

Composition for Film - Log

You have been given a short film clip to set to music. You will log the creative process which results in your composition. Below is a sequence of activities from preparation to composition. Use each section as a header and write detailed notes. You do not have to follow the sequence religiously but you should give a reason why a section has been left out (eg: "This section is not relevant because it is described in a section above").

Preparation

1. Describe how you understand the following in the film: <ol style="list-style-type: none">the pace and direction (try to 'feel' the tempo in silence. Is there a point of arrival?)Genre.your 'take' on the film: what are you trying to say, what is the view-point: character or audience. Are you trying to counterpoint the image, confirm it or intensify it?
2. Analyse the structure of the moving image – write a cue list which divides the film into its main sections no matter how short.
3. Describe a possible musical element – melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre and texture for each cue. Timbre and Texture exert a huge influence on how the film is 'seen'. Make sure you detail: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Timbre– type of sounds – eg, hard soft metallic, sustained shortTexture – eg full, broken sustained thin, full, dark, light
4. Draw an EIG (Emotional Intensity Graph): vertical axis is the intensity of emotion and the horizontal is time. It should coincide with 1 above – ie your take on the film.
5. Collect 'Temp Tracks' – identify music from film, TV, dance, symphonic, electronic etc which you think would work with your film clip or parts of it. Make a list describing which part of the film is matched to which part of the music.
6. Choose which of these TEMP TRACKS works best. Write an analysis of the temp tracks as follows: Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, Timbre and Texture. State why you think it works and what are the elements (melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and timbral) that make it work.

Composition

Following preparation, here are some suggestions for composition. For each section describe what you have done and how this has helped you.

1. Extract the harmony of the temp tracks: write out the harmony in a basic keyboard style, ie three notes in the right, one in the left.
2. Improvise a new melody over this harmony. If you decide to use melodic material make sure that your melody provides all motivic material. (Note: this may seem like an 'unfair' restriction but it is essential to create coherence. Contrasting ideas can be derived from the same material.
3. Create different 'treatments' or arrangements for the different functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Title and Credits (establish genre)○ Links and bridges between scenes (a link can end/sum up a scene, anticipate the new scene)○ Underscore (when there is prominent talking/music or sound FX): music should not draw attention to itself○ Intensification of the action○ Distancing from the action
4. If a temp track works because of its timbre and texture make sure you know: <ol style="list-style-type: none">What is the root timbreWhat effects have been applied if any to distort itWhat is the root timbre associated with in the film
5. Describe how you are going to record your root timbre and how you are going to manipulate it. As with melodic development, you must restrict the range of sounds and treatments.
6. If a temp track works because of its rhythm experiment with applying it to different timbres/textures