who is disabled) to return reluctantly to his work.

The Cue proceeds in this mood until you get to *Part B* (about 0:06:10) - when the weight of the piece is off and the music becomes suddenly warm and cozy, taking us inside WALL • E 's house, where are preserved the beautiful things of our planet, the things that make us feel at home. Here you understand the personality of WALL • E and at the same time we understand that the world has still hope. This wonderful theme will take us on a real journey throughout the film, you will find it again, twice more, in the next two Cues: *The Axiom (part A)*, when WALL • E sees the Earth from space and *Horizon 12.2* at the really end of the film, when the Earth has once again become a place to live.

As we can see in the following score, this wonderful theme is built around a minor Plagal Cadence (ratio of fourth degree minor and first degree) that, in a certain way, brings us back to some of the great Williams's atmosphere. The melody is incredibly beautiful and of emotional impact. It is interesting to note that, in order to emphasize the transition between the two notes, especially in the Cadence, Newman always keeps the pedal bass, and by doing this the string melody sticks out even more.

Moderato ♩ = 90

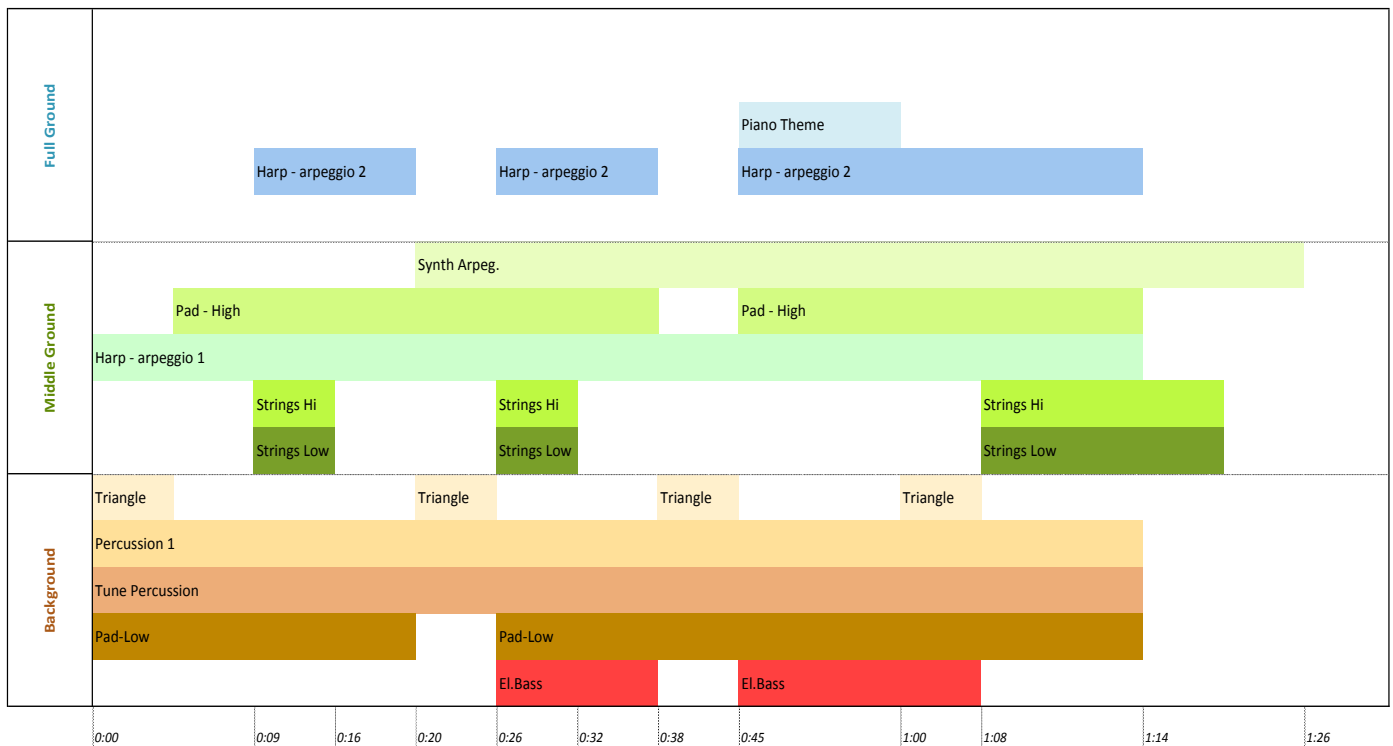
The musical score is written for piano in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The tempo is marked 'Moderato' with a quarter note equal to 90 beats per minute. The score is divided into seven systems, each with a measure number at the beginning of the first staff:

- System 1 (Measures 1-5):** Starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur over measures 4 and 5. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment.
- System 2 (Measures 6-10):** Continues the melodic and accompanimental lines.
- System 3 (Measures 11-16):** The dynamic changes to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The right hand features a more active melodic line.
- System 4 (Measures 17-23):** The dynamic increases to forte (*f*). The right hand has a complex, rhythmic melodic line.
- System 5 (Measures 24-31):** The right hand continues with a melodic line, while the left hand accompaniment becomes more intricate.
- System 6 (Measures 32-36):** The dynamic returns to piano (*p*). The right hand has a melodic line with a slur over measures 34 and 35.
- System 7 (Measures 37-40):** The piece concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. The right hand has a final melodic flourish, and the left hand ends with a sustained chord.

Figure 3. The Axiom - part A

The cue *Horizon 12.2* is a distant echo of the theme exposed in *The Axiom*. The particularity of this piece is all in the texture created. A delicate mix between acoustic and electronic instruments. The usual theme is introduced by the harp and later exposed in its entirety from the piano, it is surrounded by a wealth of electronic sounds, pads, percussion and electric bass.

**DIAGRAM ANALYSIS - Horizon 12.2 (32m2)**



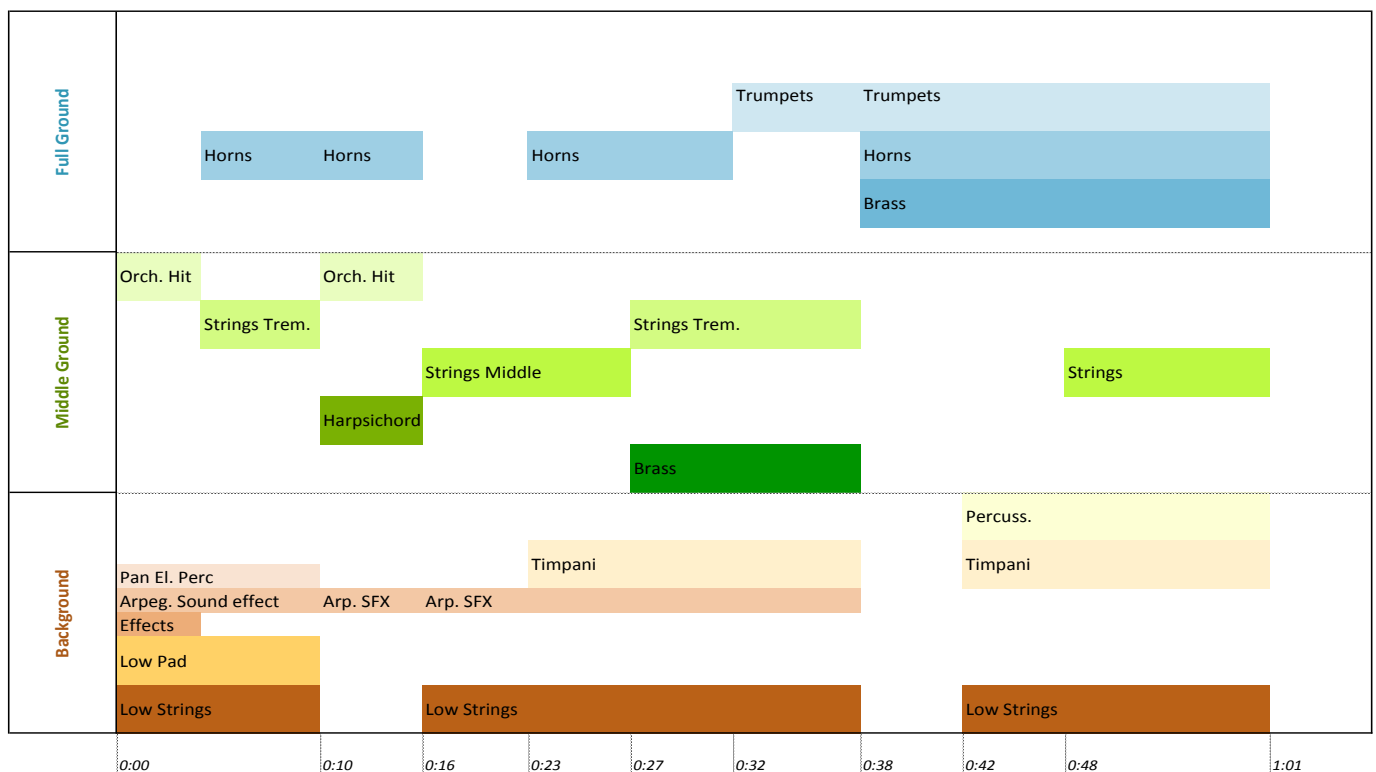
**CONCEPT: *Man-made machines***

**CUES: *The Spaceship – The Axiom (part B) – Hyperjump***

Another feature of this soundtrack used to paint concepts or situations is the use of a brass fanfare every time any kind of machinery or objects designed by man pops up in the screen. One example is the second part of *The Axiom (part B)* when WALL • E sees for the first time the giant spaceship. Or when EVE’s ship (*The Spaceship*) lands for the first time on Earth.

It is interesting to focus on the evolution of a cue as *Hyperjump*. The Axiom is preparing to return to the Earth, and to do so must make a leap. Throughout the Cue the brass play the role of Full Ground. At first the horns, then the trumpets and in the end all of brass fanfare. Another particularity of the piece is that we can easily start to feel some electronic instruments, but after the space / time jump remain only acoustic instruments. This seems to underline the transition between two different eras.

**DIAGRAM ANALYSIS - Hyperjump (29m3)**



**CONCEPT: Humans: evolution and technology**

**CUES: 72 Degrees And Sunny – No Splashing No Diving – March of the Gels**

There's another music motif which is instead used to describe humans and how they evolved. This is not an epic music as the one used by Brass to describe the technology of humans. Therefore, it is rather quirky and is exposed by electronic instruments, as if to emphasize the evolution and recent physical changes that the mankind has suffered.

In the theme in cue *72 Degrees and Sunny* we see for the first time the humans on their strange chairs. The music moves us and takes us through all the Axiom and in all the movements of a typical day on the ship. We find the same "theme" in the cue *March of the gels*, when all men are gathered in the middle of the spaceship. It is important to note that this is not exactly a theme, but it plays as background music for characterizing the scene.

In the cue called *No Splashing no diving*, we do not find exactly the same theme but a kind of variation of the same. This is because the two characters have begun to break the routine and are changing the rules, starting to learn about themselves.

**Agitato** ♩ = 140  
El. Synth

The image shows a musical score for an electronic synthesizer. It is in 3/4 time and marked 'Agitato' with a tempo of 140 beats per minute. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with four measures, each starting with a different fingering: 2, 3, 4, and 4. The bass staff contains a simple accompaniment of quarter notes and rests. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

**Figure 4. Humans's typical arpeggio**

**CONCEPT: Speaking of love**

**CUES: Eve – Define Dancing – Down to Earth - All that Love's About**

About love, this ideal is perhaps the only thing that drives WALL • E throughout the film, and is fed mostly by the songs of the music of *Hello Dolly*.

Especially for this reason, it is even more of a difficult task for the composer to find the right music to emphasize the romantic moments without being repetitive and redundant.

Another key theme is the one found in two incredible cues: *Eve* and *Define Dancing*.

Both Newman and Peter Gabriel have worked together on the music of *Eve*. Newman said that he chose to use high strings to make the music more feminine. Although there are many times when WALL • E and EVE are together, and in romantic situations, this music is reused only later in the film, when EVE dances with WALL • E in space, in one of the most beautiful scenes of the film called *Define Dancing*.

In both cues (*Eve* and *Define Dancing*) the mood Lydian (Db Lydian) dominates the whole piece. In the central part Lydian harmony is lost for a moment and the two chords Bb min and Gb maj recur and they are both emphasized and remarked by the strings.

It is definitely a Modal piece in the first part and Tonal in the middle. The choice is to emphasize with the strings moving from F natural Gb. The Bridge in the only harmonic news in this score, with two chords of F# maj and F maj (counterpoint of strings Db, C, Bb, A and vice versa).

But the real innovation is the use of string orchestra with electronic instruments.

The theme is given before the harp, then a fantastic Lead Synth and finally the high strings. The

use of the electric bass is unconventional and somewhat robotic.

The orchestration and the mood refer to certain sounds that made Gabriel famous and unique. It is a must listen to the song Red Rain by Gabriel, if only for pleasure, and find some primitive cell harmonic present in Define Dancing. It is interesting how the song is developed in its structure to have a clearer idea of originality of Newman in the choice of the instrumentation, and how to play with the timbre of the single instruments.

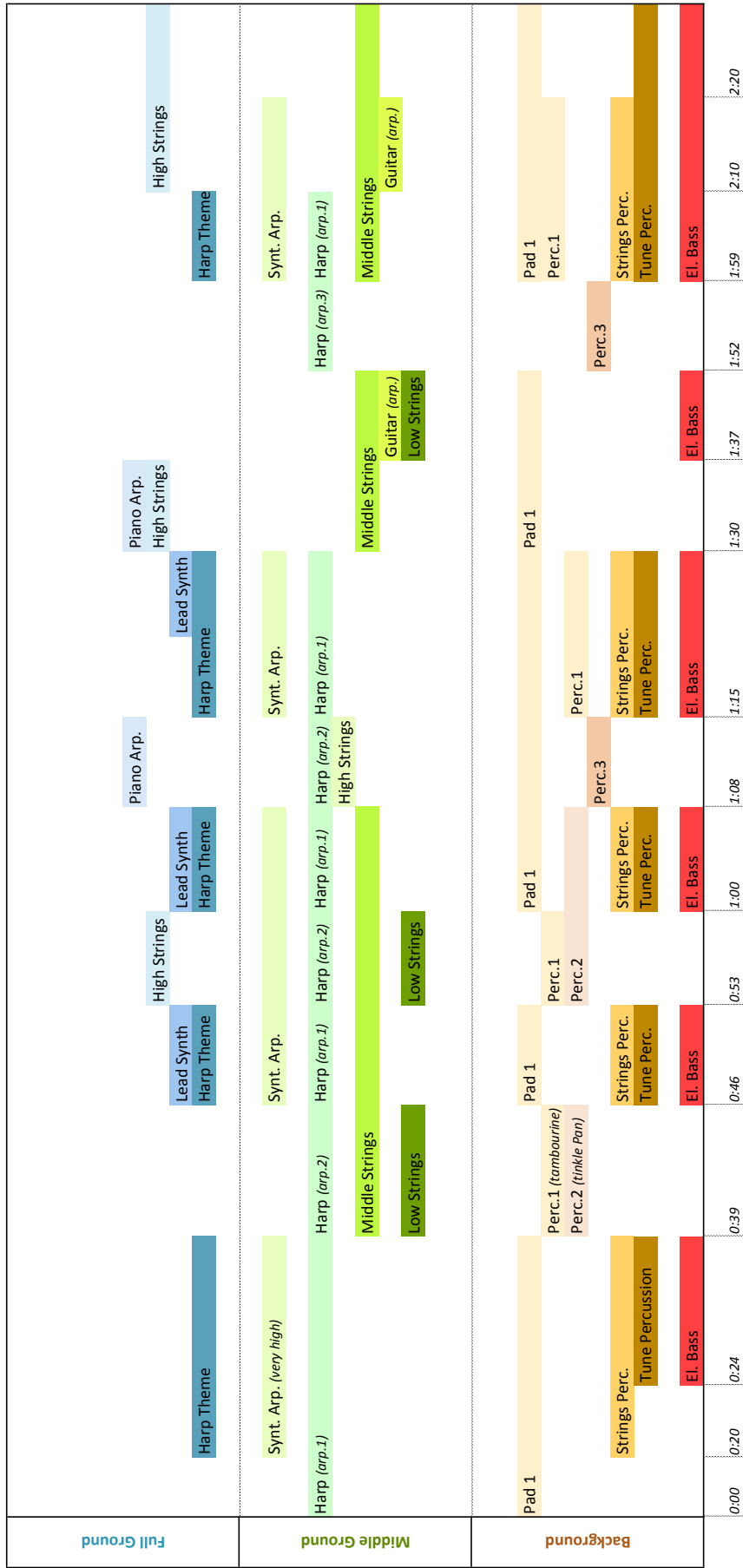
With the availability of a full orchestra, it would be easy to fall into the trap of using more possible sounds. Getting the opposite effect of increased confusion sound. Newman always manages to be elegant and minimalist choosing the instruments, but always refined in the results.

Despite the theme being of great beauty and easily remembered, this is used only twice during the duration of the movie. There is, however, one small exception.

Since Peter Gabriel created the credits theme, which talks about rebuilding the Earth, he wanted to have material used previously in the song of the film, so that the public could have a sense of familiarity and allow his song to merge with previous work of Newman. Therefore, Gabriel borrowed the bass and drums figures from both introductory music of *Eve* and *Define Dancing* to be used in the last song, making EVE's theme appear for a total of three times during the film.



DIAGRAM ANALYSIS - Define Dancing (22m2)



While the theme *All that's Love's About* does not report the same theme, but in terms of the use of bows and delicacy in the exposition of the theme it is similar to the two previous cues.

The chord progression is this:

First degree (B major) - Fourth degree (E major) - Fifth degree (F # major).

But there is a curiosity that I found listening to this piece. Throughout the song, the use of strings, and the mood, it reminds me in some way of the song *What a Wonderful World* by Louis Armstrong. I do not know if this is something that was desired, whereas the presence of another song by Armstrong (*La Vie en Rose*) and I would not be surprised if the composer had deliberately created a slight reference to the sounds. In any case, I found it very curious.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

Director Andrew Stanton and composer Thomas Newman have slipped in nods not just to Hello, Dolly!, but to Star Wars, Blade Runner and Chaplin movies. Much more than just a coincidence and a connection to Chaplin, actually: WALL • E, with his workaholic scruffiness and his yearning for someone to hold hands with, might as well be Chaplin's Little Tramp. I found a beautiful parallel between this film (especially the first part) and the first Chaplin film "Modern Times". Thanks to this score so original, the WALL • E's world seems true in all its epic decay.

And there are still many small details that deserve attention.

In the end I had no idea that EVE was humming "*It Only Takes A Moment*" on WALL • E

movie - and up until I completed this in-depth analysis, which added so much understanding and information to the film. This is a great way to tie everything together. Although I have seen this film almost forty times in my life, now I'm even more excited to watch it again, to tie in all the musical knowledge that I have acquired through the writing of this Thesis. Although I've practically memorized this movie, the music analysis gives me the chance to look at a completely different movie.

I really enjoyed the way the composer has made this work. Creating graphs I had a great help in conceptualizing a possible mockup. Make me a list of the instrumentation used and how it was used. Learn different points of approach to a character or a scene, which are not only thematic. But at the same time the presence of small theme in miniature forced me to focus more carefully on all the music present in the movie. Due to the absence of real themes, find the connection between the various cues or between different parts of the film was even more interesting and not at all simple.

As is known, the point of a film score is to create the proper atmosphere during the scenes. This is achieved with playfulness and the impressive skill Thomas Newman has. If the scene is happy, depressing, urgent, or disturbing, Thomas Newman is right on target in every situation.

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