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Post Rock Music in Film

Nathanael Adrian Putra

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

April 2019

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Abstract

The use of post-rock music has not been widely explored in the academic world. The research explores the use of post-rock music in film through both practice-based research and a musical analysis of previous works of post-rock music in film. The aim of this research is to compose a portfolio of post-rock music for a selection of film clips based on analyses of other works of post-rock music in film. The choice of the clips for the analyses is determined by the popularity of the post-rock band composing for the film and the popularity of the film. The clips analysed in turn influence the choice of clips chosen for the portfolio and influences the way the music functions in the clip. The film clips feature different genres of film to showcase the use of post-rock in different film genres. The research focuses primarily on defining post-rock and its traits, the functions of post-rock music in film and how it does it while also comparing it to traditional classical score. Claudia Gorbman states that traditional classical score tend to be perceived as background music, invisible and inaudible but full of subtle cues to influence mood and immerse the audience (Gorbman, 1987, p. 73). The research concludes post-rock music functions as a traditional classical score such as to link scenes together, to create a setting and to set the mood. Since it tends to be dynamic and instrumental, it is ideal for use in film. Unlike a traditional classical score, post-rock relies not only on just tonality but using pads and soundscapes to set the mood. Using textures with a certain timbre can influence certain mood and certain effects can bring out an out-of-this-world quality. In addition, the genre's dynamic nature can prove to intensify dramatic tension.

Introduction

The research strives to answer a simple question: what does post-rock music bring to film? To answer the question, the research incorporates musicological analyses of previously done post-rock music in films and a practice-based research to showcase how the musical traits of post-rock can enhance film. The choice of clips for the analyses is determined by the popularity of the film and the popularity of the band that composed the music for the film. The clips used in the analyses in turn, influence the choice of clips for the practice-based portion of the research. Post-rock music can be ideal for use in film due to its dynamic and instrumental nature. A major part of the research is defining post-rock and its traits. The musical traits of post-rock, particularly the use of soundscapes and studio effects, play a significant part in the compositions for the practice-based portion of the research. Through the analysis and the portfolio, I will explain the effect of post-rock music in film.

Methodology

The two methods used for the research are a practice-based research and a musical analysis of previously done post-rock music in film. As Larsen mentions in his book *Film Music*, a musical analysis ideally has a specific purpose. The analysis should solve actual problems and understand how the piece functions and is constructed. A musical analysis is normally expected to tell something about the way we experience music (Larsen, 2007, p. 39). Though there are different approaches to a musical analysis, they would essentially ask the same kind of questions such as asking “how components of the music relate to each other, and which relationships are more important than others. More specifically, they ask how far these components derive their effect from the context they are in” (p. 39). Larsen adds that in the same way a film analyst explores a film, a music analyst studying a piece of music will look for repetitions and other formal patterns. They will look at the similarities, differences, and other musical elements that fulfil or counter our expectations. Like film analysis, music analysis is also limited in the way it can be interpreted. Larsen presents an example of this with an analysis of Haydn’s Symphony No. 83 (p. 39-40). He writes, “we can present a kind of x-ray of the music, point to how the individual sections of the movements balance each other, show how things develop from beginning to end. But if we say that the movement contains a deep philosophical thesis, that it expresses the Enlightenment ideal of ‘tolerance’, we have moved outside the field of analysis. The analysis cannot ‘prove’ that this is how things are, but it can at least establish an internal, musical basis which, combined with other observations and relevant historical material, can form a point of departure for interpretations that arrive at the statements to do with the social or philosophical ‘content’ of the symphony” (p. 39-40). Larsen mentions that unlike a traditional musical analysis, a film music analysis functions as

a part of a “larger-extra musical whole” (p. 41). Film music is functional and is often made out of fragments that do not connect with each other musically (p. 41). Larsen adds that a good starting point for a film music analysis is through a simple description of the music. He does admit that there is a difference between describing music and describing scenes in a film. Cinematic descriptions are relatively easier to understand, and readers will most likely understand what is going on based on the description. The same cannot be said about a film music. It is much easier to represent music with notations and musical terminology such as motifs, themes, etc (p. 42-45). For this reason, I will be providing musical notations and use musical terminologies on the case studies to aid my musical analyses. The music analysis is relevant to the research because it gives an insight on how previous works of post-rock music in film function and how it could influence the practice-based research.

The practice-based research consists of a portfolio of five short clips taken from a collection of films: *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* (2015), *A Cottage on Dartmoor* (1929), *Tsumiki no le* (2008), *Elephants Dream* (2006) and *Drive* (2011). The clips have been rescored with post-rock music to accompany the visuals. The majority of the recording took place in the main recording studio of the University of Huddersfield. The session was recorded as a live band would, the drums were recorded live alongside the bass. The guitars and other layers were added later on. Although the majority of the recording was done as a live performance, the production element of the recordings plays a significant part and alters much of the live performance. *Elephants Dream* (2006) for example could not have been done as a live performance since the composition utilized numerous studio effects and layering to achieve certain timbres while the composition for *Tsumiki no le* (2008) made use of reverb to immerse

the audience with the different spatiality of the shots. All of the production decisions and its effects are discussed in the commentary section. The purpose of the practice-based research is to put into practice the case studies that has been done and to see what the traits of post-rock music can bring into film.

The case studies were chosen based on the popularity of the films and the popularity of the bands that composed the music for the chosen films. The case studies also influenced the compositional decisions of the portfolio, particularly the way post-rock music functions in film.

Literature Review

There is an abundance of studies on film music and its functions. However, as Wojcik and Knight point out, these studies have “largely ignored popular music in favor of analyzing the classical nondiegetic film score” (Wojcik and Knight, 2001, p. 5). Despite the wealth of post-rock music in film, there hasn’t been much research that delves into the use of post-rock music in film and what the musical traits of post-rock music bring into the film. However, there are materials that have explored a similar topic and are relevant to this study. These studies mainly relate to genre, post-rock, and music in film. The aim of this research is to look into what post-rock music brings into film and to replicate that in the practice-based aspect of the research.

Genre is one of the main foci of this research. It is crucial to define what it means and what makes up a genre. Popular music scholar Roy Shuker explains musical genre in his book *Popular Music Culture: The Key Concepts* stating that genre can be “defined as a category or type” (Shuker, 2017, p. 148). It is a key component for textual analysis and is frequently used as reference points for musicians, critics and fans (p. 148-149).

There are different approaches in defining musical genres. Shuker mentions a study by Lena and Peterson from 2008 which explored the two dominant approaches to genre study. One that is musicological, which distinguishes genre as music that shares similar musical characteristics, and another one that places genre in a social context. Lena and Peterson argue that the social context approach has greater explanatory power. It is described as “systems of orientations, expectations, and conventions that bind together an industry, performers, critics, and fans in making what they identify as a distinctive sort of music” (p. 149). Shuker also adds that “genre divisions must be

regarded as highly fluid. No style is totally independent of those that have preceded it and musicians borrow elements from existing styles and incorporate them into new forms" (p. 149).

According to Shuker, there are four distinguishing attributes that make up a musical genre. The first attribute is the stylistic traits of the music which include the compositional and structural characteristics of the music. These are the traits that produce a recognisable sound and follow the conventions of composition, instrumentation and performance of the genre. These musical traits can also vary depending on the metagenre (p. 150)

The second attribute is the image and its associated visual style. These include different factors that are essentially non-musical attributes which may include the structure of performances, the aesthetic adopted by the performers and fans. The musical and visual aspect work in tandem to create a particular ideological effect (p. 150).

The third attribute is the audience. Shuker elaborates this point by saying that "the relationship between fans (and subcultures) and their genre preferences is a form of transaction, mediated by the forms of delivery, creating specific cultural forms with sets of expectations. Genres are accorded specific places in a musical hierarchy by both critics and fans, and by many performers. This hierarchy is loosely based around the notions of authenticity, sincerity and commercialism. The critical denigration of certain genres, including disco, dance pop and the elevation of others, such as alt. country, reflects this, and mirrors the broader, still widely accepted, high/low culture

split. We must acknowledge the ultimately subjective nature of these concepts, and the shifting status and constituency of genres. This point becomes clear when we check the genres listed here against those included in the major encyclopaedias, compendiums and histories of popular music. Furthermore, genres are historically located; some endure, others spring briefly to prominence then fade” (p. 150).

The last attribute that distinguishes a genre are the institutional frames and practices such as which record label an artist is signed to (p. 150).

Italian musicologist Franco Fabbri explains his perspective on musical genre in a similar way. Fabbri defines a musical genre as a set of musical events governed by a set of socially accepted rules. In this context, musical event is any type of activity performed around any type of event involving sound (Fabbri, 1980). These genre theories are taken into consideration for the composition and recording process of the practice-based research. The portfolio follows the conventions of post-rock music in terms of the musical attributes and the way it's produced and recorded.

Post-rock as a genre is a loose term and its musical traits are hard to pinpoint. It is a subgenre of rock which itself “has mutated into an enormous range of styles (Shuker, 2017, p. 293). Music historian Jeanette Leech compiled numerous interviews and stories by post-rock bands in her book *Fearless: The Making of Post-Rock*. The term post-rock implies that the genre evolved from rock music and the word ‘post’ suggests that rock is defunct. This is the reason many post-rock bands refuse to be labelled as such and insist that they’re essentially a rock band (Leech, 2017, p. 6). Jack Chuter who is a frequent contributor to the UK’s experimental music magazines chronicles

the story of post-rock in his book *Storm Static Sleep: A Pathway Through Post-Rock*. The book describes that musically, post-rock can be considered as “the collision between Tortoise and Bark Psychosis: a largely instrumental music with vast dynamic and spatial breadth, flecked with the democratic virtuosity of jazz” (Chuter, 2015, p. 123-124). The musical structure of post-rock also differs from traditional rock music. Post-rock “abandons the verse-chorus-verse structure in favor of the soundscape” (Reynolds, 2004, p. 358). Post-rock bands still use the typical rock music instrumentation but augments the “basic guitar-bass-drums lineup with digital technology such as samplers and sequencers, or tamper with the trad rock lineup but prefer antiquated analog synths and nonrocky instrumentation” (p. 358).

A major influence in the musical traits of post-rock music is dub. Dub’s use of reverb and echo are exploited by post-rock bands to make “each strand of sound occur in its own distinct acoustic space” (p. 360). In addition to that, dub’s use of sampling and editing audio in the computer allows for limitless possibilities that “could never possibly have been a real-time event, since it’s composed of vivisected musical fragments plucked from different contexts and eras, then layered and resequenced to form a time-warping pseudoevent” (p. 360). Another influence in post-rock music is Brian Eno and his concept on using the studio as an instrument. Where most rock producers aim for a hyper-realistic simulation of the band in performance, post-rock bands follow the dub and Eno’s concept of using “effects and processes to sever the link between the sound you hear and the physical act (striking a guitar chord, pounding a drum skin) that produced it” (p. 360). In essence, post-rock music is heavily production-based. The techniques used in post-rock music, which involves using the studio effects as an instrument, are hard to replicate in a live setting.

Post-rock music generally focuses on developing texture and timbre to build a musical world. Chuter gives a more metaphorical comparison between rock music and post-rock to differentiate between the two. Rock music, as Carducci explains, is affiliated with the “physical world we all inhabit” (Chuter, 2015, p. 69). The explosive drum hits of rock music “triggers the listener’s motor memory of how the physical world behaves” (p. 69). Post-rock music on the other hand transcends the physical world. “Post-rock is a violation of these earthly concepts. It’s a suspension of musical gravity, where thuds of rhythm don’t necessarily herald explosions of guitar and cymbals” (p. 69).

The song ‘Crossing the Road Material’ on the album *Every Country’s Sun* by Mogwai is an example of an archetypal post-rock song (Mogwai, 2017, track 4). The track exhibits many attributes mentioned in regard to post-rock. The song is instrumental and it lacks distinct sections. It starts off relatively sparse and clean. As the song progresses, the music gets heavier and denser. The drums progressively get more intense while the rhythm guitar moves from a clean to distortion. The timbre of the lead guitar and the distorted rhythm guitar create a soundscape that envelops listeners.

Aside from the musical attributes, the image and the audience associated with post-rock differs to that of traditional rock band. Instead of “the body of a white teenage boy, middle finger erect and a sneer playing across his lips. At the center of post-rock floats a phantasmatic un-body, androgynous and racially indeterminate: half ghost, half machine” (Reynolds, 2004, p. 359). This contrasts with the traditional portrayal of rock music which is described by Marion Leonard as masculine, male-run and misogynist (Leonard, 2007, p. 23). Post-rock lacks the drive and the energy present

in rock music despite the fact that post-rock is derived from rock music. Certain timbres in rock music are codified as masculine, such as the sound of an amplified overdrive guitar riff and the vocal style of rock singing which tends to have a harsh, abrasive timbre (p. 96). Whereas rock music is full of aggression, post-rock constructs a safe haven of exile and utopia as in dub reggae, Hip Hop and rave (Reynolds, 2004, p. 359).

However, differentiating between post-rock and traditional rock doesn't give a sense of what post-rock actually is. Chuter states that "post-rock still struggles to communicate and identify itself with conviction and clarity" (Chuter, 2015, p. 3). Simon Reynolds, the first person to coin the term post-rock describe the genre as "bands that use guitars but in nonrock ways, as timbre and texture rather than riff and powerchord" (Reynolds, 2004, p. 358). That description itself is a vague representation of what post-rock is as other genres of music also exhibit that same attribute. Jeanette Leech describes in her book that the genre is problematic to define. She states, "one moment it's being used to describe virtually all modern experimental guitar music; the next it's used for a needle-eye definition relation *only* to a certain type of instrumental volume-based dynamic music" (Leech, 2017, p. 7). Jack Chuter defines the current incarnation of post-rock as "cinematic, predominantly instrumental rock music" (Chuter, 2015, p. 1).

The bands labelled as post-rock have evolved through the decades and the genre's characteristics have changed with them. When Reynolds coined the term post-rock, he was referring to "bands like Tortoise, Pram, Trans Am, Bark Psychosis and Main" (Chuter, 2015, p. 1). These bands are remarkably different to the bands Chuter cites

as modern post-rock which include bands like Mogwai, Godspeed You! Black Emperor and Sigur Ròs (p. 1). In fact, Reynolds does not see any remnants of the post-rock term he coined in modern post-rock bands such as Mogwai (p. 70). This doesn't necessarily mean that modern post-rock bands should not be considered as post-rock. They share a common ground in that they "employ the spatiality and tonal manipulation of ambient, using reverb to generate three-dimensional headspaces and smooth the serrated attack of the guitar (p. 70). Reynolds also mentions that the genre "was coined to describe the "open-ended space of possibility", where artists were spilling beyond the boundaries of rock in many different directions" (p. 71). Although the song previously mentioned, 'Crossing the Road Material', is an example of a modern post-rock song, it is not what Reynolds meant when he first coined the genre. As with all musical genres, post-rock is constantly evolving and it is difficult to give an exact definition of what it is. There are however common attributes of post-rock. It is a dynamic, mostly instrumental rock music that exploits the guitar to be used mainly to create textures. The genre also leans heavily towards productions rather than a pure live performance due to the use of the studio as an instrument.

As with musical genre, films are also categorized by genre. Film professor Rick Altman has a book published entitled *Film/Genre* to describe the genre theory for film. He writes, "the study of film genre is no more than an extension of literary genre study" (Altman, 1999, p. 13). The different genres of film derive from literary genre and are influenced by it. According to Altman, film genre may have multiple meanings and concept. It can be defined as a blueprint for the film industry to base their production upon. It can be defined as a structure which is the formal framework on which individual films are founded and it can also be defined as a label to market the film and

inform the audience (p. 14). The musicological and the practiced-based aspect of the research includes a variety of film genres to demonstrate that post-rock music work in different genres of film therefore film genre does not play a significant part in the research.

Post-rock music has been used in film and TV shows. Its usage has grown in prominence since the early 2000s. The most well-known examples of post-rock music used in film include *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait* (2006) which is an experimental documentary based on the football legend Zidane. The film has a soundtrack composed entirely by Mogwai. The movie *Vanilla Sky* (2001) features various genres of music in its soundtrack including two post-rock songs which are composed by Sigur Rós. Another blockbuster film that has a post-rock soundtrack is the movie *28 Days Later* (2002). The movie has a post-rock soundtrack that is highly influenced by a well-known post-rock band, Godspeed You! Black Emperor. The soundtrack is composed by John Murphy and includes a track by Godspeed You! Black Emperor. Some of these films form the choice of clips for the case study of this research due to their popularity and the popularity of the band.

In order to asses post-rock in film, it is helpful to examine the ways in which film music works more broadly. Music has always played an important role in film the world of film. Philip Tagg, a musicologist and author of numerous influential books on music semiotic and popular music, summarises Zofia Lissa's functions of films as emphasis of movement, expression of actor's emotions, representation of location, basis of audience's emotions, anticipation of events, etc (Tagg, n.d.). Most film music tends to abide to these functions including post-rock. Film academic Claudia Gorbman agrees

with these functions and expands it even further in her book *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*. Gorbman talks of the background quality of traditional classical score and its tendency to be invisible and inaudible, working its way subconsciously to signify emotions and immerse the viewers in the film (Gorbman, 1987, p. 73). She also mentions that the most general functional level of music in film serves to link empty spaces in the action or the dialogue and also bridges gaps between gaps or segments (p. 89). She agrees with Lissa that film music establishes setting, whether historical or geographical, through its cultural coding (p. 58). Film music author Roy Prendergast goes further by stating that "music can help build the drama in a scene to a far greater degree of intensity than any of the other cinematic arts" (Prendergast, 1992, p. 222). It must be clarified however that these authors are mostly talking about classical music.

The musicological research such as the functions of music, musical traits of post-rock and the case studies of post-rock music in film will influence the result of the composition of this research.

Analysis

Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror

The movie *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) is a silent film featuring a vampire called Count Orlok. The original score was composed by Hans Erdmann, although the majority of the score is now missing. This is the reason why a lot of musicians and composers have written their own rendition for the film. 3epkano is one of the bands that have composed their own rendition for the film. They are one of the bands labelled as a modern post-rock band. One of the more famous renditions is composed by James Bernard who is known for composing music for horror films (Garza and O'Meara, n.d.). His work will be used to contrast 3epkano's own rendition of *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922). The scene analysed for the case study is the last scene of the film.



Image 1 *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* - Cross cut between Orlok and the Woman

The scene starts with a cut of the woman and Count Orlok, the antagonist of the film and a vampire. At this point, the music is sinister and lacking rhythmic foundation. The music is led by a cello playing a repetitive and simplistic phrase although the pattern is unpredictable due to the lack of a rhythmic foundation as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the cello's opening phrase

Figure 1 shows that the first section is in the key of C# minor. The cello emphasizes the minor tonality since it gravitates around the 2nd, minor 3rd and the minor 6th. The emphasis on the minor key along with the low sound of the cello builds up the tension in the scene. A guitar comes in later on with a slow strumming pattern which stays on a C# minor chord throughout the section. This doesn't create a sense of resolution and builds up the tension as audiences would expect the harmonic movement to go somewhere. Like the cello, the tone of the guitar is dark and sinister. This is because the guitar is played with a sterile clean tone. At this point, the music functions as the basis for audience's emotions, which is one of the main functions of music in film as described by Lissa (Tagg, N/A). The melodic movement of the cello complemented with the tone of both instruments creates a sombre atmosphere. The cymbals eventually come in with embellishments, coinciding with Orlok's fingers slowly going up the window as shown in image 2.



Image 2 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Orlok's hand slowly crawling up the window

Soon after, the shot immediately cuts to the woman turning away from the window of her room with a look of relief as shown in image 3. The expression coincides with a double hit of the kick drum which provides a much-needed rhythmic foundation. This is described by Chion as 'synchresis' and it creates a bridge between the sound and vision (Chion, 1994, Page 5).



Image 3 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The look of relief on the woman's face

The woman then opens the window with a violin playing simultaneously as seen in image 4. This is another example of synchresis.



Image 4 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The woman opening the window

The violin brings in the melodic movement in the music and complements the cello.

The violin starts on the minor 7th of the C# minor key as shown in figure 2.

A musical transcription for violin in 4/4 time. The key signature is C# minor. The music begins at measure 17 with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure 21 continues the pattern. Measure 25 concludes the excerpt. The notation includes various note heads, stems, and rests.

Figure 2 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the violin's entrance

The violin's part is played dramatically while the cello still plays the phrase shown in figure one although with slight accidentals at times.



Image 5 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The woman's husband leading her to bed as she faints

The woman begins to faint as she walks away from the window. She wakes her husband and he leads her to bed as shown in image 5. As her husband guides her back to bed, the layers of instruments drop out and the tempo slows down considerably. The drums stop playing and a piano comes in playing arpeggiated notes shown in figure 3.

A musical transcription for piano. The first staff starts with a treble clef, common time (indicated by '8'), and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff starts with a treble clef, common time (indicated by '8'), and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of two measures of eighth-note arpeggios. Measure 1: Right hand plays F#-A-C#; left hand plays C#-E-G. Measure 2: Right hand plays F#-A-C#; left hand plays C#-E-G. Measure 37 is indicated above the second staff.

Figure 3 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the piano arpeggio when the woman is fainting

The piano is complemented by the violin and cello which are playing long-held notes that emphasize the relative major of the key. The change to a major chord and the arpeggiated note creates a bittersweet mood. The combination of the tempo slowing down and the legato that is played by the strings create an intimate mood. The music at this scene also functions as an expression of character's emotions, along with it acting as the basis for audience's emotions.



Image 6 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The woman faints

When the woman finally faints as shown in image 6, the music intensifies. The tempo quickens and the drums come in again. The cello plays the phrase seen in figure 4 with the violin playing a similar phrase.

A musical transcription for the cello from the score of Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror. The transcription consists of three staves of musical notation, each starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff begins at measure 49, the second at measure 50, and the third at measure 53. The notation features a combination of eighth and sixteenth notes, primarily using staccato dots above the stems. The music is in common time.

Figure 4 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the cello when the woman faints

The combination of the drums and the staccato increases the pace of the scene and adds intensity. Chion calls this temporal animation (Chion, 1994, Page 13). The music shifts back to a minor key which contrasts with the music of the previous scene creating a tense atmosphere again. The drum kit, which is driving the music, greatly intensifies the scene and the horror of Orlok's silhouette seen in image 7.



Image 7 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Orlok's silhouette as he walks up the stairs

The next musical change comes with a shot of the woman moving backwards towards the bed seen in image 8.



Image 8 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The woman walking backwards towards her bed

At this point, the guitar starts chugging and another guitar provides textural elements with sliding effects. The layers of guitar textures make the scene feel more dramatic. The rhythm section is filled with drum fills that create intensity and also sets the pace for the scene.



Image 9 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Orlok sucking on the woman's neck

The music continues to intensify with more layers added on. As Orlok is sucking blood out of the woman's neck seen in image 9, the music climaxes. The dense musical layers that have been built up, especially with the heavy-hitting drums and drum fills indicate the climax of the music.

Orlok loses track of time and forgets that day is upon him. He looks up and notices the coming of day as seen in image 10. At this point, the music slows down and the instruments start dropping out one by one. This functions as an anticipation of subsequent events, which is another function of music described by Lissa (Tagg, N/A).

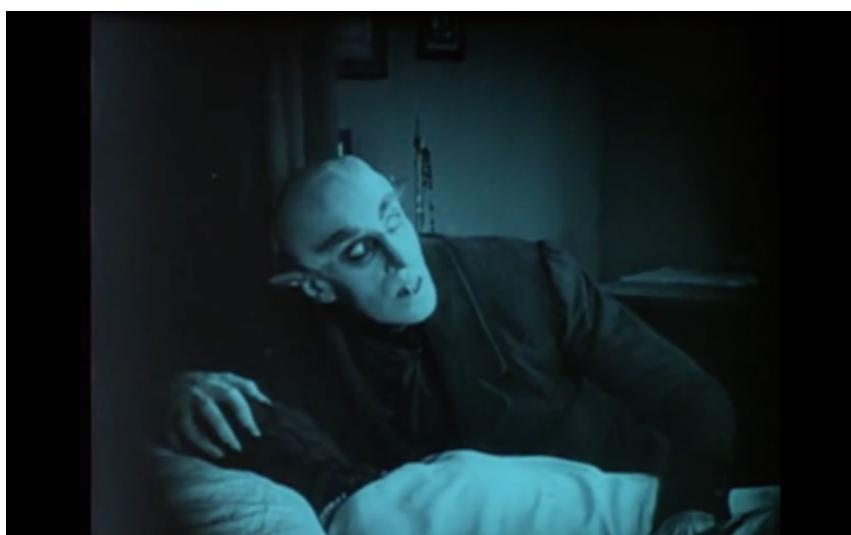


Image 10 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Orlok noticing the coming of day

The distorted rhythm guitars are the first to drop out. The gradual dropping out of the layers of instruments eases the tension and dramatic atmosphere built up previously. The violin and cello play the phrase shown in figure 5 which is reminiscent of the cello phrase from figure 4.

A musical transcription for two instruments, Cello and Violin, at tempo 121. The Cello part consists of a series of eighth-note pairs and sixteenth-note patterns. The Violin part follows a similar rhythmic pattern. Both parts use a key signature of one sharp (F#) and include rests and dynamic markings like 'v' and 'z'.

Figure 5 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the violin and cello when day is coming

The filter on the clip changes, signifying the coming of day as shown in image 11. At this point in the scene, the tempo of the music slows down again.



Image 11 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The colour filter changes to signify day

Only the violin and cello play at this point. The violin plays the same phrase it played from figure 2 but it is backed by the cello alternating notes between E and A as seen in figure 6. The notes that the cello plays emphasize on the major key and it creates a sense of resolution. This sets a happy mood for the scene.

Figure 6 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the music when the filter changes

The timbre of the violin is much sweeter and pleasant-sounding compared to how it sounded in the music previously. Though the violin phrase is the same as it was when the woman was fainting, the timbre and the cello part conveys a different mood. This is an example of ‘chameleon music’, where the same music can change its meaning or function depending on the context (Larsen, 2007, Page 164).

The scene ends with the husband and his wife cherishing their last moment before she dies. The tone of this scene is set again by the music which is provided by a Hammond organ alternating chords between E major and A major.



Image 12 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - The couple spending their last intimate moment

The melodic movement is provided by a piano playing the notes seen in figure 7. The chord and the melody work together to deliver a bittersweet tone for the scene. This works in tangent with the ending where despite Orlok dying, the woman dies as well.



Figure 7 Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror - Transcription of the piano at the last part of the film

James Bernard's score for the scene is a song entitled 'The Power of Orlok / The Death of Ellen' (James Bernard, 1997, track 14). The music for the scene uses entirely orchestral instruments. He too uses the timbre of certain instruments to create a mood. An example is his use of brass instruments to create a sense of power and horror during Orlok's scenes. The more intimate parts of the scene utilize the string section as the lead instrument, such as during the death of the woman. Bernard's rendition features stereotypical horror music tropes such as string trills, timpani rolls and ascending chromatic notes to build intensity.

Since *Nosferatu* is a silent film, the music has a lot of freedom to narrate the story. In this case, 3epkano's rendition of the film music acts as the basis of audience's mood, expresses the actor's emotion, sets the pace of the scenes and it acts as anticipation of subsequent events. There are a lot of synchresis which serve to link the visual and the music so that it doesn't feel too detached. The post-rock elements such as the textural sliding guitars when the music climaxes make the scene all the more dramatic and tenser. The changing dynamics of the composition which is a characteristic of post-rock music allows for more impact during the more intense scenes. In comparison to Bernard's version, the hard-hitting rock drum beats intensifies the scenes to a greater extent. The timpani rolls in Bernard's version does not have the same effect as it isn't as dense and has a cleaner, non-aggressive timbre. Bernard's rendition however, uses horror music tropes which is effective as it is what audiences tend to expect from horror films. This is where the post-rock version is lacking.

28 Days Later

The post-apocalyptic horror film *28 Days Later* (2002) is another example of a film with a post-rock soundtrack. Animal activists accidentally release a virus from a lab doing animal experimentation. Twenty-eight days later, Jim, the protagonist, wakes up from a coma alone to find the streets of London deserted. He eventually finds other survivors and goes on the run from infected humans to find safety. The tone of the film and its soundtrack was heavily inspired *Godspeed You! Black Emperor*'s debut album *F#A#∞* (*Godspeed You! Black Emperor*, 1997). Danny Boyle, the director of the film, mentioned in an interview that the whole film was cut to the music in his head. Despite the huge influence that the album and band have on the film, the film only used one song by the band due to copyright issues (Kitty Empire, 2002). John Murphy

composed the majority of the music in the film and imitated the music of Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

One of the early scenes in the film opens with Jim walking around a desolate London following a virus outbreak, shown in image 13. The scene features an edited version of ‘The Sad Mafioso...’ from Godspeed You! Black Emperor’s debut album *F#A#∞* (Godspeed You! Black Emperor, 1997, track 5).



Image 13 28 Days Later - Jim walking around a desolate London early on in the film

The music starts with a clean guitar playing a repeated melodic phrase that descends as seen in figure 8.

$\text{♩} = 120$

CleanGtr

A musical transcription for a clean guitar. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 120$. The instrument is labeled "CleanGtr". The music consists of three staves of musical notation. The first two staves are identical, showing a repeating melodic phrase: a quarter note followed by an eighth note, then a sixteenth-note pair (two eighth notes tied together), then another quarter note, and finally a half note. The third staff begins with a quarter note, followed by a sixteenth-note pair, then a quarter note, and ends with a dotted half note followed by a fermata. The notation uses a treble clef and a common time signature.

Figure 8 28 Days Later - Transcription of the guitar when the music first comes in

The tone of the guitar is dark and sombre as in *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) which serves as the basis for audience's emotions (Tagg, N/A). The sparseness of the song at this point, with only a guitar playing creates the sense of emptiness. It reflects what is shown on screen, a desolate city with the protagonist trying to find other living soul. The phrase repeats multiple times and it is later joined by a slow sliding, ethereal sounding effect that plays at the end of the phrase. This creates an eerie atmosphere.



Image 14 28 Days Later - Camera quickly pans to the right from an empty street to Jim

The music gets heavier as the camera quickly pans to the right, as seen in image 14. The drums come in and the tempo also instantaneously gets faster. The guitar plays a different phrase and is complemented by a bass and cello shown in figure 9.

Figure 9 28 Days Later - Transcription of the guitar and bass line when the camera pans to Jim

The guitar is now supported by the drums, bass and cello. The addition of these instruments adds layers to the music, and coupled with the increase in tempo, reflects

Jim's frustration. The cuts also feel faster because of the increase in tempo creating a sense of urgency and danger. The music is complemented by the sound of Jim's breathing which again highlights his frustration.



Image 15 28 Days Later - Close up shot of Jim showing his expression

The shot eventually cuts to a close up of Jim showing increasing frustration as seen in image 15. At this point in the scene, the music is playing the last four bars, shown in figure 10.

A musical transcription for three instruments: E-Bass, Cello, and E-Guitar. The score consists of two staves of music. The top staff is for E-Bass (Bass clef, bass staff), the middle staff is for Cello (Clef, bass staff), and the bottom staff is for E-Guitar (G clef, treble staff). The first staff begins with a dynamic 'f' (fortissimo). The second staff begins with a dynamic 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The third staff begins with a dynamic 'mf'. The music includes various rhythmic patterns like eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The tempo is marked 'accel.' (accelerando) at the beginning of each staff. The key signature changes from one staff to another. The bottom staff includes a key signature of F# major (one sharp). The tempo is indicated as 'J= 154' at the end of the transcription.

Figure 10 28 Days Later - Transcription of the music when the tempo gets faster

The last four bars from figure 10 show the guitar playing more chaotically, shifting between G# to G, especially considering that the G# is an accidental in the key of music. This serves to enforce the protagonist's expression of frustration and confusion.



Image 16 28 Days Later - Jim piecing things together about the virus outbreak

As the song reaches its end, the music progressively gets faster and denser. The tempo of the music is constantly increasing with the drum set also incorporating more fills. The soundscape is filled with distorted guitars playing the root notes, electric guitar feedbacks, various noises from electric guitars, cello and multiple layers of electric guitars strumming. The fast tempo and the very dense layer of music sets an intense atmosphere very early on in the film. It is also worth noting that the song is the only sound that is playing with no more diegetic sounds at this point. This increases the impact of the music. The music climaxes with a set of snare drum rolls followed by an electric guitar feedback fading out.

The scene that was chosen has no dialogue-based narrative, apart from the occasional "hello" yelled out by the character. The music mainly acts as an expression of the character's emotions and to set the tone for the film. In addition, the music also

serves to link the cuts, since the scene mainly features jump cuts. As Prendergast writes, music can develop a sense of continuity whereas without music, it can become chaotic (Prendergast, 1992, p. 222). As mentioned earlier, the film was cut with Godspeed You! Black Emperor's music in mind. Post-rock music works well in the film because it is able to build an exaggerated dramatic effect. It is essential for functional music to build up dramatic effect in film (Manvell, Huntley, Arnell & Day, 1975, p. 89). The decision to use their song 'The Sad Mafioso...' early on in the film works well in setting the tone for a post-apocalyptic horror film. The changing dynamics make the scene impactful and intense. The change from sparse and quiet to distorted guitars with a busy drum rhythm increases the sense of danger and effectively reflects the protagonist's increasing frustration. Various aspects of the music production and the timbre of the instruments set a gloomy, unsettling mood typical of a horror film. The quality of the production sounds unpolished and the guitar sounds like it doesn't have much high end, making it sound really dark.

Vanilla Sky

Unlike the two previous clips that have been analysed, *Vanilla Sky* (2001) uses a lot of pre-existing music in the film. The compiled music features diverse genres of music ranging from alternative rock to experimental music, including post-rock. The music functions primarily to set the mood for scenes and to enhance certain effects. Some of the more experimental music such as 'Everything in Its Right Place' by Radiohead (Radiohead, 2000, track 1) and 'Porpoise Song (Theme from Head)' by The Monkees (The Monkees, 1968, track 2) puts emphasis on the absurdity of some scenes and hints at the more surreal aspect of the film, whereas some of the music chosen helps to set the mood for certain scenes. The movie features two songs by Sigur Ròs, one

of which is called 'Njósnavélin', taken from their third album called () (Sigur Ròs, 2002, track 4). The music isn't included on the official soundtrack of the film. However, it appears on the last scene of the film.

The protagonist, David, had just been told that he had been in cryogenic sleep for 150 years and his whole reality is a lucid dream. He has chosen to go into cryogenic sleep following a car accident and learning that his love for a woman called Sofia is unrequited. He is given the option to wake up to reality by jumping off a building or to stay in the lucid dream. The scene that is going to be analysed is the last few minutes of the film. The music in this scene differs from the other clips that have been analysed as the scene is heavily dialogue-based. The music also has a vocal part, although the lyrical content is a made-up language which has no meaning whatsoever, as mentioned on the band's website (Sigur Ròs, N/A). The vocal part however serves as texture and doesn't detract from the dialogue. The music starts off at the close-up shot of David's face as he's saying that he wants to wake up back to reality, shown in image 17.



Image 17 Vanilla Sky - Close up shot of David

The music starts off with an angelic-sounding vocal line backed by a synth. Like the vocals, the timbre of the synth is calming and ethereal. The effect that it has is that it creates a surrealistic, almost heavenly-like setting. Just before this scene, David finds out that the events of the film are all a lucid dream. The timbre of the voice and the synth serves to reflect David's emotion and represents the surreal setting which is another function of music described by Lissa (Tagg, N/A). The music seems to highlight his enlightenment and that he is at peace with discovering the truth. The combination of timbre, major chords and the notes of the vocal melody emphasizes on the feeling of serenity. This contrasts with some of the music that has played in the film before, which are more experimental and hint at David seemingly going crazy.

The music throughout the scene is quite simplistic and repetitive. The synth plays the same chord progression seen in figure 11 all throughout the scene and gives the indication that the music is in the key of C major. The vocal melody revolves around the major third, the fifth and the tonic of the key, giving it a sense of resolution. In addition, the drums are quite laid back and sparse, further enforcing the calm, heavenly mood of the music.

The musical transcription consists of two staves of music. The top staff is for the Melody, starting with a sixteenth-note pattern followed by eighth-note pairs. The bottom staff is divided into two sections: 'Synth' (treble clef) and 'Drum Set' (bass clef). The Synth section provides harmonic support with sustained chords. The Drum Set section features a steady eighth-note pattern on the snare drum.

Figure 11 Vanilla Sky - Transcription of the music on the last scene of the film

A melodic phrase played by a synth, seen in figure 11, then comes in when David looks behind him to find Sofia standing there, seen in image 18. It is not a leitmotif for Sofia however since the phrase still plays when she is no longer the focus of the scene.



Image 18 Vanilla Sky - David turns around and sees Sofia

The synth playing the melody is quite noisy and distorted which contrasts the tone set by the chordal synth and the vocals. It also leaves a resonant feedback that doesn't sound particularly pleasing. This is perhaps a reflection of the harsh reality; that David chose to go into cryogenic sleep because of Sofia's rejection. David has been stuck in the lucid dream for 150 years and Sofia is most likely dead. The harsh and distorted tone of the main melody acts as a form of a reminder perhaps.



Image 19 Vanilla Sky - David and Sofia Kiss

The distortion from the synth melody intensifies and gets louder as David gets physically closer to Sofia, seen in image 19. This is the opposite of what usually

happens in an intimate scene, where the music tends to get mellower to enhance the intimacy, especially on a kissing scene. Although the distortion does add impact to the kiss, it seems to connote something else. As mentioned earlier, this is all occurring in David's head so perhaps the distortion acts again as a reminder that it is false romance.



Image 20 Vanilla Sky - David and Sofia talking

After the kiss, David and Sofia start talking, seen in image 20. At this point, only the chordal synth and the voice play to make way for the dialogue. The transition occurs as soon as the kiss ends. The quick transition from the distorted notes of the melody in the kissing scene to the gentle sounding synth and vocals has a dramatic effect. The contrast also creates a sense of intimacy, since the music is much less dense.



Image 21 Vanilla Sky - David walks away from Sofia

As David walks away from Sofia to jump off the building and wake up to reality, as seen in image 21, the majority of the instruments drop out. The voice, drums and synth stop playing. There is only a pad which creates ambience. This serves to build the intensity for when David jumps off the building.

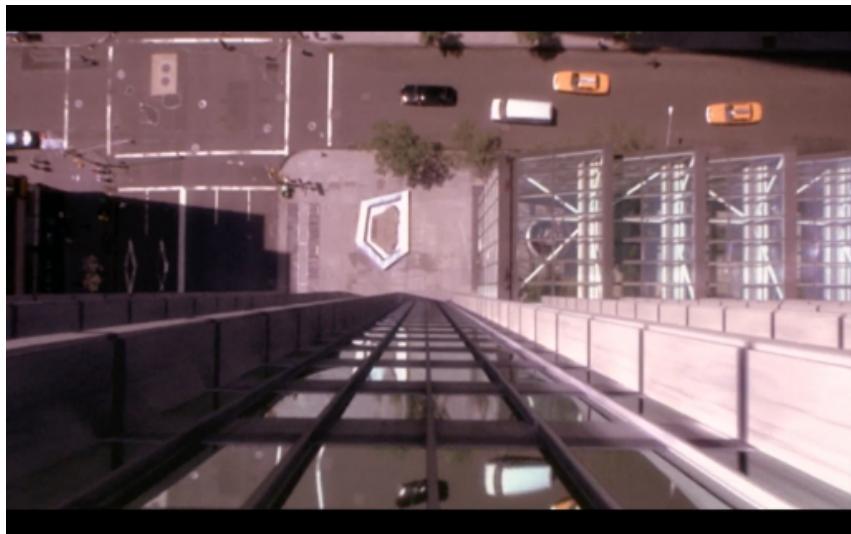


Image 22 Vanilla Sky - David falling off the building

The drums, synth, voices and the melodic line seen in figure 11 return as David jumps off the building. The addition of these instruments has a bigger impact due to the lack of these instruments just before he jumps off. At this point, the music gradually gets

louder to add intensity to the fall. The diegetic sounds, such as the wind also fade out, leaving way for the music to take over.

Njósnavélin complements the tone of the ending very well and ends the film with a happy note. Due to the scene being heavily dialogue-based, the music is very simple and repetitive to prevent the music from being a distraction. The music mainly functions as an added value by giving the scene more intensity, express the character's emotions and to represent the setting. Despite the simplicity of the music, the scene makes use of the timbre of the instruments, distorted melody and feedback noises to create an atmosphere that enhances the mood of the scene.

The three clips that have been analysed are very different to each other stylistically to showcase post-rock music in different styles of film. The way the music functions in the scenes are also quite different to each other. In *28 Days Later* (2002) and *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922), the music is very dominant and leads the visuals, whereas it acts more like background music in *Vanilla Sky* (2001). All three however, use dynamics to build impact and layers of instruments to set the mood of the scenes. Despite its tendency to be instrumental, post-rock music can still be distracting and take away from important dialogues. Hence in most cases, post-rock music works to enhance and intensify scenes because of its cinematic traits. The functions of post-rock music in film are further explored and imitated on the portfolio.

Commentary

I will now be discussing the practice-based aspect of the research which showcases the different ways post-rock music can be applied to a visual medium. The music was composed, recorded and performed entirely by me apart from the drum parts. The music takes influence from the analysis of the research in terms of the clips chosen and the function of the music for the film. The compositions showcase a diverse range of music labelled under post-rock, taking influence from various modern post-rock bands such as Mogwai, Godspeed You! Black Emperor and 3epkano. Like the clips used for the analysis, the chosen clips lend itself towards non-narrative led scenes.

As mentioned previously, post-rock music is heavily production-based rather than simulating a real live performance. Due to this, I will not only be talking about the musical decisions but also take a musicological approach to the production aspect which according to Allan Moore “would need to address the musical consequences of production decisions, or the consequences attendant on the shifting relationship between production decisions and the decisions of musicians about their performative practice” (Allan Moore, 2012, p. 99).

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl (2015) is a drama film directed by Alfonso Gomez-Rejon. The film follows a high school kid called Greg who initially gets forced to befriend his schoolmate Rachel because she'd been diagnosed with leukaemia. They gradually fall in love with each other although she ends up passing away in the end. The original music was composed by Brian Eno who is known for work with ambient music as well as a member of Roxy Music. The rescore takes the last scene of the

film when Rachel is on her deathbed and the funeral. The original score of this scene features electronic instruments and a repetitive phrase. The music sets a bittersweet tone for the scene and layers of instruments gradually gets added as the scene progresses to build intensity.

My post-rock rescore of the film takes inspiration from the original score in terms of the mood and function of the music. It is however, more intense in a rock way due to the distorted guitars and drums which is something the original score is lacking. The bittersweet mood is enforced by the tone and the harmonies of the guitars. The music starts of relatively sparse and gets denser as it progresses. The music also utilizes dynamics to build intensity which imitates the original score of the film, getting louder as the scene progresses. There are also moments of synchronicity to link the music and the visuals. Compositionally, the music takes influence from Mogwai's song 'Crossing the Road Material' from the album *Every Country's Sun* (Mogwai, 2017, track 7). The rescore has many similar qualities shared with Mogwai's song in terms of the how the song develops and the timbral quality. Both tracks intensify with the addition of guitar layers. The second part (00:05:47) of the music is much simpler, utilizing timbre and ambience set the mood. The slower tempo and the feel contrast the end of the first section. The function of the music the function of the music in *Vanilla Sky* (2001). The music is relatively simplistic compared to the first section and works as to set the mood. The timbral quality of the pad and guitars feel ethereal because of the chorus and delay effect on the guitar. The tempo complements the pace of the scene. In a way, it reflects the people in the funeral, the protagonist in particular, slowly accepting that the girl is no more. The post-rock rescore is able to make the scene

more dramatic and intense compared to the original score although it does overpower the visuals at times making it feel like a music video instead of a film.

A Cottage on Dartmoor

A Cottage on Dartmoor (1929) is a silent film directed by Anthony Asquith. The story opens with a convict called Joe breaking out of Dartmoor Prison. Joe worked as a barber and developed feelings for his co-worker, Sally. His feelings for her grew into obsession, leading him to assault Sally's partner which resulted in his conviction. The motivation for his escape is his obsession for Sally. The original score was composed by William Hodgson and featured a piano along with a string section. The original score function to set the mood of the scene. The music builds intensity by playing fast trills on the piano while playing slower major 7th chords for the intimate scenes. As with many silent films, there are a lot of musical renditions composed for it. Most of the other renditions use primarily orchestral instruments or a piano such as in the case of the version played by Simon Peberdy (Kenneth Barhost, 2017). These renditions function to set the mood of the scene by using dissonant harmonies when the shot is focused on Joe in contrast to the sweeter chord progressions and melodies when the shot is focused on Sally and her baby.

My post-rock rescore of *A Cottage on Dartmoor* (1929) functions to emphasize the darker aspect of the clip with dissonant harmonies, tritones and timbre. I relied primarily on strings to set the harmonies and melody. There is a guitar that plays melodic lines as well, but it serves more as a drone and to add texture. Like the other musical rendition of the film, I contrasted the music for the scenes which had Joe in the shot and the scenes with Sally and her baby in the shot. In the shots which feature

Joe, the strings play dissonant chords and low notes from the cello, connoting that he is not of good character. There is also a leitmotif for Joe which is a tritone phrase played with a cello initially (00:00:00) but played with a violin at (00:04:48). The leitmotif is meant to create an association for the character. In contrast, the shots that feature Sally and her baby has sweet harmonies and minor 7th chords making it sound more pleasing. The chord progression also shifts back and forth from Eb which as the tonic to Bb which is the dominant note of the key, creating a sense of resolution as opposed to the dissonant chords during the scenes that feature Joe.

Harmony and melody aside, the ambience and timbre of the guitar enforces the mood set by the strings. In the shots that feature Joe, the musical soundscape is complemented by a harsh and noisy sounding ambience. In addition, the timbre of the guitar is more distorted and a harsher reverb. This enforces the idea that he is not a good person and creates an uneasy mood for the audience. The guitar is less distorted and a cleaner reverb timbre during the scenes that feature Sally which creates a lush sounding soundscape for her scenes. The transition of the soundscapes from Joe's scenes and Sally's scenes matches seamlessly which work to create a link between the visuals and the music.

The function of the music in my rescore was influenced by Zepkano's musical rendition for *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) and the music from *28 Days Later* (2002). The end of the scene (00:05:19) has a guitar playing a chord with the same rhythm but gradually gets louder. The drums also play more fills and plays with a faster feel. This intensifies the last scene of the clip where we see Joe lurking in the shadow. This is also done in *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) where the drums and music

intensify when we see Count Orlok's silhouette when he is walking up the stairs. The music functions primarily to set the mood of the scene and to establish the character's role in the film.

There are many similarities between the post-rock rescore and the other renditions for the scene. As mentioned previously, other renditions for the film function to set the tone of the scenes using dissonant harmonies and pleasant-sounding harmonies. The post-rock rescore however differs in the way it builds horror and tension. The other rendition uses ascending patterns or other established horror music tropes to create the horror while the post-rock rescore uses harsh and eerie soundscape to build the sense of horror and uneasiness.

Tsumiki no ie

Tsumiki no ie (2008) is a Japanese short animation produced by Robot Communications and directed by Kenji Kondo. The plot revolves around an old man who lives alone in a town immersed in water. One day he accidentally drops his smoking pipe into the water and decides to retrieve it by diving down. As he descends floor by floor, he relives significant moments of his life. The original score features a harp, piano and a string section. The music is sparsely placed in the film and starts out with a whimsical tone which changes to a more dramatic tone during some of the flashbacks.

My rescore of *Tsumiki no ie* (2008) functions to set the mood and to reinforce the tone of the plot. In addition to that, I decided to be more experimental and use spatiality to immerse the audience. I was influenced by Allan Moore's idea to bring the listener

“into a physical relationship to the music” (Alan Moore, 2012, p. 173). He mentions that the listener can be immersed into becoming a part of the story or to observe it (Alan Moore, 2012, p. 173). I decided to use reverb and filters to imitate the different spaces of the shots.

The start of the clip introduces a motif played solely by a piano. The melody of the motif and the lack of other musical layers connote loneliness and the emptiness of his life. The motif also appears during the man’s flashbacks (e.g. 00:04:13 and 00:04:49) and serves as a link to the present and his feeling of loneliness.

The chordal and melodic content is provided mainly by strings and piano although distorted guitars and drums are used when the old man is underwater to intensify the shots when he is underwater. In addition, more layers are added on as the old man ventures deeper.

As mentioned previously, the use of reverb and filtering play a significant role in the rescore. The aim is to imitate the changing space of the shots. When the shot is indoors, the reverb is more reflective and smaller. In comparison, the reverb is much more spacious when the shot is of outdoors. This is most evident when the shot cuts from the man waking up (00:00:54) to an outdoor shot of his house (00:00:56). The change in reverb creates the illusion that the audience is in the same virtual space as the shots. The reverb when the man is underwater has a significant high cut filter applied in order to simulate what sound would sound like underwater.

The use of filtering complements the reverb to create the illusion of being in the same space. As Zagorski-Thomas writes, the use of frequency shaping (filtering and equalisation) and dynamic control (compression and noise gates), two of the fundamental and most frequently used tools in the story of record production, similarly affects a single property in order to manipulate or influence the listener's interpretation" (Zagorski-Thomas, 2014, p. 55). When the man drops his pipe, there is a sound made that plays in sync with the visuals (00:02:46). Not only does the sound link the visual and audio content, it introduces an association for the audience of the underwater sound. The sound has a high cut filter applied and as the pipe goes deeper underwater, the high cut filter cuts more of the top end.

The use of the high cut filter returns when the man goes underwater (00:03:54). The high cut filter cuts more when the man ventures deeper. The point of the high cut filter is to imitate the muffled sound of the underwater. The whole mix has a high cut filter applied except for the recurring motif that plays during the flashbacks. It serves as a link to the present and the man's feelings as mentioned previously.

Another important part of the composition which serves to immerse the audience and link the visual is the sound of the high and crisp note from the piano when the man clinks his glass in his flashback (00:08:44). This is an example of a sonic anaphone which is when a sound from an instrument is meant to connote a gesture. This relates to the theory of cross-domain mapping which is "a process through which we structure our understanding of one domain (which is typically unfamiliar or abstract) in terms of another (which is most often familiar and concrete" (Allan Moore, 2012, p. 107). The sound is influenced by Moore's interpretation of the crisp timbre of the opening

keyboard from Annie Lennox's track 'Walking on Broken Glass'. He writes that "it seems unproblematic to describe the crispness of this timbre as a sonic anaphone, reminiscent of the crispness of the sound of shattering glass" (Moore, 2012, p. 106).

As opposed to the original score, the rescore is significantly different. The post-rock rescore is more present unlike the sparsely placed music of the original. As previously mentioned, the original score starts out whimsical and sets a more dramatic tone on the more serious scenes. The post-rock rescore repurposes the film with a more melancholy mood all throughout the film. In addition, the use of spatiality and equalizer attempts to create the illusion that the audience is in the same space as the visual content.

[**Elephants Dream**](#)

Elephants Dream (2006) is a short abstract animation made by Blender Foundation for the purpose of showcasing their software. The animation does not have a set plot but features abstract scenes featuring an old man and a young boy. The original clip lacks any music on the shots where I've rescored hence why most of the diegetic sounds are present on the rescore.

The rescore acts like a traditional classical score, serving sort of as background music that immerses the audience to the film. The music starts with a sustained distorted guitar to create an eerie, tense tone for the clip. The music mainly relies on the timbres of the ambience to set the mood. The music then shifts to a sinister sounding pad playing a low note (00:00:25). Again, this emphasizes the eerie tone that has been established previously. The music is quite subtle at this point, careful not to take

attention away from the dialogue. The distorted guitars and the drums then come in with a faster tempo increasing the pace of the scene (00:01:38). This is an effect described by Peter Larsen as perceptual equivalence, which is when the rhythm of the music matches the movement in the image (Larsen, 2007, p. 67). The second part of the rescore is a pad complemented by a piano and a reversed guitar (00:02:33). The reversed guitar serves to portray the surreal setting while the melody of the piano often falls on diminished notes creating an uneasy feeling. Another point worth mentioning is that the composition is filled spacious reverb to reflect on the open large spaces of the shots. Like *Tsumiki no Ie* (2008) this is done to make the audience feel as if they are in the same space as the film. The function of music in the film is like *Vanilla Sky* (2001), relying on the timbre of the instruments to build mood instead of focusing too much on the tonality of the music. In addition, like *Vanilla Sky* (2001), the music is not as busy during dialogues to not dominate over it and is more intense when it needs to be such as during the running scene.

Drive

Drive (2011) is an action drama film directed by Nicolas Refn. The film follows an unnamed getaway driver who gets intertwined in a million-dollar heist that went wrong and endangers his life. Cliff Martinez scored the bulk of the music for the film which resulted in a retro, synthesizer europop score for the film. The original score for the chosen scene is a simple piece of music that relies on drone tones and textural pads which function to set the mood of the film.

Like *Elephants Dream* (2006), the rescore of *Drive* (2011) functions more like a traditional classical score instead of the post-rock scores that have been analysed.

The music doesn't link to each other and the dialogue-heavy scenes doesn't feature music. Each of the music on the scene serves its own purpose whether to build intensity or to set the mood. The first section of the music complements the romantic visuals with its slow tempo (00:00:00). This contrast the next section where the protagonist gets in a physical confrontation with a hitman (00:01:21). The music at this point is a delay pedal with the delay time turned up to create a tense timbre, reflecting on the visual aspect. The music on the last scene of the clip is influenced by the use of music from *Vanilla Sky* (2001), using the technique of balancing feedback and harsh noise with a sweeter melody and timbre to reflect different emotions. As the antagonist slices one of the character's forearms, the music starts with feedback from an electric guitar (00:09:43). The main melodic line of the music and its timbre gives a bittersweet mood reflecting on the sadder part of the scene. Meanwhile, the feedback and noise reflect on the action of the antagonist, villainizing his deed. When the protagonist finds his friend lying dead, the feedback and noise stops (00:10:34) which though subtle, enhances the dramatic effect of the scene. The original score sets a similar mood with synthesizers. Unlike the post-rock rescore however, the original score relies on ambient pads to set the mood instead of using harmonies and melodies.

Conclusion

Post-rock music functions the same way that a traditional classical score does in film. As described by Lissa, post-rock music is capable of functioning as the basis of audience's emotions, anticipation of subsequent events, to link scenes, and to serve as a leitmotif for a character or theme. Post-rock can be effective to use in film as it can provide dramatic effect and set the mood of films. The dynamic nature of post-rock music and using layers of instruments can be impactful, especially going from quiet to loud. Aside from just relying on chordal and melodic content to provide, post-rock music also uses textures, timbres and soundscapes to immerse the audience in the visual content. These soundscapes may evoke certain moods that the audience can associate with. An example can be seen in *Vanilla Sky* (2001) where the timbre of the voice and the synth creates an ethereal setting for the scene. This is also done in most of the rescores such as in *A Cottage on Dartmoor* (1922) where the use of timbre and sound effect play a significant part in setting the mood of the scene. Low rumbling tones and a harsh soundscape can sometimes ascertain a sinister tone while a clean and lush soundscape can establish a more joyful tone. The problem with that is the association is subjective. Simon Zagorski-Thomas refers to Lakoff and Johnson's idea that "abstract images and music only have meaning for us in so far as we can create metaphorical relationships between them and our previous experience, and that they are therefore representational" (Zagorski-Thomas, 2014, p. 56).

Another trait of post-rock music that is effective for use in film is its use of the studio as an instrument. The use of spatiality to immerse the audience such as in my rescore of *Tsumiki no Ie* (2008) which attempts to convince the audience as if they are in the same space.

Post-rock music can offer a different viewing experience to film. The music can immerse the audience in a soundscape that complements the visuals with its dense layers of music and different tones. In addition, a post-rock soundtrack may also interest fans of post-rock music to watch the film.

In hindsight, the methodologies used can be regarded as subjective. The musical analysis is open to interpretation and there is no way of proving that a certain timbre or musical technique connote a certain thing. It must also be considered that the pool of the clips chosen for the analyses are limited and post-rock is very diverse hence it can't justify the functions of post-rock music in film.

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