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Staying Original: A Case study for Film Composers Working with Temp Tracks

Kyle Maurits Simpson

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**Staying Original:
A Case study for Film Composers Working with Temp Tracks**

Kyle Maurits Simpson

**Thesis submitted
To the College of Creative Arts
at West Virginia University**

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree:

Doctor of Musical Arts

**David Taddie, Ph.D., Chair
Travis Stimeling, Ph.D.,
Matthew Heap, Ph.D.
Michael Ibrahim, D.M.A.
Jay Malarcher, Ph.D.**

School of Music

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ABSTRACT

Staying Original: A Case study for Film Composers Working with Temp Tracks

Kyle Simpson

Ever since the late 1960s, film directors have become more reliant on the *temp track*, which is a portion of a pre-existing piece placed into a working cut of a film, by the director, music editor, or music supervisor. These temporary pieces help the director see how a scene might play with music. Occasionally, directors succumb to what is known as “temp love,” in which the director falls in love with a piece and either tries to keep the pre-existing track in the film or asks the film composer to write something extremely close to the temp track. Ron Sadoff has suggested that the temp score can often work out some of the musical details for a composer, such as the entrance/exit of music and the kind of emotion to play to on screen¹. In order to understand this important aspect of contemporary film scoring, the project aims to interview a composer working in Hollywood, describing a recent project in which a temp track was utilized. Though celebrated and experienced composers have often lamented those moments when directors become attached to the temp score, due to their recognition and level of achievement in the industry, veteran composers can simply choose to ignore the temp track. Young composers rising up in the industry do not necessarily have the same option. By interviewing the young composer, Kyle Newmaster, the process of engaging with, and adapting to the temp track will be documented. The history of the emergence of the temp track will be examined as well. Historic precedents such as Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*, will help inform the historic context of temp tracks and will help illuminate its use in today’s industry. Scholars have pointed to Kubrick’s example as “the most infamous example of the tyranny of the temp track.”² Younger composers wishing to break into the industry will have to face the challenges, both the positive, and negative aspects to the creative decisions pertaining to the temp track.

¹Ron Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track' as Blueprint for the Score, Source Music, and Source Music of Films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 02 (May 2006),168.

² Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992): 192.

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by Kyle Simpson

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Introduction:

This document aims to illustrate how modern film composers encounter and engage with the *temp track*. Ever since the late 1960s, film directors have become more reliant on the temp track, which is a portion of a pre-existing piece placed into a working cut of a film, by the director, music editor, or music supervisor. These temporary pieces help the director see how a scene might play with music. Occasionally, directors succumb to what is known as “temp love,” in which the director falls in love with a piece and either tries to keep the pre-existing track in the film or asks the film composer to write something extremely close to the temp track. Much of the scholarly work on temp tracks has been focused on the input and work of the music editor to compile the temp track; showing that the efforts of the music editor have musical implications for a composer when working out the final details of the original score.¹ However, only few authors have presented the engagement of the temp track from the composer point of view. One example contains a detailed account from a composer’s point of view, which is by Miguel Mera and his experience scoring the short film *Moth* (2004). Mera articulates the unique process for a short film, which he admits is vastly different from a studio feature-length project, because there is a lot more freedom inherent to short film projects. There is not a big commercial market for

¹ Some specific examples that highlight this concept, which will be detailed in the project:

Ron Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track' as Blueprint for the Score, Source Music, and Source Music of Films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 02 (May 2006).

Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 5, no. 1 (2011): 19.

short films.² Therefore, it is the goal of this project to document the current temp track process for feature-length films for composers working in Hollywood.

The first chapter presents the historical connection to the modern temp track. Many of the musical concepts developed in silent film have similarities and connections to the practice of contemporary music editors and supervisors. In the silent film era, music synchronizers would compile a score from a large anthology or collection of music organized specifically to help find the right music to fit the appropriate scene. This same concept would prove to be very similar in the way which a music editor or director might compile the temp track.

The second chapter will showcase an important precedent in the use of temp tracks, which is Stanley Kubrick's rejection of Alex North's original score for the temp track in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Some authors are extremely set against Kubrick's bold decision suggesting it was "the most infamous example of the tyranny of the temp track."³ Others canonize the decision remarking that Kubrick's use of pre-existing material functioned as an elaborate and perfect counterpoint to the visuals. There is agreement between scholars that Kubrick set an important precedent that other directors would use. Similarly, in *Platoon*, director Oliver Stone used the temp of Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* over George Delerue's original score⁴. Ultimately, this practice would lead to what became the modern compilation score, in which directors turned to popular music for inclusion in their films over original film scoring. Examples include *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) and *The Big Chill* (1983).

² Miguel Mera, "Scoring Moth: Beyond the Temp Track," in *CineMusic?: Constructing the Film Score*, by David Cooper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 37.

³ Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992): 192.

⁴ Ibid, 193.

The third chapter of the project documents the current practice of the temp track. Through the examples of *Tears of the Sun* (2003) and *The Ice Storm* (1997), the collaborative process is highlighted. These examples help show how the music editor can help solve many musical issues in the temp before a composer is brought on to the film. Music editor Roy Prendergast, in his temp track for *Tears of the Sun*, helped solve the issues of when music should enter and exit, style, and even orchestration decisions that would appear in the final score written by Hans Zimmer. *The Ice Storm* also presents a unique case of “temp love” which made the work of composer Mychael Danna more difficult to prepare a final cue for the specific scene. Additionally, the temp track, as compiled by Alex Steyermark, helped Danna formulate the overall sound and leitmotif structure for the film.

Where the third chapter documented cases largely formed from the music director point of view, chapter four interviews a composer working in Hollywood. Kyle Newmaster is the sole focus for this chapter. Much of the content for this portion was derived from conversations and emails from the composer. The goal of the chapter was to document the current process for the way in which a young composer experiences the temp track. Newmaster points to three examples of current temp practice. In each instance, the attitude for the temp is different, which presents varying musical demands on the composer. In essence, this chapter answers the question of how much material does a composer use from the temp track. As Newmaster showcases, each example asked for a different amount. In a case when a director might suffer from “temp love” the amount a composer will need to use from a temp track will be significantly more, as opposed to a project in which the director is not nearly as attached to the temp.

The last chapter presents conclusions from the musical examples detailed by Newmaster from the previous chapter. This chapter attempts to answer the question of staying original as a

composer in an atmosphere of temp tracks. Strategies to stay original are presented from Newmaster, music editors, and other composers working in Hollywood. Additionally, issues of authority and originality are presented, and the older convention of the film composer as the sole author of the score must be revised. This chapter illustrates how current trends in temp tracks can sometimes force a composer into unoriginal territory, confirming Kathryn Kalinaks assertion that the “tyranny of the temp track” can be a kiss of death for originality in a film score. The goal of this paper is to illuminate the ways that composers can still stay original in film music with regards to the temp track.

Chapter 1:

The Temp in Early Cinema

The temp track can be described as the process of including music in a film-in-progress: “a temporary soundtrack is created for the purpose of contributing to presentation of film screenings, and audience previews.”⁵ This temp track is compiled by the music editor, who works in collaboration with the film’s director, music supervisor, and film editor. The music utilized for temp tracks typically consists of pre-existing recordings of classical, popular, folk, or jazz genres, and more recently, other scores in pre-existing films. Once a composer has been hired and the original music has been finished, the temp track is removed. Composer Fred Karlin suggests that, “*Temp* is short for *temporary* which is something that the temp tracks frequently aren’t. Event if they are totally and successfully replaced by an original score, there may be a musical residue left behind.”⁶ This is in part due to the fact that directors and music editors work with a temp track months before the original score can be utilized.

The concept of the temp track goes well beyond its modern day connotation. The idea of pre-existing music to make up the large majority of the film score has its roots in the silent-film era. The 1924 film *The Thief of Baghdad* featured a unique idea of time in that it showcased a completely original film score composed by Victor Herbert. At the premiere of the film one

⁵ Ronald H. Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track' as Blueprint for the Score, Source Music, and Source Music of Films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 02 (May 2006): 166.

⁶ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," in *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 26.

reviewer remarked, “When the music of the world is at the disposal of an arranger and the libraries are rich in beautiful numbers, written by renowned composers, suitable for accompanying such a delightfully fantastic picture, why worry any one man to write a new ‘note for every gesture’?”⁷ To understand how and why contemporary directors use and fall in love with the temp track, it is essential to trace the development of pre-existing music throughout the history of cinema; in particular, its abundant use in the silent-film era going through to the golden era of the Hollywood system.

As the film industry grew and short films turned into feature length films, the importance of effective film music became a priority. Not only did films become longer but also the content was elevated. Films began adapting literary and theater models (such as *Film d’Art* France), and growing in popularity and recognition to expand into rich and opulent spaces to view the burgeoning films. Alongside these evolutionary changes were the musical adaptations to accompany them. Often films were advertised not only on the content of the film, but the array of musical selections that would be performed with it.

The use of music in silent film was present continuously throughout the length of a film. It was typically considered bad taste if a musical accompanist left more than 10 seconds of silence between musical numbers. During the period of silent films, music was not diegetically specific, meaning that music was not meant to specifically synchronize the movements on screen. Since no other sound competed with music, music had many functions within the silent

⁷ Mervyn Cooke, "The ‘Silent’ Cinema," in *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 5.

film context. Claudia Gorbman in her book *Unheard Melodies* posits the reasons for music in silent film were:

1. It had accompanied other forms of spectacle before, and was a convention that successfully persisted.
2. It covered the distracting noise of the movie projector
3. It had important semiotic functions in the narrative: encoded according to late 19th century conventions, it provided historical, geographical, and atmospheric setting, it helped depict and identify characters and qualify actions. Along with intertitles, its semiotic functions compensated for the character's lack of speech.
4. It provided a rhythmic beat to complement, or impel, the rhythms of editing and movement on the screen.⁸

In the early 20th century the way in which one might hear film music could be vastly different. Different theaters could provide contrasting musical accompaniments to the same film. Production companies associated with the films employed music directors to compile music “cue sheets” to be used for the films. These cue sheets were a list of suggested pieces to be used at certain times within a specific film. Many cue sheets were published in trade publications. As early as 1909, the publication *Edison Kinetograms* published articles such as, “Incidental Music for Edison Pictures.” Other studios and trade publications also published material on suggestions for use in silent films. As film technology developed and as films evolved, cue sheets became more detailed to include timings of the suggested pieces, short-score references to each theme,

⁸ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI, 1987), 53.

and detailed accounts for coordinating music and image. The material that made up these cue sheets were culled from standard concert repertoire, primarily 19th century art music, popular and folk music, and original compositions.⁹

Music use was not standardized at this point as film theaters also had their own musical director that might not use any of the suggestions issued by the production companies. Depending on their budget for music, some theaters employed a large orchestra, chamber orchestra, small group of musicians, or just a pianist or organist. With the release of a film in the early 1900's one could see a film two or three times, and each time experience different music.

As the demand for organized musical selections grew, music directors met this need with anthologies that contained a large selection of music for use in the cinema. These anthologies or encyclopedias contained the kinds of music that were listed in cue sheets, and were organized by their narrative function. The first examples of these collections were written by J.S. Zamecnik (a student of Antonin Dvorak) wrote *Sam Fox Moving Picture Music Series* (1913-1914). Erno Rappee, wrote *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* (1924), and later *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* (1925). These encyclopedias catalogued the different kinds of narrative functions in which music could be used. For example, in Zamecnik's anthology is a piece entitled, "Mexican or Spanish Music", which was to be an all-purpose cue played anytime a Spanish or Mexican reference was onscreen (see example 1-1).

⁹ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 10.

Mexican Or Spanish Music

Example 1-1, excerpt from “Mexican or Spanish Music” composed by J.S Zamenik.
J.S. Zamecnik, *Sam Fox Moving Picture Music Series*, vol. I (Cleveland: Sam Fox, 1913).

Some were original pieces like the example above, while others were a makeshift edit from an existing piece by a famed composer. Max Winkler persuaded his publisher Carl Fischer to present its own music anthology in 1916. Winkler said of the project, “extracts from great symphonies and operas were hacked down to emerge as ‘Sinister Misterioso’ by Beethoven or ‘Weird Moderato’ by Tchaikovsky.”¹⁰ A popular favorite in these anthologies was Rossini’s *William Tell* overture, which was ideal for chases or what were termed “hurry” scenes. Many of the pieces had short repetitive sections that could be extended or cut short if necessary.

Zamecnik’s published material shows a preference for these short repeated sections. Music encyclopedias were mainly a cataloguing of short works by well-known composers such as Rossini, Puccini, Verdi, List, Richard Strauss, Tchaikovsky, and Grieg. Music directors were

¹⁰ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 12.

often times referred to as fitters or synchronizers. The later term referencing the ability to place music within a certain time frame, rather than tying any sort of musical details to the action on the screen.

Music Directors would utilize these anthologies and cue sheet to “compile” the film score for early cinema. This practice became known as the *compilation* score. Furthermore it is this practice of compiling pre-existing materials that bears a strong resemblance to the way in which a modern music editor would compile the temp track. The music director/synchronizer, pianist or conductor performed essentially the same task as today’s music editor in assembling temp tracks: both jobs require the position to compile an engaging score from pre-existing materials that fits the filmic and genre demands. In early cinema, music directors would consult an anthology such as *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* and would find fitting music under categories like “chase scenes” or “Spanish Music.” In Hollywood today, a music editor could find pre-existing film scores in an immense computerized database that is organized in a similar manner to the early anthologies.¹¹ Although the process for selecting music is similar, today the music editor works with recorded compositions and computers (whereas in early cinema the compilation score would be performed live with the film), and his/her creation (temp track) is replaced when the composed score for the film is completed.

¹¹ Music editor Jack Dubowsky has detailed the databases at Pixar and how an editor can type “chase scene” into the database and find hundreds of examples for a temp track. This can be narrowed further, with more specific criteria entered into the database, for example, “fast, string feature, and dissonant.”

Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 5, no. 1 (2011): 11.

Both the cue sheets and the anthologies highlight the reliance on previously composed material to permeate early cinema practices. These two ideas laid the foundation for the temp-track to thrive into modern cinema. The practice of using a previously composed material to amplify a scene in silent cinema will transfer into the golden age of Hollywood as well, as seen through the films scored by Erich Wolfgang Korngold (Ex. *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.) By having standardized cue sheets distributed to film houses and theaters, this allowed for further codification and similar practice among theaters. The fact that many theaters at this point in history could now pull out the *Sam Fox Moving Pictures Music Series* and utilize a generic cue for a specific spot in a film meant music was moving towards certain cliché's and generic norms.

These clichés were pointed out in 1947 by philosophers/critics Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler. In their book *Composing for the Films* they discussed how this process had become standard by saying, “Mass production of motion pictures has led to the elaboration of typical situations, ever-recurring emotional crisis, and standardized methods of arousing suspense. They correspond to cliché effects in music.”¹² The authors point out the overuse of standard music cues such as *William Tell* for “hurry scenes” or using the *Moonlight Sonata* during a “moonlight scene.” The authors elaborate their point in music by saying, “throbbing and torrential string arpeggios—which the guides to Wagner once called the ‘agitated motif’—are resorted to without rhyme or reason.” The ideas, illustrated by Adorno and Eisler, stem from the tradition of using cue sheets and anthologies written in a 19th century style. The preponderance to rely on previously composed material in the anthologies. These anthologies helped standardize how music was to be used in silent film. They also helped form the musical language that would become standard for film. And even though motion pictures were a 20th

¹² Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 16.

century technology, much of the musical material for cinema came from the 19th century or earlier. Adorno and Eisler lament on this by saying, “such musical conventions are all the more dubious because their material is usually taken from the most recently bygone phase of autonomous music, which still passes as ‘modern’ in motion pictures.”¹³ This phenomenon occurs in part because of Gorbman’s first assertion, which is that older music had successfully accompanied previous traditions, hence the acceptance into film.

Celebrated early directors like D.W Griffith were known for touting the musical language of Wagner, in particular the concept of the “leitmotif” to help identify with a character or specific feeling. The leitmotif in cinema was primarily associated with the language of 19th century Romantic music. Even as early as 1911 in *Moving Picture World* W. Stephen Bush exclaimed, “every man or woman in charge of music of a moving picture theater is, consciously or unconsciously a disciple of Richard Wagner.”¹⁴ Wagner’s structure of opera helped to assist the music in both the silent film era and the classic Hollywood era. The usage of concert repertoire was not only practical but pedagogical as well. Outlined in trade manuals, cue sheets, and advice columns from the time the desire to “pave the way for the man in the street to come into an appreciation of good music.”¹⁵

Early Technology:

Mechanical keyboards began to supplant the piano and harmonium in movie houses in the early 20th century. Mechanical keyboards utilized the burgeoning technology of the era with

¹³ Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, 17.

¹⁴ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19.

¹⁵ Mervyn Cooke, "The ‘Silent’ Cinema," in *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 25.

electric technology that could include integrated sound-effect components. The most opulent theaters would feature a cinema organ, which was a highly versatile organ. The most prominent makers of the cinema organ were Kimball and Wurlitzer. The first massive “picture palace” in America was erected in 1914 in New York on Broadway, called the Strand. The Strand could hold around 3,000 occupants. This new venue featured a gargantuan Wurlitzer organ as well as a thirty-piece orchestra for its musical needs. With the advent of new mechanical keyboards and organs, the concept of continuous music was easier to produce. New mechanical keyboards allowed for multiple rolls to be loaded for easy access when switching between pieces. An ad for Marquette’s Cremona Theatre Orchestra Organ claimed, “any girl or man, after simple instructions, can operate the Cremona with most enchanting results.”¹⁶ These instruments were primarily geared towards more frugal theater owners. Furthermore, this technology helped give non-musicians the power to experience a silent film with music. It allowed for theaters and movie houses the option to go without an actual organist, pianist, or musician. This is an initial step for the film industry in allowing non-musicians access to musical materials. As technology changes, the ways non-musicians can access music will change as well, offering new challenges to musicians and composers.

Attempts were made to try and synchronize the picture to the phonograph as well. This idea went as far back to around 1900, which companies like Messter in Germany and Gaumont in France. This concept was especially popular in France with the company Pathe, which had a vested interest in seeing the success of synchronizing the picture to the phonograph. However it was generally considered to be inferior to the accompaniment provided by live musicians. By

¹⁶ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 22.

the 1920's fitting recordings could be sourced from sound libraries that supplemented cue sheets for live music. Synchronized playback equipment became more widespread. The sound operators, who were controlling the phonographs while watching the screen, were sometimes previously the music directors from the silent era whose jobs were in jeopardy. This technological innovation has connections to modern day use of pre-existing recordings as well. The practice of synching the phonographs in the 1920's can be seen as a correlation to the way in which music editors currently compile a temp track.

Simultaneously at this period was the development of "Illustrative scores" for specific pictures, which gave a correspondence for the length of time for a given segment and a recorded piece of music to match the time on a large sound disc. This was very difficult to manage. D.W. Griffith's *Dream Street* (1921) was intended to be screened with a portion of disc-recorded music however the application ended failing and they abandoned the synchronization.¹⁷

The most successful early attempt at synchronizing music and sound came with the Vitaphone. This was a sound-on-disc system that was developed by the Western Electric Company and purchased by Warner Brothers in 1925. At first very skeptical about it's potential, they restricted the new technology to the recording of musical accompaniments in the standard silent-film idioms. This technology would however lead to the birth of the sound film. First appearing in what was known as Vitaphone Shorts, these were short films that synched dialogue to the film.

The Birth of a Nation:

An early example of temp tracking for consideration is the case of the early film epic *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). This film was highly controversial with its considerable racist elements.

¹⁷ David A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016), 74.

However, this film would set the standard not only for narrative film but also for musical structure in an epic film. Even though most of the film score was compiled by previous compositions, there was an original score in parts, including an original “love theme”. The director, D.W. Griffith, wanted the music to be structured to “grand-opera methods...Each character playing has a distinct type of music, a distinct theme as in opera.”¹⁸ Composer Joseph Carl Breil helped work towards a more Wagnerian approach to original music in the film. However the score compiler for the film, Carli Elinor, believed that “there was no need for original music since so many good tunes had already been written”¹⁹

Elinor’s attitude towards music in film influenced Griffith. Often times Griffith would include civil war songs and classical music right next to each other, rather than offer original music. Elinor would include the work of composers such as Beethoven, Bizet, Flotow, Mozart, Offenbach, Rossini, Schubert, Suppe, Verdi, and Wagner. One famous example is the use of Richard Wagner’s “Ride of the Valkyries” to accompany the scene depicting the equestrian riders of the Klu Klux Klan. This scene sparked debate between Griffith and composer Breil; Griffith wanted to alter specific parts in Wagner’s score to fit the scene and Breil believed it was not necessary to alter a master’s work. Griffith ultimately won by quoting the conductor of the Metropolitan Opera agreeing that the change was acceptable. Griffith’s concept of altering the pre-existing music would influence other filmmakers as well and would have implications for future compilations scores.

Birth of a Nation was a phenomenal success and many directors would copy the narrative and musical organization. The example of slightly changing a known melody would have

¹⁸ Mervyn Cooke, "The 'Silent' Cinema," 24.

¹⁹ *ibid*, 23.

implications for directors to come. This is one idea that helped spur the concept of the temp track. The way in which Griffith altered a known melody is still very common in contemporary film. Often times directors will produce a temp track for a film with classical works then ask the composer to write something that sounds very similar, but does not violate copyright laws.

A Modern Comparison:

A modern musical comparison to *A Birth of a Nation* could be in Bruce Broughton's score to the 1985 film *The Young Sherlock Holmes*. In this film the director was very much attached to Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* (1937). The director was adamant about getting this exact sound for the big dramatic scene close to the end. The director wanted the exact sound from the famous Orff composition, up to and including the whisper-like chanting of the choir, with regular orchestral accents on the downbeats. Broughton worked in as much as he could from the composition without infringing on copyright. This concept stems from the argument first made by D.W. Griffith saying it only needed to be close to the sound but not exact. The end product is apparent that Broughton was tied to *Carmina* during that climactic scene. However, Fred Karlin in his book, suggests that "in spite of the score's clear relationship to Orff in that scene, Broughton's score is very original throughout."²⁰

The Transition to Sound:

In the late 1920's Hollywood experienced the transition to sound film. Technology had made it possible to synchronize dialogue and sound to film. The initial technology did have setbacks, and production companies were not even sure a sound film might do well financially.

²⁰ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," 27.

Music had been the realistic portion of an otherwise mechanical process. Music was the “antidote to the technically derived ‘ghostliness’ of the images.”²¹ Music was also presented continuously during a silent film. The new technology forced musicians to think differently about how music would interact with the visual element. Now music was not the only sound in the diegetic space. As the transition to sound transpired, there became three distinct models for a sound film with one hybrid model. These models are outlined by James Buhler and David Neumeyer:

1. The pure silent film-silent film with live accompaniment
2. The “talking” or “100% talking” film—sound film with synchronized dialogue and effects
3. The “synchronized” film-sound film with recorded music and sound effects (but little or no dialogue)
4. The “part-talkie”-hybrids that were essentially synchronized films containing interpolated talking sequences as novelties.²²

Initially production companies wanted to use the burgeoning technology to standardize and improve musical accompaniment in a silent film. This was option three from above, and companies wanted to elevate the accompaniment of silent film. For example in 1926 Warner Brothers hired the New York Philharmonic to record the score for *Don Juan*.²³

²¹ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 53.

²² James Buhler and David Neumeyer, “Music and the Ontology of The Sound Film: The Classical Hollywood System” in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, 21.

²³ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 66.

Initially movies tried to adapt the older system of continuous music into sound film. Since it was an already established convention, filmmakers wanted to ease the transition by giving music a similar treatment. However, with the introduction of sound came the realization that films felt more real with synchronized sound. Music had to find a footing in this new world of reality. Continuous music made no distinction between what was diegetic and what was non-diegetic music. Added to that the difficult task of postproduction dubbing, a combination of music and sound, particularly music and dialogue, had to be mixed directly on the set, posing immense hurdles. Some composers continued in the same vein as silent films. For example, composers like J.S. Zamecnik and Hugo Riesenfeld reproduced films that utilized the continuous score structured around the principle of the leitmotif; films like *The Wedding March* (1928), *Sunrise* (1927), and *The Wind* (1928).

Not all filmmakers maintained the continuity-of-convention concept in regards to music. Some left music only to the diegetic portions of a film, where the presence of music was only signaled by dialogue cues (“Just listen to that music”) or visual reference (appearance of on-screen musicians.). In many of the newer films in the late 1920’s there was no musical accompaniment at all.

Some films adhered to option number four from above, as a kind of hybrid. *The Jazz Singer* (1927) juxtaposed two diametrically opposed musical practices: one allowing for non-diegetic and continuous music, the other heavily restraining it. Portions of the film that resembled the silent era were accompanied by continuous non-diegetic music structured in the leitmotif. For instance, the love theme was from Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* and represented Jack Robbins’ feeling for his parents. The Tchaikovsky composition was an “old warhorse of the compilation score” and was used not for any real relevance to the plot but

“simply because it was a popular tune of the day.”²⁴ The brief synchronized sound portions of the film include only music produced by Jack as he vamps a few chords at the piano. “Here Jolson [is] not only singing and dancing but speaking informally and spontaneously to other persons in the film as someone might do in reality. The effect was not so much of *hearing* Jolson speak as of *overhearing* him speak, and it thrilled audiences bored with the [melodramatic] conventions of silent cinema.”²⁵ This illustrates the change that begins with sound film. The non-diegetic film score was at odds with the ever-strengthening impression of reality found in the Vitaphone dimension of sound.

With the new technology of synchronizing sound to film, the financial burden changed from the theater owner, who bought cue sheets or original scores, maintained a film music library, and paid musicians and conductors, to the production studios. With the financial burden changing to the studios, artistic considerations were changing as well. Since silent films had continuous music, it was considered unrealistic to have a wholly original and unique film score, although some did try. The leitmotif was important in both silent film and sound film, however the concept changed considerably. In silent film, the leitmotif would often be an entire piece (usually preexisting) of music lasting sometimes over a minute or 2 minutes for each segment. In sound film, with dialogue and sound effect considerations, music had to be much more precise and exact. The leitmotif would often occur for only seconds a time. Between roughly 1930-1965, “composers were integrated in into the industrial process to give each film a newly composed score, a musical accompaniment unencumbered by extrafilmic associations.”²⁶ As sound film

²⁴ Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music*, 51.

²⁵ David Cook, *History of Narrative Film*, 210.

²⁶ Julie Hubbert, "The Compilation Soundtrack from the 1960s to the Present," in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, by David Neumeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 298.

flourished, the practice of compilation quickly faded. However, compilation scores were still being used as a temp-track for composers.

In silent film the temp-track was not really “temp” but was the actual score, as evidenced by the process of cue sheets. During the silent era the compilation score was the temp-track, preexisting pieces culled from the classic repertoire to make up the majority of the score. However during the golden age of Hollywood, the compilation was no longer the end product but merely a starting point for a composer. The tradition of establishing film music from preexisting material had been imbedded in the culture of film music by this point. By looking at the process of a well-known composer in the golden age of Hollywood, it can be seen how the concept of the temp-track adapts to the changing aesthetic of film music.

Hollywood Example: Erich Wolfgang Korngold

The compilation score became rare during the first period of sound film. This period is also referred to as the golden age of Hollywood, known from the time of the mid 1930’s through the 1950’s. While the compilation score became scarce it was not completely wiped away from the process of producing a film. At this point in history, the compilation score starts to resemble the temp-track. In looking at some of the works of Erich Korngold in film scoring, the process of using pre-existing material into an original score can be examined. One of the first successes for Korngold was his score to *Captain Blood* and Kathryn Kalinak describes it as a working model for the golden age of Hollywood.²⁷ Even in this score Korngold shows his appreciation of the preexisting material he used by having the opening titles list his name as “musical arrangements

²⁷ Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 72.

by”. This was done to emphasize the fact that Korngold had used pre-existing material, primarily from that of Franz Liszt. In particular, Korngold used Liszt’s symphonic tone poem *Prometheus*. Liszt’s music was not just copied wholly; furthermore, portions were adapted and themes were re-orchestrated. This was a different process during the silent era when pieces could be used wholesale, and the hope was that people would recognize the piece. On the other hand, the aim during the sound era was to give the perception of a new musical world within the film, even if it came from previously composed material. Hugo Friedhofer, Korngold’s orchestrator, recounts the work on *Captain Blood* with Liszt’s piece;

I don’t know whether Korngold was tired, or what, but anyway, he decided that except for an introduction to [the duel sequence], a play into the actual duel, and a play-off at the end, we adapted something from a symphonic poem of Franz Liszt called *Prometheus*. It had a fugue. Fugues make an excellent background for duels, because that’s the conflict—one voice against another. I think I still have a miniature score of the Liszt piece, with the markings in it what we discussed the night I went over to his house, at about eight o’ clock in the evening, and left around midnight and went home and orchestrated. The copyist picked it up in the morning, and that afternoon it was recorded.²⁸

This excerpt highlights the importance of Liszt’s material to *Captain Blood*. Furthermore, scholar Kathryn Kalinak points out that it was not only *Prometheus* that was used in *Captain Blood*, but also Liszt’s *Mazeppa*. Both Kalinak and Ben Winters illustrate how Korngold uses Liszt’s material in the film. It is an important distinction that these choices were made by

²⁸ Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 43.

Korngold himself, not decisions that came from a producer, or director forcing the composer to make these adaptations. Korngold was very skillful at adapting pre-existing material to the point that it seemed original and fresh. Freidhofer commented on this aspect of Korngold's scoring process as well when discussing musical borrowings from Dukas's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleu*.

I remember once Korngold spoke of Dukas's unjustly neglected opera *Ariane et Barbe-Bleu* in glowing terms, saying, at the conclusion of an hour long eulogy, peppered with excerpts from the score (which he played on the piano from memory) that he 'had been living of *Ariane* for many years.' Be that as it may, the fact remains that whatever he borrowed became transmuted in the crucible of his enormous individuality, and the end product was always pure Korngold...tune detecting is, after all, a childish game played by young music students, unimaginative critics, and the second violinist on the next-to-last desk in any orchestra.²⁹

Thus Korngold demonstrates the habit of taking previously composed material and crafting it to his own sound. The compilation score has been used as a departing point for inspiration to create within the demands of the Hollywood system.

The practice of adapting and altering pre-existing material also manifests similarities to the modern application of the temp track. The way in which Korngold would adapt, alter, and re-orchestrate pre-existing materials illuminates similarities to the contemporary music editor and the temp track. With the introduction of digital technology such as Pro-Tools and other Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), music editors are much more skilled at altering and adapting pre-recorded music through the process of pitch shifting, time stretching, and editing operations.

²⁹ Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood*, 40.

Through a modern lens, Korngold can be seen as music editor and composer, who first assembled the temp track then composed in a manner that adapted those pre-existing materials.

Korngold's Contemporaries:

Max Steiner, a contemporary of Korngold, whom many consider the father of the modern film score, utilized a similar process in composing for films. Often using a very Wagnerian stylistic approach, he also would appropriate pre-existing materials for his scores. One of the most telling examples is his score to the movie *Casablanca* (1942). The movie called for diegetic music performances of the Herman Hupfeld song 'As Time Goes By,' Steiner then used this melody as the basis for the leitmotif of the love theme. This example is slightly different than Korngold since the decision to use this song was dictated to him by the studio. However, other instances demonstrate Steiner's zeal to include preexisting material at his own choosing. In the film, *The Gay Divorcee* (1936), when scoring a sea voyage that started in France and ended in England, Steiner began the scene by quoting 'Marseillaise' and ends with 'Rule Britannia.' Additionally in *Casablanca* Steiner set the scene by utilizing 'Marseillaise' to give a sense of setting of French North Africa.

The use of pre-existing material can be traced through the silent film era. Scholar Claudia Gorbman proposes that one of the reasons music is in silent film and also in sound film is the concept that "[music] had accompanied other forms of spectacle before, and was a convention that successfully persisted."³⁰ This concept can also apply specifically to pre-existing music. The silent era found it necessary to include pre-existing works, while the Hollywood era of sound film sought to emphasize original. Yet the convention of pre-existing works successfully

³⁰ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 27

persisted in that composers then chose to include already known works in their own creations as shown through the work of both Korngold and Steiner. The temp track concept started as the compilation score in the silent film era. The way in which music synchronizers assembled the compilation had striking similarities to the current practice of the music editor. In silent film, the compilation score was the end result; however, in today's industry the compilation can be viewed as the completion of the temp track. Silent filmmakers needing music turned to the repertoire of late 19th century classical music. Sound film, while forging a new paradigm of film music continued the convention of inclusion of pre-existing material. Sound film now used previous works as the temp-track of sorts for composers to adapt and creatively configure to fit the film. The composers who wanted to creatively include these masterpieces, as part of their own musical language, made these decisions of their own accord. As the next chapter will show, directors begin to impose their creative view to composers in regards to previously existing material. The temp-track will emerge as its modern day component. These changes will be discussed in the next chapter through the controversial example of Stanley Kubrick and his film *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Chapter 2: Kubrick and the Precedent of *2001: A Space Odyssey*

This chapter deals primarily with the precedent of Stanley Kubrick in his film *2001 A Space Odyssey* (1968) rejecting the original work of Alex North, for the temp score with which he had been working throughout the filmmaking process. The important decision had implications for the entire industry. Following Kubrick's example in *2001*, other directors would follow suit in a similar fashion: Oliver Stone would reject over half the score by Georges Delerue in favor of Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* for his film *Platoon* (1986). William Freidkin would replace all original score for his film *The Exorcist* with pre-existing music by Krzystof Penderecki, George Crumb, and Anton Webern. Kubrick's example was really the first of its kind, in that the director was so enamored with the temp score it became the permanent score. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the conditions under which the rejected score happened and also discuss the musical implications of Kubrick's decisions in the film *2001*.

1960's Hollywood's Changing

With the introduction of sound to film, from the 1930's up until the early 1960's (golden age of Hollywood), composers were hired for major studio production companies, and were encouraged to write new scores for each film. The compilation score generally fell out of favor with production houses, in order to produce a film that was devoid of "extrafilmic associations."³¹ This shift in emphasis was in part an economic decision. The Depression helped

³¹ Julie Hubbert, "The Compilation Soundtrack from the 1960s to the Present," in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, by David Neumeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 296.

contribute to a substantial decline in movie attendance. By 1933, approximately 1/3 of the nation's movie-theaters were forced to close. "The industry survived the crisis largely on account of its aggressive promotion of a formulaic product designed to appeal to mass spectatorship."³² Furthermore, Caryl Finn has argued that the "outmoded and highly romantic style with which the majority of features were provided gave the diverting products of the Hollywood dream-factory an appropriately utopian aural dimension."³³ This account confirms audiences were escaping the hardships of the depression for the fantasy world of film, which also contained the appropriate musical accompaniment for a welcome diversion from reality.

As described in the previous chapter, the temp score could be seen through the lens of the compilation score in the silent film era. This was then adapted in the classic Hollywood era, as a kind of working temp track that would utilize pre-existing material. This music model would be adapted, arranged, and edited to fit the music to the new sound film. The traces of pre-existing material would be diminished if not apparent. This concept can be found in the early work of Erich Korngold for his scores *Captain Blood* and the *Adventures of Robin Hood*, where both films firmly rely on previously composed material to make up large portions of the score.

One of the contributing factors to the rise of the compilation score in the 1960's was the frustration over the conservative style promoted by the Hollywood system. Even in the 1940's when Adorno and Eisler released their book *Composing for the Films*, they documented the already growing frustration with Hollywood's emphasis on romantic scores:

³² David A. Cook, *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970-1979* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 137.

³³ James Buhler, Caryl Finn, and David Neumeyer, *Music and Cinema* (Hanover: University Press of New England., 2000), 170.

Musical conventions are all the more dubious because their material is usually taken from the most recently bygone phase of autonomous music, which still passes as ‘modern’ in motion pictures. Forty years ago, when musical impressionism and exoticism were at their height, the whole-tone scale was regarded as a particularly stimulating, unfamiliar, and “colorful” musical device. Today the whole-tone scale is stuffed into every popular hit, yet in motion pictures it continues to be used as if it had just seen the light of day.³⁴

Moreover, Bernard Herrmann discussed the issue by saying, “a piece of film, by its nature, lacks a certain ability to convey emotional overtones,”³⁵ Additionally, Claudia Gorbman clarifies that concept by saying “as something not very consciously perceived, [music] inflects the narrative with emotive values via cultural musical codes...the core musical lexicon had tended to remain conservatively rooted in Romantic tonality, since its purpose is quick and efficient signification to a mass audience.”³⁶ Another explanation for the conservative musical language during the Hollywood system was that it was the “continuity of convention” idea. Hence, Romantic music was firmly established as the musical accompaniment in the silent era and had been perpetuated as such for decades.

Hollywood was able to stay profitable during the depression then became increasingly successful through the 1940’s and into the 1950’s. Hollywood’s formulaic production of movies was working. Nonetheless, in the 1960s, the studios became less economically successful.

³⁴ Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno and Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 17.

³⁵ Roger Manvell et al., *The Technique of Film Music* (London: Focal Press, 1980), 244.

³⁶ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI, 1987), 4.

Audience numbers were beginning to once again dwindle, and movie studios began to rethink their strategies in the formula. Film executives began looking for new sources of income. One of the first ideas was to tap into the youth market. One of the ways studios did this was by employing younger directors and filmmakers, many who were not getting their education through the industry, but through university education programs. These new “film school generation” of directors were given an unusual amount of artistic freedom. These artistic freedoms helped to produce the “auteur”³⁷ style of filmmaker. One of the biggest changes for these young directors was how to handle music. “Significant changes in the post-studio era such as shifts in industry economics resulted in an influx of new music idioms on one hand, and a vastly more flexible range of ideas concerning the nature, placements, and effects of music in movies on the other.”³⁸ For some directors music was necessary to denote one’s personal style. They treated music “as a key thematic element and a marker of authorial style” and placed extreme attention to “control of the texture, rhythm, and tonality of [their] work, and of the social identifications made available through music choices.”³⁹ Stanley Kubrick would prove to be one such director with his innovative approach to *2001: A Space Odyssey*. As a result, these artistic freedoms led to novel approaches to the inclusion of music in film.

³⁷ Auteur filmmaker is defined as “a filmmaker whose individual style and complete control over all elements of production give a film its personal and unique stamp.” From: David A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016), 554.

³⁸ Michel Chion and Claudia Gorbman, *The Voice in Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 151.

³⁹ Michel Chion and Claudia Gorbman, *The Voice in Cinema*, 149.

Technological Considerations:

One technology that revolutionized the music industry was the introduction of magnetic tape. This allowed for multi-track recording, which would open up the possibility to “construct” a piece rather than just capture a performance. Recordings could be pieced together from multiple different takes. As Lawrence Morton observed, “Tape destroyed the already tenuous concept of an ‘original’ performance and made the performance a source of content to be refined rather than something to be preserved.”⁴⁰ Directors would be able to refine the pre-existing musical content to fit their filmic needs.

The 1960’s developed new technology around magnetic tape. This included the newly expanded four-track recorder, which doubled the possibilities from the earlier two-track recorder. The studio experiments of the rock/pop musicians in the 1960’s have been well documented, such as The Beatles, Beach Boys, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, etc... By the late 60’s eight track recorders were available, and by the 1970’s the 24-track recorder was in use. Author Steve Jones remarks, “with each expansion, sound recording became more complex and nuanced, but the new technology also shifted authorial control away from the musicians performing the music to producers and recording engineers who were doing the sound manipulation.”⁴¹ Music became a form that was composed in the studio, “a unique artistic act whose artistry was produced through technology.”⁴² It is these conditions that would allow the director more control of the musical

⁴⁰ David Morton, *Off the Record: The Technology and Culture of Sound Recording in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 46.

⁴¹ Steve Jones, *Rock Formation: Music, Technology and Mass Communication* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1999), 46.

⁴² Michael Chanan, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music* (London: Verso, 2000), 62.

content in a film. Magnetic tape would open doors for directors to assert their vision upon musical decisions.

Magnetic tape also helped spear the desire to make music more portable. Cassette tapes became more readily available and purchased by consumers. Consumers could now buy blank cassettes and create their own mix of music. Although vinyl was still the dominant music medium in the 1960s, personal recording devices were available on tape. If paired with a tape recorder, consumers now had the ability to be their own recording engineer, mixer, and editor. The tape helped to introduce a potent element of personal choice.⁴³

These new technologies made it more possible for directors to utilize pre-recorded music for the temp track, technology that gave more freedom with personal choice and availability of recordings. When William Friedkin rejected the score of Lalo Schifrin for *The Exorcist*, he did because he had a readily accessible alternative option: recorded music. Friedkin even explained, “I went out and got the music off the records that I wanted. Penderecki, and Henze, and Anton Webern and I found a few little other things along the way and it really is Music Score by Tower Records.”⁴⁴ This statement not only illustrates how easily the director felt he could replace the original score, but also about the growing availability of many different kinds of music through superstores like Tower Records. Up until the mid 1960’s, most records were purchased in a small store that offered other items like cameras and audio equipment. On the other hand, this changed with the introduction of the superstore or “megastore.” Companies at this point could buy in bulk for a sizeable discount that could then be offered at a lower price to consumers. Friedkin’s

⁴³ Julie Hubbert, "The Compilation Soundtrack from the 1960s to the Present," 299.

⁴⁴ Elmer Bernstein, "The Annotated Friedkin," *Film Music Notebook* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1974-75): 12.

remark highlights the fact that one could go and browse to find even more obscure items like Penderecki and Webern, items that might not be available in the previous concept of a record store.

When analyzing the directorial process for Kubrick, it can be shown how these new technologies helped inform his decisions. Scriptwriter Jeremy Bernstein documented the making of *2001* and recalled:

I could see that it was used as much for listening as for writing, for in addition to the usual battery of tape recorders (Kubrick writes rough first drafts of his dialogue by dictation in to a recorder, since he finds that this gives it a more natural flow) there was phonograph and an enormous collection of records.⁴⁵

Both dialogue and music were enabled through the new technology and catalogue of music available to him at the time. Surely, these factors helped contribute to his decision to reject Alex North's original score for *2001*. Even Kubrick remarked about his process, "When you're editing a film it's very helpful to be able to try out different pieces of music to see how they work with the scene...with a little more care and thought, these temporary music tracks can become the final score."⁴⁶ This quote reveals that the technology to readily replace a live orchestral score helped Kubrick's process of finding the right "temp track," which would eventually become the final score for *2001*.

⁴⁵ Jerome Agel, *Making of Kubrick's "2001"* (New York: Signet, 1970), 57.

⁴⁶ Michel Ciment, *Kubrick: The Definitive Edition* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2001), 177.

Original Score vs. Compilation Score

In order to understand what happened between the rejection of North's score and the securing of Kubrick's temp score, it is crucial to analyze how Alex North and Stanley Kubrick worked together. Many people have condemned Kubrick for this important precedent. For instance, Timothy Scheurer explains that "directors have been routinely making musical choices for the soundtracks of their films but there remained an unwritten rule within the film music community...that, as effective as a temp track can be, directors should not scrap the work of a master film music composer."⁴⁷ To understand the reasons for Kubrick's rejection of North's score, it is essential to comprehend what Kubrick wanted that Alex North could not give him. Because this was the first well-known example of a director rejecting an original film score, it is essential to analyze how Kubrick's soundtrack functions in the film.

Stanley Kubrick previously employed Alex North on the film *Spartacus* (1960), which was nominated for several academy awards, including music. Alex North recalls receiving word about working on *2001*: "I was ecstatic at the idea of working with Kubrick again (*Spartacus* was an extremely exciting experience for me)...and to do a film score where there were about 25 minutes of dialogue and no sound effects."⁴⁸ First accounts show that North was initially excited to work on this new Sci-Fi film that would have many spots for original music. However, Jeremy Bernstein recalls listening to Kubrick discuss the musical direction saying, "Kubrick said film

⁴⁷ Timothy E. Scheurer, "Kubrick vs. North: The Score for *2001: A Space Odyssey*," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 25, no. 4 (1998), 173.

⁴⁸ Paul A. Merkley, "Stanley Hates This But I Like It!: North vs. Kubrick on the Music for *2001: A Space Odyssey*," *Journal of Film Music* 2, no. 1 (2009), 12.

music tends to lack originality and a film about the future might be the ideal place for a really striking score by a major composer.”⁴⁹

Eventually, North discussed the musical issues between Kubrick’s concept and North’s. Alex North recalled by saying:

I flew over to London to discuss music with Kubrick. He was direct and honest with me concerning his desire to retain some of the ‘temporary’ music tracks which he had been using for the past years. I realized that he liked these tracks, but I couldn’t accept the idea of composing part of the score interpolated with other composers. I felt I could compose music that had the ingredients and essence of what Kubrick wanted and give it a consistency and homogeneity and contemporary feel.⁵⁰

Some of the “temporary tracks” that North references were Richard Strauss’ tone poem *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, Johann Strauss’ *Blue Danube Waltz*, Gyorgy Ligeti’s *Atmospheres*, *Requiem*, and *Lux Aeterna*. Although Ligeti’s music did not come in until slightly later in the process, North was aware of Kubrick’s desire to use the music.

From the referenced material, it appears that North and Kubrick were not on the same page when it came to the placement of music in *2001*. On one hand, Alex North didn’t want any pre-existing material, yet on the other hand, Kubrick was continually searching for pre-existing recorded music to place into the film. Why is this the case? Why did Kubrick just not use a composer for this project? In the modern film era, directors would use a music supervisor to help secure rights, and find music to place in a film. There was no such position in 1968. It would

⁴⁹ Kate Mcquiston, "An Effort to Decide: More Research into Kubrick's Music Choices for *2001: A Space Odyssey*," *Journal of Film Music* 3, no. 2 (March 13, 2011), 146.

⁵⁰ Paul A. Merkley, "Stanley Hates This But I Like It!," 11.

have been quite bizarre for a major film at this time not to have a composer. According to the producer of *2001*, Robert Townsend, who described how Kubrick originally wished to use classical excerpts for the score but agreed to engage a composer to write it in response to pressure from MGM.⁵¹ MGM was accustomed to the standard use of an original score for almost all their movies since the 1930's and was challenged to envision a score the way Kubrick had desired.

Another reason for the studio's wish to hire a film composer was the novelty of Kubrick trying to access the recording rights for a compilation score in 1968. North's orchestrator on the film, Henry Brant, remembered, "Kubrick told North that if he had been able to get the permissions he needed, his score for the film would have been a *fait accompli*."⁵² North's wife Anna Hollger-North corroborates this point by remembering,

[North] was then told Kubrick didn't need any more music, but when I was present at all the recording sessions Kubrick was very pleased and very complimentary, and there was no friction. But he had a different idea of what he wanted, and all along he was trying to clear the rights to the temp track music so he really under pretext had Alex compose the score, and I always thought that was unfair.⁵³

Both of these rationales highlight the fact that Kubrick was trying something novel and because of this, both the studio and Kubrick did not know the proper path to avoid disorder, and as a result, much confusion ensued.

⁵¹ Kate Mcquiston, "An Effort to Decide," 149.

⁵² Paul A. Merkley, "Stanley Hates This But I Like It!," 21.

⁵³ Paul A. Merkley, "Stanley Hates This But I Like It!," 22.

One of the lingering issues was securing the rights to Ligeti's music. The ending credits from the original release in 1968 did not show the credits to Ligeti's piece *Aventures*. However, in the later general release, the credits do appear in the film. More importantly, this suggests the rights were still being negotiated even during the credits. Ligeti himself did not know about any of this until very close to the release of the film, saying:

I wasn't involved...they took the music from my recordings. I knew nothing about it.

When I heard about the film I wrote MGM and producer Stanley Kubrick. They wrote back: "You should be happy. With this movie you have become famous in America." I wrote back: "I am not happy. You took my music. And you did not pay me." But I didn't want to sue. I am not so commercial. Lawyers met. In the end I got \$3,500.⁵⁴

With all the confusion about procuring rights for the film, and hiring a film score composer, the fact remains that Kubrick's film set an important early precedent for the modern compilation score. North's wife understood that Kubrick was searching for something different than the standard Hollywood score at the time. Kubrick did not reject the film score because it was bad or uncreative, the director was responding to his artistic preferences for the placement of music in the film. Moreover, the way Kubrick thought about music went against the current paradigm of fitting music to film. Those ideals were outlined by Claudia Gorbman in her book *Unheard Melodies*. She outlines the ways in which film music was to be treated during the golden age of Hollywood. Furthermore, she discusses the concept of film music needing to

⁵⁴ Joanna Ching-Yun. Lee, *Gyorgy Ligeti's Aventures and Nouvelles Aventures: A Documentary History*, PhD diss., Columbia University, 1993, 173.

adhere to “invisibility,” “inaudibility,” music being the “signifier of emotion,” “continuity,” and “unity.” In Kubrick’s musical decisions he would end up breaking many of these guidelines. Which is why Alex North was probably not wrong when he said, “ I felt I could compose music that had the ingredients and essence of what Kubrick wanted and give it a consistency and homogeneity and contemporary feel.” He was treating this project and the musical material under the current paradigm and the more traditional means of music in film.⁵⁵ Therefore, it did not work for Kubrick.

Since this film had many implications for future filmmakers, it is necessary to look at some of the more significant musical selections used for *2001: A Space Odyssey*. In some ways the musical choices resemble that of a classic Hollywood score, especially the pieces from the Romantic era, such as the selections composed by Richard Strauss and Johann Strauss. However, the use of Ligeti’s music is more adventurous in it’s style and conception. Kubrick said of his musical selections that he wanted “something that sounded unusual and distinctive but not so unusual as to be distracting.”⁵⁶

The first music the audience member experiences in *2001* is Ligeti’s orchestral piece of micropolyphony entitled *Atmospheres*. This music accompanies a black screen that has been compared to the older use of an overture before the beginning of a film or even a theater piece. Kubrick uses the piece a second time later in the film, to break into halves. The piece is used over a black screen that previously had the title “intermission” once again giving an almost theater-like presentation. This piece highlights Ligeti’s conception of micropolyphony, being that

⁵⁵ Irena Paulus, "Stanley Kubrick's Revolution in the Usage of Film Music: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 40, no. 1 (June 01, 2009), 102.

⁵⁶ James Howard, *Stanley Kubrick Companion* (London: Batsford, 1999), 110.

he creates complex textures with dense clusters of sustained pitches and gradual additions and subtractions of layers to create a dynamic texture. The density of this music tests the ear to pick out where one pitch begins and another ends, or when a group of instruments enters or disappears. Jane Piper Clendinning describes how Ligeti's use of quick rhythms creates and energy of expansiveness: "The small units are repeated quickly enough that the pitches almost fuse into a chord, creating a compound melody, complete with voice leading within each melodic line connecting adjacent harmonies." Kate McQuiston admits about this choice, that, "in any context however Ligeti's music presents challenges, and even the savviest of listeners of 1968 would have found existing musical concepts and vocabulary insufficient for discussing the composer's sound-world."⁵⁷ She continues on to say that it is precisely this "floating temporal quality" and disorienting music that make it suitable of suggesting a "life form above and beyond our own" and for suggesting a dizzying perspective on the human experience.⁵⁸

Kubrick and *The Blue Danube*:

Kubrick's use of Johann Strauss' *Blue Danube Waltz* is one of the most discussed musical decisions for *2001*. In the film, the music of Strauss accompanies a space docking sequence as Dr. Heywood Floyd travels to the wheel-shaped space station. It is quite an interesting juxtaposition being that the scene, which immediately precedes this, is the "Dawn of Man" sequence, in which the apes learn how to use tools to improve their situation. Some

⁵⁷ Kate McQuiston, *We'll Meet Again: Musical Design in the Films of Stanley Kubrick* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 151.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 153.

people condemn the decision suggesting that the music presents the “extrafilmic” association of 19th century Vienna, not appropriate for a space movie. While others, laud its adaptation as a unique counterpoint to the action on screen with innovative and new conceptions of music to image. While looking at the use of this cue it will help to examine how Alex North scored the same scene and how the two possibilities differ from one another. This will help understand the underlying differences between how each artist approached the music. Film music scholar Royal S. Brown has discussed the significance of this placement of music:

the slightly empty elegance of the waltz stands as a musically imaged metonymy of the uncluttered grace of the visuals and the matter-of-fact commercialism of the narrative. Further, the surface out-of-synchedness between the waltz’s 19th century musical idiom and the futuristic iconography of the visuals allows the *Blue Danube Waltz* to operate on a deeper level by suggesting that the ‘evolution’ from bellicose apes to Viennese ballrooms to outer space has more to do with hardware than ethos.⁵⁹

Composer John Williams also discussed the music and its use in the film against the romantic associations that accompany it:

It’s largely cultural association. But what I think Kubrick has shown so wonderfully well is that the associations can be dispelled. Take a thing like the Strauss waltz in *2001*. The whole thing about a waltz is grace, and you can see that the orchestra can achieve this. Kubrick takes what is the essence of courtly grace, the waltz, and uses it to accompany these lumbering but weightless giants out in space during their kind of sexual coupling. And even though the Strauss waltz in my mind...it’s the Danube, it’s Viennese awful

⁵⁹ Royal S. Brown, "Film Music: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," *Cineaste* 21 (1995), 66.

chocolate cakes and ghastly Viennese coffee...But Kubrick says to us ‘Watch the film for more than five seconds and forget those associations, and it will stop being 19th century Vienna.’ And in the hands of Van Karajan the music becomes a work of art that says “Look,” that says ‘air,’ that says ‘float,’ in beautiful orchestra terms and if you go with this film, the film helps dispel all of these associations.⁶⁰

Thus the music is effective on multiple levels. The first level the music provides a kind of musical counterpoint to the symbolism in and around the docking of the space station. On a second level, composer Irwin Bazelon states, “The waltz is Muzak—an endless flow of rerecorded, sentimental musical pap, heard in any air terminal the world over.”⁶¹ Not only does the waltz work in a way that illustrates the kind of grace and beauty of these space vehicles docking, but it also helps to bridge the gap to the future that highlights the normal everyday workings of people in space. Timothy Scheurer explains that “The actions and observed conversations (we do not actually hear their voices) of the humans in the sequence, furthermore, reinforce the routineness of life in the 21st century.”

Conversely, the music composed by Alex North for the space-docking scene was in two parts. The music North composed has none of the 19th century style elements found in the Strauss, a much more modern styled score that uses swaths of pandiatonicism. The first part of North’s music was used to accompany the shuttle moving away from earth and towards the space station. The music here is antiphonal featuring winds and strings responding to one another in

⁶⁰ Kate McQuiston, *We’ll Meet Again*, 147.

⁶¹ Timothy E. Scheurer, "Kubrick vs. North: The Score for 2001: A Space Odyssey," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 25, no. 4 (1998), 175.

short musical gestures back and forth. There is no clearly defined melody as in the Strauss. Timothy Scheurer suggests that there is playfulness to the section that suggests a light ballet more than the ballroom dance atmosphere suggested by *The Blue Danube*. Furthermore, the music is very much like the kind of music one might expect to hear accompanying a space travel sequence from an innovative composer who was trying to break away from the older conventions of Sci-Fi films, in which space travel might be accompanied by theremins or electronic, synthesized beeps, or angular, high-register chromatic scoring.⁶²

The second part of the sequence has a stronger waltz feel, though much more subtle and ambiguous in the rhythm as compared to Strauss's famous waltz. The second portion also continues the antiphonal call and response between strings and winds. The melody is carried by the strings and is essentially a dense scoring of a two-note motive that is responded in the winds with a longer more dissonant sustaining idea. It is an innovative and brilliant section of music that compliments the visuals quite effectively. This might be entirely the problem that Kubrick had with the music; while it subtly brings out the ideas of floating in space and buoyant bodies in motion, it does not work as a counterpoint. The music does not challenge the images of what the audience is experiencing. The almost preposterous and grandiose music of Strauss works as a counterpoint to the image, not as a compliment to the image in the way North's music does. Scheurer expounds upon this point by saying, "[North's] weakness lies in its success as a piece of film music: it captures perfectly the feeling of outerspace... What is missing is the irony that underlies the choice of *The Blue Danube* and the tension that results from juxtaposing pieces like the waltz... with Ligeti's *Requiem* and *Atmospheres*."⁶³

⁶² Timothy E. Scheurer, "Kubrick vs. North," 176.

⁶³ Timothy E. Scheurer, "Kubrick vs. North," 177.

There is recent evidence to suggest that Kubrick was searching for a possible piece to have mass appeal, and that the *Blue Danube* may have been chosen for this reason.⁶⁴ With the most recent example of *The Graduate* (1967), and the hit song from the film “Mrs. Robinson,” which illustrated that a musical hit could help the box office returns.⁶⁵ Other films also demonstrated the success of a memorable theme song. In the 1960’s such films as *Dr. Zhivago*, *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*, and *Bridge Over the River Kwai*, which all had chart-topping music featured in Billboard. Early in the process it seemed as if Kubrick wanted a piece by Mahler to function in this way. In July of 1967 Kubrick sent a letter to his publicist Benn Reyes saying, “I want to know which three [of Mahler’s] pieces are in the top 40? How many records have they sold?”⁶⁶ The anecdote shared in Merkeley by Conrad Pederson tells of a possible shift when Pederson relates to Kubrick, “I read just last weekend in the London Times that the Blue Danube is the largest sheet music seller in history!”⁶⁷ The possibility for *The Blue Danube* to be a Billboard hit may have also factored into his decision to use the piece.

It is clear from the information presented that Kubrick did not reject Alex North’s score out of pure ego. North and Kubrick respected one another as colleagues and Kubrick had great success in their partnership on *Spartacus*. Kubrick was a product of the changing attitude in Hollywood to allow directors more artistic freedom in realizing a more “auteur” style that controlled all aspects of film, including music. Kubrick’s idea of how music should function in a film diverged from the standard paradigm of film music ideology at that time in the late 60’s.

⁶⁴ Both McQuiston and Merkeley’s article show anecdotal evidence that points to Kubrick searching for a popular piece of music.

⁶⁵ Julie Hubbert, “The Compilation Soundtrack,” 310.

⁶⁶ Kate McQuiston, *We’ll Meet Again*, 147.

⁶⁷ Paul A. Merkeley, “Stanley Hates This But I Like It!,” 25.

Kubrick's decision to stick with the temp track fit more closely with his artistic vision of the film as a whole. Vivian Sobchak writes of Kubrick's use of music in *2001*, "Kubrick, then, uses 'unoriginal' film music originally, seeing music as not only supportive of his visuals but also as an active participant in the creation and/or destruction of image content. Thus, music in Kubrick's films is used inventively and narratively and flamboyantly, causing the viewer to listen so that he/she can see."⁶⁸

The changing technology helped people realize a more personalized music experience with the introduction of magnetic tape. Willam Rosar has asserted, "Kubrick may have turned to compilation scores because with a composer, music was the one element of a film that he could not micromanage."⁶⁹ And from accounts it is clear that Kubrick was not shy to manipulate, rerecord, alter, or recompose a piece to fit portions to the segments of film, and it would be much easier to do this with pre-existing music, than having an original composer who might be attached to the continuity and structural integrity of a cue.

Stanley Kubrick used this film as an example for many of the future films to follow. In the coming years Kubrick would not hire a composer for any film, opting to choose the pre-existing compilation score. Such examples include *Clockwork Orange*, *The Shining*, and *Eyes Wide Shut*. It is noteworthy to add that Kubrick continued to use the music of Gyorgy Ligeti in subsequent movies. Thus, any issues of copyright clearance were resolved moving forward.

The case of *2001: A Space Odyssey* is an important precedent to examine because it sets the trend for the remainder of the 20th century into the 21st century. Kubrick's use and ease of

⁶⁸ Vivian Carol. Sobchack, *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 212-213.

⁶⁹ Kate McQuiston, *We'll Meet Again*, 152.

taking pre-recorded music and fitting it to the film has great implications for the temp track and the film industry. In part the role of the music supervisor was born out of this first example of Kubrick's. The job of finding music, getting clearance copyright to use found music opened up job possibilities, and also extended other jobs such as music editor. The editor would in part become responsible for fitting these temporary pre-existing pieces into the film. Other auteur filmmakers also copied his novel approach to the use of pre-recorded music, including but not limited to Woody Allen, Quentin Tarantino, and Lars Von Trier. The next chapter will examine the practices of the late 20th century/early 21st century of temp tracking and the changing role of the original composer. With ever-changing technology the use of temp-music has changed and subsequently the way in which composers encounter the temp have also evolved with it.

Chapter 3: The Function of the Temp Track

This chapter will discuss the current practice of temp track placement and replacement with original score. Ever since Kubrick's precedent of *2001: A Space Odyssey* directors have increasingly relied upon the placement of a temp track or temp score to help understand how a scene will work with music. Additionally, this section will document the typical timeline in which the temp appears in production of a film. With further technological innovations, it has been easier for directors and music editors to place temporary music in a working cut of a film. As discussed in the previous chapter, magnetic tape helped directors more easily place pre-existing music into a scene. Many directors followed Kubrick's example of rejecting an original score for the temporary tracks that preceded it. The transition from magnetic tape to the digital technology has only increased the ease in which directors can place pre-existing music in a film. The job of music editor changed as well. In the past, the music editor's main job was to fit the original score to a specific scene and making sure it fit properly and had the correct synchronization and timing. However, today music editors are additionally tasked with assembling a temp-track for directors. Music editors need to have a large catalogue of pre-existing recordings to aid in the placement of temp tracks.

With the changing role of the music editor, the compositional process has evolved as well. Thus, the film score composer is not the only one responsible for the musical material. As Ron Sadoff has clarified, the temp track can serve as a kind of "blueprint" for the original

score.⁷⁰ The temp track conveys the style, instrumentation, atmosphere, or instrumentation that can carry forward and influence the creation of the original score. Original film music is now more of a cooperative effort relying on many different parts. Therefore, music editors and directors are able to help inform the compositional process through the temp track. This chapter aims to document how music editors and composers work together from the temp track to the creation of the original score.

Timeline of the Temp Track:

A typical production of a film in Hollywood will often have music completed towards the end of the timeline, often at the end of post-production⁷¹. Music composers usually have around six weeks to finish an original score for a film.⁷² Film composers are typically employed towards the end of post-production. The temp track is brought in much sooner in the process, during the beginning stages of post-production. However, the temp track can be introduced as early as a director gets working footage of a scene in the stages of production. Richard Davis defines a

⁷⁰ Ronald H. Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track' as Blueprint for the Score, Source Music, and Source Music of Films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 02 (May 2006), 165.

⁷¹ Most films have three distinct production phases that occur before the opening of a film. They are:

1. Development, where the script is fine-tuned, money is raised, locations are found, art and design ideas are approved, and actors and actresses are cast.
2. Production: the movie is shot, either on location, or in a sound studio at a production company lot.
3. Post-Production: movie footage is edited, visual effects are placed, and dialogue can be replaced or overdubbed. Foley is recorded, music is composed and recorded, and the film sound is mixed.

⁷² Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

temp track as a “temporary selection of music laid into the work-print of the film in order to give studio executives and test audiences an idea of what the film will be like once the final score is completed.”⁷³ He goes on to illustrate that when a film is almost ready, if it is shown without music, this “work-print” can be very dry and lifeless, in particular dramatic and action sequences. The director will instruct the music editor to what kind of music to use for the temp track (sometimes will have specific pieces in mind like Kubrick did for *2001*). The music editor will then pull from his or her catalogue of music to edit and splice into the movie. In the past, this was done with magnetic tape by splicing the selections to the precise timeline of the scene. Nowadays, this can be done digitally in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) such as Pro Tools, Digital Performer, or other digital audio software. In standard practice, no royalties or mechanical rights need to be purchased since an original score replaces the temp tracks. Temp music is typically only used in-house for studio execs and test audiences.

Often directors will use temp tracks to make sure the length of a scene is appropriate. Film editor John Burnett explains how a typical temp track can help a director realize the appropriate length of a scene:

You can have a scene that’s running very long and *should* be long...If the director is very honest....pretty soon [the director] feels it’s just too long, and he starts going, “cut it, cut it, cut it.” Until finally it becomes not even an entity within itself that’s worth anything. Consequently you start dissipating your movie. But all of a sudden you put in a piece of

⁷³ Richard Davis, *Complete Guide to Film Scoring: The Art and Business of Writing Music for Movies and TV* (Boston, MA: Berklee Press, 2012), 96.

music, and then do you know what happens? They start saying, “Wait a minute, that’s too short.”⁷⁴

Temp tracks especially help directors understand how long a scene needs to be that does not contain dialogue but has certain action or plot points. Music has the ability to help a scene breathe and take its time; especially without it, directors get the urge to cut the edit short. In other words the temp also enables the director or film editor to finish editing a film. It is for this reason that a temp track is brought into the film process much earlier in the timeline than an original score.

Music editors will often refer to the process of selecting materials for the temp track as tracking. Tracking can refer to the process of creating the temp track for the “work-print.” Furthermore, the term is used for the selection of preexisting music in the final version of the film. Music editor Eric Reasoner documents the process in creating temp tracks:

It depends on the relationship between the director, picture editors, and you [the music editor]. You may set up a traditional spotting session where you look at the film and discuss ideas for the temp track. Or you may just screen the film on your own and then converse with the director about styles and things like that, and then just begin searching for music. Sometimes, you have a real wide creative range to pick music that’s appropriate, and you can just go your own way.

On *The Three Musketeers*, when [music editor] Michael Ryan and I were tracking that film, we had a two or three hour meeting with Steve Herek, the director, where we

⁷⁴ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," in *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 29.

looked at different parts of the film, talking about style. He had already laid up some music against some scenes as examples, and from that session Michael and I went back to the office and just started searching through tons and tons of existing scores, soundtracks, and CD's, picking out music that fit within those guidelines.⁷⁵

Reasoner describes searching through “tons of existing scores,” which is significant to the temp track process. Music editors primarily focus the selection of music on previous film scores so the audience won't be distracted by well known classical pieces. This differs from the earlier concept of temping the film as showcased by Kubrick and some of his peers in later films, who did purposely utilize well-known classical pieces for the temp. Currently, editors try to avoid using classical music as temp tracks largely due to the recording procedures involved with the recordings. As music editor Jack Dubowsky comments, “classical recordings are too stylistically distinctive or too naturally recorded (in comparison with commercial Hollywood scores) to match the slickness desired for the temp, or to match other film music used in the temp.”⁷⁶ He elucidates this point by suggesting that classical recordings attempt to sound as natural as possible with distinct panning to mimic that of the acoustic orchestra on stage; whereas, Hollywood film scores usually are more close-mic'ed and panned center, with electronic sampled instruments to help thicken or “sweeten” the sound. Additionally, softer instruments like flutes or harps, or celeste are given an unnatural boost in volume for the final mix to have a more homogeneous sound.

⁷⁵ Richard Davis, *Complete Guide to Film Scoring*, 97.

⁷⁶ Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 5, no. 1 (2011), 13.

Compiling the Temp Track:

In assembling the contemporary temp track for production of a film, it bears a similar resemblance to older tradition of assembling a compilation score to a silent film. As discussed in chapter one, the music synchronizer in the silent era would be responsible for assembling the many different musical selections to be included in the presentation of the silent film. Many of these pieces could be found and accessed in one of the many cue sheet anthologies. For example, one trying to find music with a Spanish or Mexican link could consult the *Sam Fox Moving Picture Music Series* written and compiled by J.S. Zamecnik. Selections were typically organized by their narrative function, such as Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, which would be placed in the "hurry" scenes section of an anthology. Thus, the technology has changed from the silent film, yet the process for selecting temp tracks is very similar to silent film practices.

Music editor Jack Dubowsky has documented the process involved in temp tracks at Pixar studios. Much like the cue anthologies from the silent film era, Dubowsky can consult a database with many musical options. He says, "Pixar maintains a database in which soundtracks from about 2,000 films are catalogued, indexed and described in detail. This enables editors to type in, for example, 'chase', 'tranquil', 'angry', or anything they can think of and see resulting tracks which have been so described, including at what precise time in the track."⁷⁷

⁷⁷Jack Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," 14.

Function of the Temp Track

Composer Miguel Mira describes the major functions of the temp track, providing three main uses, and he lists them as:

1. Assisting the picture editor especially in the creation of appropriate filmic pace and rhythm.
2. Focus the ideas of the production team about the design of the score
3. Prerelease screenings, particularly audience test screenings and screenings for financiers.⁷⁸

The most straightforward function is number three. Since films without music have been deemed commercially unwatchable, it is necessary for the film to have some music to help the audience.

The first two aspects are a little more complicated in their scope and can have deeper implications for a composer coming on to a project. Where a film composer can create a sense of unity through variances of a main thematic element, music editors compile a temp track essentially brick by brick—making the compilation from preexisting materials, which “bear a stylistic and affective resemblance to the musical requirements for the project at hand.”⁷⁹ The first two points that Miguel Mera outlines are very much intertwined. Ron Sadoff expounds upon these points by arguing that the temp track can be viewed as a “multi-level blueprint as well as a barometer, revealing an essential vision of intent, the employment of cultural/affective codes, and audio-visual conventions.”⁸⁰ The way in which the temp track can influence composer decisions will be outlined below. In many cases, a temp track can serve as a musical guide for a

⁷⁸ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 103.

⁷⁹ Jack Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," 12.

⁸⁰ Ron Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track,'" 167, 180.

composer. Many decisions occur in the temp track that if done successfully will make it's way into the final score.

Temp Track Example: *Tears of the Sun* (2003)

The process of scoring *Tears of the Sun* highlights how a temp track can help solve musical issues, and present stylistic preferences for scoring. This movie stars Bruce Willis as Lt. Water and Monica Bellucci as doctor Lena Hendricks. The film is a military thriller set in war-torn Nigeria. The scene that will be analyzed is referred to as Lena Story. This is a moment that occurs halfway through the film that offers a chance for the two main characters to reflect on what's happened, thus showing their emotions and vulnerability. The director, Antoine Fuqua, was clear to music editor Roy Prendergast about avoiding romantic sentiment between the two characters:

In Previews, anytime there were scenes between Willis and Bellucci that played as romance, the audience laughed out loud. They didn't buy it. Those scenes were cut... There were scenes at the end of the movie where they embraced and kissed—the audience laughed every time—so those scenes are gone.⁸¹

Consequently, music editor Roy Prendergast needed to find music that would not suggest romance between the two characters. The style, and placement of music would be paramount to its success. Rather than highlight the romance, the director wanted music that was quiet and subdued. He wanted something that would contrast and reflect against the violence on the screen.

⁸¹ Ron Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track,'" 179.

According to Prendergast, for this particular scene, the director wanted music to depict a general sadness and tragedy for the situation, yet also to preserve an aspect of warmth.⁸²

The temp track for Lena's Story was taken from a film entitled *What Lies Beneath* (2000), in particular the cue titled *I Opened the Door* (2000). Alan Silvestri composed this particular cue. The temp was from a film that was a supernatural thriller that featured many extended techniques and avant-garde styles. However, there were moments that were scored quietly and sparsely, having the kind of aesthetic for which Prendergast was looking. This cue was one of these moments that Prendergast felt could be successful in *Tears of the Sun*. The temp track *I Opened The Door* starts in C# minor with a faint piano and harp figure, only outlining the key timidly, accompanied by a pedal G# in the strings (example 3-1).

Example 3-1, condensed score for mm.1-5, "I Opened the Door" composed by Alan Silvestri, author transcription Alan Silvestri, writer, "I Opened the Door," recorded 2000, in *What Lies Beneath*, Varese Sarabande, 2000, CD.

The structure of this pensive music shows a kind of phrase-pause-phrase. These pauses would allow Prendergast the flexibility to craft this cue around the dialogue in the scene. The music had the subdued and pensive quality that he was searching for, where as the move to the note A in the second measure highlights an increased tension with the dissonance between the piano and the string pedal point, as well as a longing quality in the implications of the minor 6th from the C# to

⁸² Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Films* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 210.

the A.⁸³ The emotional quality is also present with the slight crescendo on the sustained G#. Furthermore, the music intensifies through its widening of the range and the thickening of the orchestration. As a result, all of these characteristics emphasize the anguish and subtle misgivings about the horrors that the characters Willis and Bellucci have witnessed.

One of the most important roles a music editor has in creation of the temp track is where to start a music cue. This is especially important for this scene since Prendergast did not want the audience to associate any romantic sentiments between the two main characters. He needed to play off of the situation and not the relationship between the characters:

[The music starts] over the previous scene's couple, so that the music, in a sense, could attach itself to them—so that when you came upon the Willis and Bellucci characters, it was already there and has less of an impact. Music tends to attach itself where it starts, and if you start it on Willis and Bellucci, subconsciously the listener thinks, 'This is important—this is about them.'⁸⁴

This statement attests to the importance of placement of a musical cue in a film. By placing the music just before the scene change and thus allowing the audience to attach the meaning to the situation and not specifically on the characters. Prendergast made this decision in the spotting session with the director. He goes on to say, "Many times the music editor has solved the dramatic problem, musically."⁸⁵ Hans Zimmer was the original score composer for the film

⁸³ Philip Tagg and Bob Clarida, *Ten Little Title Tunes: Towards a Musicology of the Mass Media* (New York: Mass Media Music Scholar's Pr., 2003), 217-20. This intervallic connection is pointed out in this book through analysis not only of film music, but that of J.S. Bach and Richard Wagner as well.

⁸⁴ Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track'," 172.

⁸⁵ Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Films* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 212.

Tears of the Sun and his music cue for this scene enters in the exact same spot. The music bears a resemblance to that of Silvestri's *I Opened The Door*, with a few differences (see example 3-2)

Example 3-2, excerpt from Hans Zimmer final score to “Lena’s Story” from *Tears of the Sun*, author transcription Hans Zimmer, writer, “Lena’s Story,” in *Tears of the Sun: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*, Varese Sarabande, 2003, CD.

In this example Zimmer has opted for strings with synthesizer to underscore the emotional scene. Furthermore, Zimmer’s original score focuses on the “reflective disillusionment”⁸⁶ rather than the quiet longing that appears in the temp. Zimmer does this through the dissonant and ambiguous treatment of E major into E minor, and was able to compose around the dialogue. The E minor chord sustains as Dr. Hendricks continues her story saying, “We Went to Sierra Leone...” and Zimmer begins again with the E major to highlight the suspense and emotion of the scene. Nonetheless, the music does have the reference of the minor 6th (E to C) just as in the temp. The pedal point that was prominent in the temp is also here in the final score; in addition, Zimmer utilized a similar concept in the unfolding of harmonies against the pedal point.

This example of Lena’s Story showcases the collaborative effort to produce a film score. Even though Prendergast never discussed the musical issues with Hans Zimmer, who was hired well after the temp score was compiled, Prendergast helped work out musical issues of placement, style, and ambiance. Through Prendergast’s effective choice of music, Zimmer was

⁸⁶ Ron Sadoff, “The Role of the Music Editor and the ‘temp Track’” 173.

able to emulate many of the same qualities as the temp, and then enhanced the meaning through his original score. Since a temp track is usually pulled from many disparate musical worlds, there is usually a lack of unity in a temp track. The original score helps to bring unity to the film through either thematic or orchestration similarities, while maintaining similar emotional qualities demonstrated in the temp. In short, the practice of employing a temp-track has become standard in the industry. This is in part due to the short turnaround that is demanded upon film composers. Not allowing for much room and time to be creative, composers are asked to start and finish a film score in six weeks. The process of employing a temp track helps prioritize the creative decisions for a film composer and these implications will also be examined in the next chapter.

Temp Track Example: The Ice Storm

From the above example it can be shown how a temp track might be successful in the hands of a skilled music editor with a talented composer. However, Kathryn Kalinak asserts that the temp can “function as a straightjacket, locking the composer into certain musical ideas, gestures, styles, and even melodies.”⁸⁷ George Burt goes even further saying, “I can’t think of anything that would more inhibit a composer or more effectively dislodge his or her creative process.”⁸⁸ In the film *The Ice Storm* (dir. Ang Lee, 1997), Mychael Danna was hired for the film score, and Alex Steyermark was the music supervisor. Steyermark and editor Pat Mullins

⁸⁷ Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 82.

⁸⁸ George Burt, *The Art of Film Music* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996), 217.

compiled the temp track. The temp illustrates some of Kalinak's concerns in that there seems to be evidence of the temp influencing creative decisions in the final score. One of the temp tracks was a piece by Peter Gabriel entitled "Before Night Falls" from the film *The last Temptation of Christ* (dir. Scorsese, 1988). Gabriel's music can be described as a postmodern mix of Middle Eastern percussion, synthesized drones, and wind and string instruments. The music hangs over a quick, repetitive 16th note percussion played by sakut (finger cymbal) and darbukkah (hand drum). Furthermore, the music features a Turkish ney flute melody that is sounded in canon and responded by a delayed Indian violin, in which a dark synthesized drone underlies the activity. Mera claims that this music "succeeds in achieving both a sense of forward, propulsive movement through the recurrent sixteenth-note pattern, but also a sense of gradual, spacious evolution from the slower-moving melody instruments."⁸⁹

This temp track is used for two scenes in *The Ice Storm*, the first where main character Ben Hood returns home walking through the forest after just having an affair with Janey (the neighbor). The second scene occurs when Elena Hood (Ben's wife) is caught shoplifting at a local pharmacy. The two scenes do not really have much in common except for maybe the wrongful acts of the two main characters Ben and Elena. However, it seems that Danna distilled from the temp track the notion of ethnic musical treatments in a non-ethnic context. These scenes are eventually scored with Native American Flute, pounding gamelan, and nauth bells. This would certainly suggest that Danna used the influence of the temp to suggest concepts of instrumentation. Alex Steyermark thought the best way around the debilitating influence of the temp track was to use the composer's own materials. Steyermark said:

⁸⁹ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 104.

If you are going to temp the music for a movie then you should use music that is written by the composer that you are going to work with, because a lot of directors are not able to articulate what it is about their music that they actually like, but if they can show the composer who wrote that music what it is that they like, the composer can reverse engineer it from there.⁹⁰

Music editor and supervisor Steyermark had pulled music from Danna's score for director Atom Egoyan's 1991 film entitled *The Adjuster*. In compiling music from Danna's already composed music, it was deemed easier to transition into an original score. Two cues were used from Egoyan's film entitled, "Archery" and "House Tour." Interestingly, "Archery" shares many of the same characteristics as Gabriel's "Before Night Falls." These two temp tracks helped codify the musical theme of "primitive" in the film. This concept was written in the spotting session notes, next to the temp tracks placed by Steyermark.⁹¹ Danna's cue entitled "Archery" features African percussion to create an ostinato pattern and has a duduk playing a kind of improvisatory melody over the top. Like Gabriel's piece, this also uses multiple synthesizers. Aside from the more percussive music, Steyermark also used Danna's earlier original piece called "House Tour," which is a warmer cue featuring sustained synthesized pads with a sparse piano melody over the top. The temp track helped solidify the idea of "family," which was written in Danna's

⁹⁰ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*, 105.

⁹¹ Ibid. 105. Miguel Mera reproduced copies of handwritten spotting session notes, which showed both Steyermark's comments as well as Danna's handwritten notes about the central musical themes in the film. Negative Zone/Primitive is a central concept discussed by one of *The Ice Storm*'s main character, Paul Hood-high school student, who thinks the negative zone is a time when things do not work out. Danna wanted to musically represent this with "primitive" sounding percussion.

handwriting in the spotting session notes next to this temp track.⁹² This was an important concept since this cue is utilized in one of the more family-oriented scenes of the film when Ben Hood carries his daughter home after catching her “fooling around” with Mikey. Hence, the temp track helps demonstrate the structural and narrative importance of this tender moment.

The temp track as demonstrated in *The Ice Storm* can help facilitate discussions between director and composer. The music editor/supervisor can act as a kind of moderator or translator between the two, with aid of the temp track. These temporary pieces help the director more accurately describe what musical characteristics are important for the music to contain. Director Ang Lee was able to use the temp tracks to explain how he was thinking of the music in these certain scenes. In using Danna’s own music, it was perceived to be an easier adjustment to create the original score. Furthermore, it is shown that the temp track helped Danna solidify important conceptual musical ideas such as “primitive” and “family.” As Mera points out, “the temp track seems to have contributed to the conception of fundamental building blocks on which the score eventually became constructed.”⁹³ This suggests that the temp track can help aid in larger musical concepts of a film score. Not unlike a Wagnerian leitmotif approach, Danna used certain musical characteristics from the temp to inform his overall structure of the music and both composer and director were able to more clearly realize their vision through the convenience of the temp track.

⁹² Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*, 105.

⁹³ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*, 107.

Temp Love:

It seems that the temp track proved to be a successful component of creating an original score for both the director and the composer in *The Ice Storm*. Yet one cannot forget the strong words of George Burt discussing the dislodging of the creative process for composers when dealing with temp tracks. Steyermark believes a way around this is to use the composer's own works for temp tracks. However, one aspect that can spell doom for the composer is what is referred to as "temp love." Ron Sadoff defines this when "directors and producers become so convinced, accustomed, and perhaps 'married' to the temp, that composers are often requested to emulate it. Those with enough clout often refuse to listen to it, citing its presence as a major factor in diminishing their own creative input."⁹⁴ Even when using a composer's own previously composed original material, temp love can be a very real occurrence. Such is the case in *The Ice Storm*, when the production team used a previous Danna cue from another Egoyan film entitled *Family Viewing* (1987). The cue utilized was called "Memories, These Things Possess You", which is a gentle $\frac{3}{4}$ meter featuring piano, oboe, and clarinet with intermittent use of synthesized pads and pizzicato textures.

Example 3-3, melody to "Memories, These Things Possess You" from *Family Viewing* (1987), mm.1-11

Author transcription.

Mychael Danna, writer, "Memories, These Things Possess You," in *Music for the Films of Atom Egoyan: The Adjuster, Speaking Parts, Family Viewing*, Varèse Sarabande, 1996, CD.

⁹⁴ Ron Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'temp Track,'" 165.

One of the main characteristics of this melody is the clear use of the dorian mode with raised scale degree 6 in minor (see example 3-3 measures 4 and 6 the C#). The melodic fragments are dovetailed between the different instruments of the oboe and clarinet. Danna recalled the situation with this particular cue:

I remember very clearly that I rewrote that piece dozens of times and I don't think Ang was ever convinced that it was as good as the temp piece, which was me. That was very frustrating...He would just say: 'No I don't feel anything, try it again.'⁹⁵

Miguel Mera shows that in subsequent sketches of new melodies by Danna, director Ang Lee rejected them because he did not feel close to anything like the temp. Mera points out that these sketches largely use the pentatonic minor scale. Namely, in the first sketch Danna uses a D minor pentatonic, then the next an F# minor pentatonic. In each sketch, the underlying texture resembles the temp featuring the same meter. Eventually, Danna brought back the idea of the Dorian mode with a C Dorian melody, written in 6/4 that features dovetailing melodies by clarinet and oboe. This new melody was the accepted version that made its way into the film (Example 3-4).

⁹⁵ Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*, 107.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Oboe, Clarinet, and Kenong. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 6/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 4. The second system starts with a measure rest (indicated by a '5' above the staff) and then contains measures 5 through 8. The Oboe and Clarinet parts are mostly rests, with some notes in the final measures. The Kenong part is a continuous melody. The score is divided into two systems, with a measure rest in the first measure of the second system.

Example 3-4, Final Music cue for “Janey” 6M2, composed by Mychael Danna, mm.1-8

Condensed score, author transcription.

Mychael Danna, writer, “Janey,” in *The Ice Storm: Music from the Motion-picture Sound Track*, Velvel Records, 1997, CD.

According to Mera, the key link was a melody in Dorian mode.⁹⁶ Surely, it must have been difficult for the director, a non-musician, to describe it to Danna. This case suggests that directors do not necessarily lack the musical sophistication to know what they like in a music cue, but rather they do not have the sufficient musical language to communicate that to a composer. This example of the temp track highlights some of Kalinak’s concerns about the temp becoming a creative “straightjacket” for the composer. Even though Mychael Danna composed the temp track, the director was still very much afflicted with “temp love” thus making it difficult for Danna to produce anything except a semblance copy of the temp. However, the ending original cue does have a more unified sound with the rest of the film score, especially with Danna’s use of the ethnic instrument, the Kenong. It was still one of the more difficult cues Danna wrote for the film, even though the temp utilized his own music.

Author Fred Karlin documents this practice of directors using composers’ previous work as temp, and he notes that many people often suggest to composers that they should try to

⁹⁶ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*, 108.

convince a director to use their own music as the temp track. While this may prove successful to some, the case above shows it is not necessarily true. Composer Mark Isham echoes Karlin's concerns with this practice saying, "If it's working and it's yours, you've already done it. How do you do that again?"⁹⁷ Thus highlighting the idea that if a director is suffering from "temp love" with the composer's own work, it is not necessarily going to help the situation. The next chapter will focus on ways that composers can help encourage directors to leave the temp track or to abandon it all together.

In summation, this chapter has documented ways in which music editors compile the temp track and how composers respond to these temp tracks by utilizing key musical concepts from the temp. As illustrated from the first example in *Tears of the Sun*, the temp track can offer solutions such as where to place music, the style of music, and also musical gestures such as pedal points or even specific intervallic relationships. Moreover, the temp can be viewed as a kind of topography for the musical structure, which will inevitably be filled in by the composer. In the second example, *The Ice Storm*, the temp can help a composer form prominent conceptual ideas, such as the musical connections to the idea of the "Negative Zone" and "Family" that are paramount to the narrative concepts of the film. However, this example also showed that in temping a film score with a composer's previous works, it does not guarantee that a composer will struggle with a director's "temp love." Even though much of the film was tracked with Danna's previous work, he was still confined in the temp track example of "Memories, These Things Will Possess You." This cue took the longest for Mychael Danna to complete due to the temp love afflicted by director Ang Lee. Danna worked on that single cue for over a month, supplying different sketches at every edit and development of the scene. He ultimately resorted

⁹⁷ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," 31.

to a melody and texture that very much resembled the temp but with some ethnic musical accompaniment to aid in connecting the other music cues.

Where chapter 3 documents the standard use of the temp track, chapter 4 will expound on the idea of the temp and discuss the many implications for composers working in Hollywood under the current system. Chapter 4 will also highlight the work of the contemporary film score composer Kyle Newmaster and document how he has encountered the temp track. Issues of authority and originality will be clarified and how the temp track can become blurred with an original score. The consistent and abundant use of pre-existing film scores as temp tracks also presents new challenges to composers to stay original.

Chapter 4: Contemporary Case Study: Composer Kyle Newmaster

One of the goals of this project is to document how composers today encounter and work with the temp track. Author Fred Karlin suggests, “It’s not really safe these days for composers who don’t have enough stature or money in the bank to ignore the temp track.”⁹⁸ Therefore, it seemed the most important composer to document would be a composer who has had success, yet has not yet reached the notoriety or prestige of a John Williams, Alan Silvestri, or Hans Zimmer. This concept helped frame whom to document for this project. Having experienced Kyle Newmaster’s work first-hand, the idea was to interview him, since he has gained considerable experience and has grown substantially during his career in Hollywood. Because Newmaster has garnered a successful reputation, it was paramount to discuss with him the ways he engages and encounters the temp-track. This chapter will outline the different ways he has dealt with the temp track, and how different directors approach the temp. Since Newmaster works with temp tracks on a regular basis, his observations provide valuable insight into the ways that burgeoning composers might learn how to handle a temp score.

Example. 4-1. Kyle Newmaster (courtesy of Kyle Newmaster, used with permission)
 Kyle Newmaster, "Biography," Kyle Newmaster | Composer, 2017, accessed March 10, 2018,
<http://www.kylenewmaster.com/>.

Kyle Newmaster has been successfully composing film music for over 15 years in Hollywood. He recently completed a film score for director Alejandro Bruges in the upcoming

⁹⁸ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," in *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 27.

Horror anthology feature *Nightmare Cinema* (2018) starring Mickey Rourke. He also scored the well-received family drama entitled *Where Hope Grows* (dir. Chris Dowling, 2015). Aside from film credits, Newmaster has also been an active composer in the video game world. In 2012, he completed a project scoring new orchestral music for the LucasArts/Microsoft title *Kinect Star Wars*, in which he recorded the score at the famous Abbey Road Studios with the London Symphony Orchestra. Through multiple interviews with Kyle Newmaster, this chapter will analyze how he confronts and works with the temp track.

Newmaster admits that composers must work with the temp track. He resolutely agrees with Karlin's suggestion that it is inevitable that a film score composer will be asked to respond to the temp track. "Everyone I know who is a freelance composer works with the temp track when asked....," he remarked. "Temp is the norm. In about 90% of the projects I received, they contained temp tracks."⁹⁹ There are exceptions to this rule, and Newmaster points out that many times an artist or composer outside of the film industry will not usually be asked to work with a temp track. This is due to the fact that the producers are hiring those specific artists for their unique and special sound. Newmaster pointed out that, when Mica Levi is hired for a project, she is not given a temp track since they looking for her signature sound.¹⁰⁰ As evidenced by Newmaster's comments, it is essential for a composer just beginning their Hollywood career to get comfortable with the idea of a temp track. Newmaster adds that the temp can be both good and bad. Renowned composer Alan Silvestri echoes this notion with a famous quote by saying, "A temp score is like a hammer: in the hands of a builder it's a tremendous tool, in the hands of a

⁹⁹ Kyle Newmaster, telephone interview with author, 13 March 2018.

¹⁰⁰Also known by her stage name Micachu, Mica Levi is a singer and experimental pop musician known for her 2009 popular release *Jewellery*. More recently she has been composing film scores like *Jackie* (2016) and *Under the Skin* (2013).

homicidal maniac it's a weapon of mass destruction.”¹⁰¹ Furthermore, Newmaster will clarify the ways in which he experiences the temp track.

Preference of Temp Track or No Temp Track:

Having undertaken projects with and without a temp track, Newmaster notes that it depends on the amount of time and comfortability with one another. “Not having a temp track is good if they are cool with you going with your instincts, if they know you and what kind of work you do,” he reflected. He further clarified that, without a temp track, the relationship between the composer and the director may take longer to develop and can lead to creative sounding scores that think outside the box. Newmaster recalled an enjoyable scoring effort in a *Star Wars* fan fiction movie entitled *Forced Alliance*, in which he was not offered a temp score and was instead given instructions to compose and orchestrate music that had a resemblance to the John Williams scores of the original *Star Wars* releases. This allowed him to compose for a larger orchestra and flesh out his own creative ideas while giving them a Williams-esque orchestration.

Given no time constraints, a film without a temp track can lead to creative solutions. However, many times composers are given a very short amount of time to compose the score.¹⁰² Newmaster observed that the “Downfall [of working] without the temp is that sometimes it requires you writing many revisions because the production team doesn't know exactly what they want. Having a temp solves some of those issues because you can aim towards it musically. It's less creativity, but time management is much easier.” Here the temp can serve as a

¹⁰¹ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On the Track*, 26.

¹⁰² In his interview Newmaster described that it is typical to write about thirty minutes of music for Television in one week. Then a feature film in Hollywood is typically given six weeks for a composer to write all the music.

discussion piece for a director or picture editor to describe the kind of sound for which they are searching. Newmaster further stated that many times the director or music editor do not have a musical background, and can be very difficult for them to describe what they are looking for without music. “They say ‘light and bouncy,’ then I do something that I feel represents that, and then they come back and explain something or play something that to you feel does not sound like that at all. Sometimes non-musicians often have troubles explaining what they are looking for musically.”¹⁰³

Temp Love:

Newmaster admits that in certain projects directors and production companies can suffer from “temp love.” Newmaster clarifies this term, defining it as what happens when the production staff directs a film composer too specifically toward a sound that requires the composer to create music that sounds extremely similar to the temp. One way Newmaster attempts to pull production staff away from the temp is to explain to the director and picture editor that they might, in fact, have this specific affliction. Furthermore, in order to hear his original score more objectively, they could try and go without the temp music for a little while before presenting the original work. He says that, in certain instances, he might say, “If you could try to understand that you might have temp love, try not to listen to the temp for a little while in order to prepare for the presentation of the original score.”¹⁰⁴ However sometimes a director and/or the production staff will become wedded to the temp track, and require that the composer create music that is extremely similar to the sound of the temp.

¹⁰³ Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

¹⁰⁴ Kyle Newmaster, telephone interview with author, 13 March 2018.

Temp Example 1: *Blood Shot*

This example highlights Newmaster's work on the film *Blood Shot* (dir. Dietrich Johnston, 2013). The production company's synopsis of the film is as follows: "Based on the award winning short film, *Blood Shot* is the story of a cop named Rip whose life falls apart as he chases a terminator-like vampire, who happens to be a hitman for the CIA. They must join forces to stop a terrorist cell before its too late."¹⁰⁵ The scene, in which the main character Rip attempts to console his girlfriend Carrie, was temped with the score from *Batman Begins* in a cue titled "Eptesicus." The main features of this cue are a soft piano arpeggiation with a static string pad in A minor. The harp also presents various soft modal variations in A minor (see example 4-2a). One odd moment in the temp version occurs when Rip is talking to Carrie about his desire to stay together. The unison low string melody is heard, which gives a sort of ominous and foreboding connotation, which does not exactly fit the scene emotionally. However, the previous material with the piano arpeggio works very well, bringing a melancholy and hopeless feeling. It demonstrates that the temp, although hitting much of the desired emotional content, is not always consistently effective tool to score the scene. Measure 14 of the temp shows a sustained tremolo A in the low strings while the high strings present a motive in descending thirds. This descending motion deftly accompanied the heartbreak and feeling of loss by the main character. Prominent in the temp is also the last part from measures 16-20, which features a chord progression moving in thirds primarily from C major (Lydian) to E minor. When comparing the finalized cue for this

¹⁰⁵ Infinite Justice Productions, "Blood Shot-Plot," IMDb, 2014, accessed April 25, 2018, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1196124/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl.

scene, it becomes apparent that Newmaster tried to stay close to the musical concepts stated in the temp track (see example 4-2a, 4-2b).

Largo ♩=60
Bloodshot Rip and Carrie Temp: Hans Zimmer "Eptesicus" from Batman Begins

11

Example 4-2a, temp track to “Rip and Carrie,” Hans Zimmer composer from “Eptesicus” from *Batman Begins*, mm.1-20, author transcription
Hans Zimmer, writer, "Eptesicus," in *Batman Begins*, WaterTower Music, 2010, CD.

Largo ♩=60
Blood Shot, Final Cue: Rip and Carrie, composed by Kyle Newmaster

11

Example 4-2b, final cue to “Rip and Carrie,” composed by Kyle Newmaster, mm.1-20, author transcription
Blood Shot, dir. Dietrich Johnston, perf. Brennan Elliott, Michael Bailey Smith, and Brad Dourif (Flower Mound, TX: Infinite Justice Productions, 2013), Online.

The final cue shows the importance of the arpeggiated piano part against a static string pad. In the final cue, Newmaster focused the arpeggiating piano part to feature the interval of a sixth, which helps bring a longing quality to the scene. This quality is appropriate considering how Rip is trying to win Carrie once again in this scene. Measure 10 in the cue features a similar concept in the temp (measure 14-ex.4-2a) with the descending string line. Using the same key of A minor, Newmaster focuses the harmonization of the melody in sixths as opposed to thirds in the temp. The harmonization in sixths again helps continue the emotional longing throughout the scene. Newmaster also kept the chord progressions of thirds as found at the end of the temp cue. In this version, however, Newmaster grounds the chord progression by orchestrating the strings lower and keeping a low melody in the violins and viola. The chord progression is basically the same: C major (with lydian) moving to an e minor chord. By comparing these two cues it appears what was most important for the directors; that is, the arpeggiated piano line against a slower moving string accompaniment. Additionally, the descending melody in the strings was also important. And lastly, the chord progression moving in thirds between C major and E minor was paramount to the production team. The slight coloring of the major chord bringing in the lydian mode (#4-the F# in m14-ex.4-2b, m.16-ex.4-2a) was also significant to the interpretation of the scene. Newmaster wrote of the scene, “I had to hit this temp pretty closely. The end result is that much of the music in this clip reflects the influence of Hans Zimmer.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Kyle Newmaster, telephone interview with author, 13 March 2018.

Temp Example 2: “The Thing In the Woods” from *Nightmare Cinema* (2018, dir. Alejandro Brugués)

In this example, the scene is set with a group of people in the woods, and something frantic occurs that creates panic, tension, and suspense.¹⁰⁷ The temp used for this scene was taken from the film *Snakes on a Plane* (2006, dir. David Ellis) with the specific cue *Snake Chaos*, which was composed by Trevor Rabin. This music resembles primitivistic pounding rhythms with highly dissonant brass accents, accompanied with glissandos and dissonant string passages. Kyle Newmaster said of this example:

The temp music basically just set the tone and showed the intensity they wanted and a few hit points...I took this overall vibe, wrote a cue and then made sure to outline the major hits better including the switch to the overhead shot, which the temp did not hit...This is an example of being given good freedom musically within a basic vibe. They started with temp as a general reference, but wanted to see what I would do.¹⁰⁸

This example highlights a different approach to the temp. In this instance, the production team gave the direction of the style through the temp, but let Newmaster compose highly original material that went beyond the function of the temp and responded much more closely to the subtle edits within the cue. For instance, in this first page of the score (example 4-3), the dissonant stingers accompanied by high chromatic tone clusters in the strings in the first four bars highlight the campers’ experience of the first frantic/chaotic moment. The driving dissonant eighth note line (mm. 5) further helps to underscore the quick escalation of the horrific drama.

¹⁰⁷ The film has not yet been released and this project does not want to present any possible spoilers.

¹⁰⁸ Kyle Newmaster, "Temp Track Examples," e-mail message to author, April 21, 2018.

Newmaster decided to use a twelve-tone row as the basis for the impellent eight-note line. He continually adds layers to the original row to help intensify the sound and texture. The tone row, coupled with the glissandos of high chromatic tone clusters in the strings, help aid the feeling of considerable suspense and terror. Although Newmaster's original music does resemble the temp in a general way, he was able to be much freer in creating a sound that fit the picture more appropriately bringing many more aspects of terror and suspense to the scene (see example 4-3).

The Thing In The Woods
1M10

Composed by Kyle Newmaster

Full Score

8 Cls to 1 $\text{♩} = 155$

Example 4-3, opening music to “The Thing in the Woods” from *Nightmare Cinema*, composed by Kyle Newmaster, Reproduced by permission from Kyle Newmaster.
Kyle Newmaster, "Temp Track Examples," e-mail message to author, April 21, 2018.

Temp Example 3: *Cuban Food Stories* (2018, dir. Asori Soto)

The example is taken from a segment of the film entitled “An Inkeeper’s Dedication.”

The temp track for this portion was taken from a recording by the Afro-Cuban All Stars, which is titled *Fiesta de la Rumba*. The film is a personal documentary by Asori Soto, in which he takes a road trip around the island of his birth “searching for the flavors of his youth and the stories

behind the distinctive (and sometimes disappearing) tastes of regional cuisines.”¹⁰⁹ This specific segment profiles an innkeeper and his passion for food and the stories of travelers. Upon watching the scene with the temp track, it was clear the director was interested in the sound of the *tres* guitar and the Latin percussion of the clavé, woodblock, conga, and bongos. The first two-and-a-half minutes of the track feature these instruments exclusively. After that, the song presents many different vocalists, both singing and talking. This was slightly distracting in the temp since the segment features talking by the innkeeper, while the temp accompanies it also with singing and talking. In discussions about this particular temp, Newmaster recalled:

I included this cue because, although the instrumentation/feel needed to match, [the director] allowed me to do my thing with that and hit the picture better. I wrote a tune that developed much more than the temp, but kept the minor vamp feel that he had and featured the *tres* guitar like the temp did. There were specific points I wanted to hit that the temp did not.

We recorded with a live rhythm section on this one (and all the main authentic Cuban cues) to get the authentic sound. I dubbed the trumpets/flugelhorn separately with me playing. The *tres* was actually overdubbed by a famous Cuban *tres* player in NY...The *tres* player we eventually got is considered a Cuban national treasure basically. He just nailed it the first time!¹¹⁰

The score for the scene is provided below (Example 4-4). There was a great deal of leeway and improvisation in this cue, which is not notated in the score. The main structure is notated and the

¹⁰⁹ Alissa Simon, "Berlin Film Review: 'Cuban Food Stories'," *Variety*, February 26, 2018, accessed April 25, 2018, <http://variety.com/2018/film/reviews/cuban-food-stories-review-1202710113/>.

¹¹⁰ Kyle Newmaster, "Temp Track Examples," e-mail message to author, April 21, 2018.

tres player was allowed great freedom to improvise around the structure. The indications from the director were the significance of the Latin percussion and the *tres* guitar melody. The final cue includes these things as prominently as the temp (beginning measures highlight the specific Latin percussion). Furthermore, Newmaster overdubbed multiple flugelhorn parts (as well as a flugelhorn-improvised solo later in the track). The brass parts come in later (measure 25-master rhythm part, example 4-4). Newmaster's final cue fits the segment extremely well, and the addition of flugelhorn brings a musical balance to the *tres* guitar without distracting from the narration of the innkeeper. Later in the track, the flugelhorn doubles the *tres* for a unique coloristic change that also helps point out some of the editorial changes in the segment. For instance, when they cut from the innkeeper working in the restaurant to when he's talking with travelers at his inn, the orchestration changes to the doubling of *tres* and flugelhorn.

Newmaster's music supports the director's edit to highlight the different qualities of the innkeeper's work. The precise orchestration changes help to more acutely guide the audience's understanding of the scene. Unlike the first example illustrated in this chapter, the director here included the temp track merely as a reference point where musically, the temp did not hit very many structural points. In the first example, on the other hand, the director was more significantly married to the musical material stated in the temp, forcing Newmaster to craft his cue much more closely to the specific material.

Cuban Food Stories

Kyle Newmaster

$\text{♩} = 118$

Cue 6 - Fiesta De La Rumba

[Intro]

Trumpet in B♭ 1
Trumpet in B♭ 2
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Trombone 3
Master Rhythm

A

B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
M.R.

Tuba Solo
SUBTLE AND SOFT
Tap note 2nd x

2

B

B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
M.R.

Tuba Melody
Perc. Continue
Montuno in Pico
Cuban Rhythms
New to This

Kyle Newmaster, "Temp Track Examples," e-mail message to author, April 21, 2018.

Best Practices:

In the previous chapter, the example of *The Ice Storm* illustrated the issues when using a composer's own work as the temp. Director Ang Lee was afflicted with "temp love" in Mychael Danna's previous work, which slowed his composition work on the film. Newmaster, however, feels that it can often work to the composer's advantage to use one's own previous work as the temp. Newmaster stated his position:

If I'm on early in the project and they need a temp score, I will give them as much as I can of my stuff. It's at least coming from my musical instincts—then coming from my own voice. Starting out, you might not have enough material for the film, so this might not be a possibility. If you go this route, then they can hear what you do and when you go away from something they are more open to it. They end up listening to a lot of your stuff.¹¹¹

This quote brings up a couple of significant points. First, he outlines the process of the production team using his own work for the temp, which gets them listening to his own creative work. In the process of finding appropriate cues, Newmaster feels that the production team will be more amenable to his own creative decisions pertaining to the project at hand. The previous chapter does outline the problems with using the composer's own work as temp; however, it also shows that Danna's previous work helped the music staff find the overall appropriate sound for

¹¹¹ Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

the structure of the film. Here, Newmaster's comments reflect that the good results outweigh the bad.

The other important issue that Newmaster highlights in this quote is getting involved in a project early. Many times, issues regarding temp tracks can be worked out if a composer is hired to work on a project early. In some instances, the composer can help select appropriate temp music and offer suggestions to pull from the composer's own work.

Consequently, Newmaster believes it works best to pull temp music from a composer's previous work when possible. However, for composers starting out, this might not be a viable option. It stresses the concept of needing to work with a temp track. Newmaster understands that working with a temp track is the new normal for most composers. The examples presented highlight different ways directors will approach the temp. In some cases, like the first example, the director will want the composer to sound very close to the temp track. This can be a difficult and tedious task, yet it is a skill that is necessary in today's film industry. Furthermore, the issue can get more clouded, when directors fall in love with music that they want to include in the film but cannot get the copyright clearance. This happens with popular music in many cases. Newmaster described a time when a director was extremely tied to a popular song from the 1970s for a long segment in a feature film. The group that recorded the song never allows their music to be used in films. So the director asked Newmaster to do a "sound-alike." This issue is fairly common in the industry. Newmaster commented that, "starting out, it's fun because you're getting to try your hand at different musical styles, but after time it starts to get tedious. Over time it starts to feel like your painting by numbers."¹¹² This concept stems from the "temp love," as described above. Rather than trying for something novel and creative, a director cannot be

¹¹² Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

persuaded to try something new even when the copyright clearance cannot be gained. A composer is then forced to produce a “sound-alike” that will appease director and producers.

Composers encounter the temp track in many different ways, and as presented in this chapter, there are various strategies that can be used to produce creative and effective results. This chapter showed two ends of the spectrum: The first was a highly specific temp that director and producers wanted Newmaster to produce an extremely similar result. Then the second was a temp, in which directors gave Newmaster more freedom, by just showcasing the atmosphere or the specific instrumentation that was desired. These cases confirm Ron Sadoff’s supposition that a temp can be used as a kind of blueprint for a composer to utilize and bring more creativity and unity to the project. For each instance, the temp served as a kind of topographical map for the composer then to work more specifically and hit more edit points as well as overall unity of sound.

Newmaster’s work stresses the importance for burgeoning composers to work with a temp track. He points out the fact that almost ninety percent of his projects utilize a temp track. Composers entering the industry should be prepared to work with temp tracks and to develop appropriate practices to do so. Therefore, the ability to adapt and maneuver compositionally to the temp can be a way to showcase one’s musical competence to directors. As shown in the previous chapter, since directors often lack the necessary musical language to communicate to composers, they will communicate the desired musical landscape through the chosen temp track. As described in this chapter, the musical demands for the temp track can change depending on the project and the director. Hence, when a composer can successfully meet the specific demands in the temp it exemplifies a type of musical competence to the director. Newmaster

noted that he does not know of any of his contemporaries who can afford to reject a temp.¹¹³ Due to his successful work with temp tracks, Newmaster has been able to cultivate fruitful relationships with directors, who in turn hire him for subsequent projects. Newmaster described this kind relationship with director Alejandro Brugués (*Nightmare Cinema*, example 4-3), who has utilized him on numerous projects, and even referred him to other directors.¹¹⁴ Thus, the temp track can also serve as a barometer for musical competence with directors.

¹¹³ Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

¹¹⁴ Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Ever since the inception of music accompanying film, composers have struggled with the inclusion of pre-existing materials. During the silent film era, many companies thought along the lines of music synchronizer Carli Elionor: “there was no need for original music since so many good tunes had already been written.”¹¹⁵ Film has a rich history with the use of pre-existing materials. Many habits found of the silent-film era can be seen in today’s industry. The use of cue anthologies in the 1910s and 1920s is not unlike the modern databases that movie production companies keep today to find appropriate music for films. The silent film process ended when the music synchronizer found the appropriate cue in the anthology, which would make its way into the final presentation of the film for that particular theater. However, in today’s industry, the selection of music from an anthology (or database) of music is only the beginning of the compilation of the temp track. Once the temp track is compiled from a host of disparate scores, a film score composer is then hired to make the music more unified and codified throughout a film.

The Golden Age of Hollywood brought new aesthetic considerations to the art form; specifically, the desire for each film to have its own unique sound and musical atmosphere. The demand for original scores grew, and by the 1960s, it was commonplace for every film to have its own uniquely composed music score. Stanley Kubrick upended this concept in 1968 with his work on *2001: A Space Odyssey*, illustrating the possibility for an *auteur* director to have more control and say in the musical direction for a film. Kubrick’s challenge to the status quo led to great changes in the way music was presented. Consequently, the temp track became more

¹¹⁵ Mervyn Cooke, “The ‘Silent’ Cinema,” in *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 13.

standard with the introduction of digital technology in the 1980s and 1990s. Music editor and CEO of Segue music Daniel Allan Carlin outlines the changes:

Because of Pro Tools you don't have to wait for somebody to make a transfer. If you were tracking in the old days you would do some picking off your discs or off your cassettes or DAT's and then you'd send it over to the transfer department and they would make the mag (magnetic tape) for you and send it back over, and you'd break it down and try it, so this was very prolonged process. And now, if you pick something that you like you're picking from a CD and you can immediately load it at high speed into your Pro Tools it's immediate duplication, so you can have as many of those as you want so you can keep using the same cue on all six different reels, whatever you need. That's made it easier and quicker.¹¹⁶

Just as word processing on the computer changed the writing process, digital technology has drastically changed how music editors and directors can place music. Digital technology has encouraged quick turnaround in the music editing room. The timeline has been sped up. Even during the 1960s and 1970s, as Carlin points out, the process was still fairly involved, and many directors preferred to rely more heavily on the composer to create the musical sound-world of the film. Newmaster also illustrates this point by remarking that, "there's a lot less trust these days than in the past, in regards to film composers."¹¹⁷ He further clarified that in the past someone like John Williams might meet with the director and play the cues on the piano and that would be it. The director would have to trust that the synching, orchestration, and performance would be

¹¹⁶ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," in *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 27.

¹¹⁷ Kyle Newmaster, telephone interview with author, 13 March 2018.

suited for the movie according to the composer. Now composers are forced to produce MIDI mockups to show exactly how the cue will work in the film. And many times the temp track will inform that midi mockup. Directors and producers have many more options in regards to the use of music in film. With quicker turnarounds in film and a sped-up timeline, the work of music placement is often placed at the end of the production timeline. Regularly, the temp track is brought in towards the beginning of post-production and then original scoring at the end. Composers are typically given a very tight deadline to create the music. Therefore, composers rely on the efficacy of the temp track to help the topography of the music cues. As Ron Sadoff put it, "The temp track, in most cases is a veritable blueprint of a film's soundtrack."¹¹⁸

Young film composers need to contend with this "blueprint" and meet the specific needs of the temp. Since directors convey much of the desired music content through the temp track, composers need to meet the varying demands of the temp track. Depending on the director, the needs may be drastically different. Composers can convey their musical competence by successfully navigating the specific demands of the temp. Kyle Newmaster illustrated that he was able to not only stay true to the temp demands, yet also compose music that was creative and original. In his score to *Nightmare Cinema*, he underscored the film effectively, going beyond the temp, by hitting many more of the film edits, which emphasized the action more successfully. In displaying his musical competence with the temp track, he was able to garner more work and develop a more rewarding relationship with the director.

The concept of the temp track further complicates the idea of authorship of film music. Ron Sadoff describes how the expert placement of the temp track by a music editor like Roy

¹¹⁸ Ronald H. Sadoff, "The Role of the Music Editor and the 'Temp Track' as Blueprint for the Score, Source Music, and Ssource Music of Films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 2 (May 2006), 166.

Prendergast can solve many of the musical issues for the original composer. The example of *Tears of the Sun* highlights how Prendergast's deft selection of temp music helped Hans Zimmer with the final cue. Composer Miguel Mera notes, "The composer is only one of a number of people who influence the shape and structure of the score at every stage of the filmmaking process."¹¹⁹ Mera is responding to the fact that not only is the film composer an author, but it would suggest that the music editor, music supervisor, and to some degree, the director is an author as well (if he/she helps compile the temp track.). Music editor Jack Dubowsky adds to the debate by saying, "I am merely taking instructions from the music editor or picture editor on the trope they require [for the temp]."¹²⁰ This quote would further support Mera in his claim that many people influence the shape and sound of the score at every moment. This debate of authorship goes back to the Golden Age of Hollywood as well. In the production of *Gone With the Wind*, for instance, "Selznick [the producer] let it be known that he might consider Herbert Stothart as co-composer of the score... Once Steiner heard of this possibility of another composer being brought in, he doubled his efforts to clear himself for Selznick."¹²¹ However, recent scholarship has solidified that indeed others were involved in *Gone With the Wind*.¹²² These comments suggest that the contemporary audiences must reject the older idealistic and mythological notion of the film composer as complete *auteur* for the musical content. Union and

¹¹⁹ Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 66.

¹²⁰ Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 5, no. 1 (2011), 19.

¹²¹ Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies* (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 1997), 116-117.

¹²² Annette Davison clarifies this debate in her book *Alex North's A Streetcar Named Desire: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 14.

departmental rules that dictate who gets screen credit for what are limiting the number of people who receive credit for their involvement in the score. Often times ghostwriters and ghost editors are un-credited if they did not work the requisite number of hours in order to receive on-screen credit.¹²³

Related to this matter of authorship is the concept of originality. Originality is a separate issue to that of authorship. A new musical composition for a score can be of certain authorship, yet still be highly derivative and ultimately deemed unoriginal. The work of the temp track can have immense implications to the concept of originality. Author Fred Karlin further describes the issue:

The director's predetermined, very specific blueprint from the final score, it can be the kiss of death for originality. Many Times the director expects the composer to replace his temp track with music that is virtually the same. In these cases, the composer may find himself imitating the temp track to satisfy the director: Creatively, this is stifling.¹²⁴

In many cases like the one Karlin has outlined, there is usually a lack of time allotted to the composer, who may end up needing to sound close to the temp to appease the director and studio executives. Dubowsky suggests that a composer may occasionally be able to defy the director's or music editor's guidance with the temp, but these are typically composers who have a stature at the level of John Williams or Hans Zimmer.¹²⁵ As Newmaster reminds us, "most freelance composers need to work with the temp."¹²⁶ The previous chapter highlighted the fact that the

¹²³ Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," 21.

¹²⁴ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," in *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 7.

¹²⁵ Jack Curtis Dubowsky, "The Evolving 'Temp Score' in Animation," 22.

¹²⁶ Kyle Newmaster, "Discussions on Temp Tracks," telephone interview by author, March 13, 2018.

production team might be extremely attached to a temp score and demand the composer stay very close to that specific musical material. This has strong implications for the originality of the work.

This issue of originality has a strong connection to the standard practice of temping edits with pre-existing film scores. Ron Sadoff confirms that compiling the temp score is “often drawn from the score of pre-existing films—a testament to film music as a potent elixir of style, connotation and affect. The routine interchangeability of cues utilized in temp tracks demonstrates their practical functionality, rooted in a pool of standardized and accepted clichés and conventions.”¹²⁷ This practice can hurt the concept of originality. As new scores are composed, and if they are completely based on older film music, it can propel film music towards a “slowly evolving generic norm.”¹²⁸ Fred Karlin argues: “The score will often become generic if the overall sound of the temp track is duplicated too closely. In other words, it won’t really be tailored to the specific film, but rather to a certain type of film or story.”¹²⁹ More recently, new viral videos have emerged as groups are starting to document this concept. One particularly popular video handle titled “Every Frame a Painting” documented how many of the Marvel franchise films cut and edit a film precisely to the temp track that is culled from recent film scores.¹³⁰ Then the film score composer is asked to sound eerily similar to that of the temp track. The videos show a specific scene (from a Marvel film) with the temp track then immediately compared to the final score. Each example shows how the final score very much

¹²⁷ Sadoff, “The Role of the Music Editor and the ‘Temp Track,’” 167.

¹²⁸ Dubowsky, “The Evolving ‘Temp Score’ in Animation,” 21.

¹²⁹ Karlin and Wright, “Role Models and Temp Tracks,” 7.

¹³⁰ Tony Zhou and Taylor Ramos, “Every Frame a Painting,” YouTube, April 2014, accessed April 01, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting>.

mimicked the style, orchestration, rhythmic concepts, tempo, and harmony. This is done in part, because the film has been edited so precisely to the timings of the temp music that studio execs want the same exact feeling brought by the temp track. “Every Frame a Painting” describes how this process makes the film score sound bland, uninteresting, and largely unoriginal, a consequence, in part of the time constraints put on Hollywood composers.¹³¹

With this issue of originality at stake, how are composers and musicians to respond to this? How can they stay original in this culture of temp tracks? It appears one solution is for composers to get on to a project early. In his interview Newmaster recalled the potential for fruitful endeavors when getting to a project early. He was able to consult the director in selecting a temp track that consisted of previously composed cues by Newmaster himself. While not completely without issues, this strategy allowed the production staff to understand and hear the creative output of the composer, allowing him more freedom to deviate from the temp track if needed. Getting to a project early is significant for the creative success of a composer. Academy-Award winning composer Dario Marianelli discussed his method of composing music for the critically hailed film *Atonement* (2007, dir. Joe Wright). He recalled that upon being hired for the project, he immediately composed a set of pieces from initial reactions to the script. Marianelli commented, “I started writing before the shoot. I wrote several pieces for Joe (director) to ‘get inspired,’ or rather to really get the conversation to move to the next stage... Some of those early pieces found their way into the final score.” He goes on to say that this process helped him avoid the issues of needing to fight with the temp track. “All of the test screenings were done with my

¹³¹ William Earl, “‘Every Frame a Painting’ Reveals Why the Marvel Universe Lacks Memorable Scores,” IndieWire, September 12, 2016, accessed April 23, 2018, <http://www.indiewire.com/2016/09/marvel-cinematic-universe-music-tony-zhou-every-frame-a-painting-mcu-score-1201726038/>.

demos, and everyone got used to my music form very early on.”¹³² By getting music to the director quickly, it helped not only stay away from the temp, but it also helped the composer’s workload by having already working music upon which he could rely. This process aided Marianelli to stay original, and he was ultimately rewarded for his work on this film winning both the Golden Globe and Academy Award for Best Film Score of 2008.

Hans Zimmer discusses the potential for creative success when getting to a project early as well. When Zimmer was hired to do the score for *Gladiator*, he prepared as much music as he could for the temp early in the process. “Sometimes you just can’t because you haven’t had the idea yet. But if I can, that’s what I use my technology for. That’s what I use all those synths for. *Gladiator*, all the action sequences were cut to my music.”¹³³ This also allowed Zimmer to circumvent issues with the temp track.

When composers “haven’t had the idea yet,” there are still ways to think creatively in response to the traditional temp track. One of the ways lies in the way that Stanley Kubrick selected his temp track. Through the selection of pre-existing classical music as the temp, composers can start a dialogue about the pieces with the director. Composer Miguel Mera described his early compositional process in the short film *Moth* (2004, dir. Simon Corris): “On *Moth* pre-existing musical materials were used but only prior to the editing stage as a means of generating discussion and trying ideas rather than narrowing the imagination; a genuine process

¹³² Dan Foliart, “Dario Marianelli: Turning Impressions Into a Score,” *The Score, the Society of Composers & Lyricists* 23, no. 1 (2012), 13.

¹³³ James Buhler and David Neumeyer, *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History* (NY, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 83.

of creative iteration....”¹³⁴ Among the pieces Mera selected to generate discussion were Maurice Ravel’s *Introduction and Allegro*, Arvo Pärt’s *Fratres*, Leroy Anderson’s *Plink Plank Plonk*, and the second movement of Claude Debussy’s string quartet. This approach of selecting classical music was an attempt to avoid both cutting the film to the rhythm of the temp track and also using pre-existing film scores as the model. Mera continues the discussion:

In response to the script, I selected a range of tracks designed to encourage debate regarding the style, mood and emotional focus of the potential score. None of this music was thought of as *the* model for a particular scene or as the signature sound for the score, but rather as a starting point for a journey towards an appropriate sound-world.¹³⁵

This method allowed Mera to start a dialogue with the director in the kinds of sounds he thought appropriate or inappropriate for the film. By starting early, it helped Mera understand the sound-world the director could envision for the film. This was a non-traditional way to create a temp track. In a sense, it was a temp track that was never put in the film, but really only served to facilitate musical discussions between director and composer. The process allowed Mera to follow his own compositional and creative instincts once the sound-world had been agreed upon. This is a solution that helps foster the growth of originality.

Music editors can also help foster an environment of creativity and originality as well. Music editor Daniel Carlin agrees that getting material early is key to creative success in a film. Often, he will reserve time early during the production period on the scoring stage to get some early themes recorded. He says, “We go in and have a three-hour session where you do a couple

¹³⁴ Miguel Mera, "Scoring Moth: Beyond the Temp Track," in *CineMusic?: Constructing the Film Score*, by David Cooper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 38-39.

¹³⁵ Miguel Mera, "Scoring Moth: Beyond the Temp Track," 40.

of transitions, you do a couple of thematic big moments—we pick isolated spots in the movie that we can now track. It gives us the basis that lets you, the composer, establish the basis for the development of the score and not me, the music editor.”¹³⁶ This non-traditional idea helps create a community of thoughtful musicians working towards a more original and creative musical concept for a film. In scheduling a recording session early, the music editor can get a better sense of the compositional style of the composer, thus allowing the music editor to further advocate for the composer and an original direction for the score.

Inevitably, even with the best of circumstances, a burgeoning composer will encounter the temp track. It is the hope that this project has illuminated some of the ways composers and music editors deal with the temp track that can result in original and creative work. Even when a director or producer is afflicted with “temp love,” the original score still can showcase a composer’s skill and musicianship to identify, understand, assimilate, and recreate essential musical features. Newmaster warns that too much of “sound-alike” work can get stifling and lead to painting by numbers, but offers the suggestion, “The more you can spend your energy on what you do and how you sound unique, that will help separate you in the industry.”¹³⁷ Music composer and editor Dan Foliart echoes this sentiment by saying, “I think finding our own voice can be instrumental in a long-lived career. Perhaps one of the great voices that evolved over and amazing career was Henry Mancini’s. His use of melody and orchestration left a body of work that is totally original, yet each project had that creative spark that was his genius...Once you find yours, here’s to successfully handling the balancing act of acknowledging what you may be

¹³⁶ Karlin and Wright, "Role Models and Temp Tracks," 7.

¹³⁷ Kyle Newmaster, telephone interview with author, 13 March 2018.

handed and still finding your unique identity as you move forward in your career.”¹³⁸ Composers will invariably be handed a temp track with which to work, it is important that composers continue to work towards originality while staying true to one’s individual and unique voice in the industry.

¹³⁸ Dan Foliate, "Finding Your Own Voice," *The Score, the Society of Composers & Lyricists* 22, no. 1 (March 2007), 3.

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