

History of Film Music

Early Film Soundtracks

Early films had no soundtrack ("Silent Cinema"), so music had to be provided live, usually **IMPROVISED** by a pianist or organist. The first soundtracks appeared in the 1920's and used existing music, particularly from operas and ballets (Wagner and Verdi) and libraries of "Mood Music" were formed.

Film Music in the 1930's and 40's

Soundtracks first appeared at the end of the 1920's and until the Second World War, Hollywood hired Classical composers to write huge Romantic-style film soundtracks.

Film Music in the 1950's and 60's

In the 1950's and 1960's, film producers tried using contemporary popular and classical styles, including jazz and experimental music but from the 1970's, there was a rise of post-Romantic Film Music.

Film Music Today

Film music today often blends popular, electronic and classical music in a flexible way that suits the needs of the particular film. Nevertheless, Hollywood still creates superstar composers whose film music often takes on a life of its own away from its original context, on CDs, downloads and in the concert hall.

How Film Music is Produced

Music Spotting

The Film Music composer attends a 'music-spotting' session with the Director and decides where music is to feature in the finished film.



Cue Sheets

Cue Sheets are then produced containing accurate timings (in seconds and fractions of seconds) of all dialogue and descriptions of the action.

MUSIC CUE SHEET

Composer	Director	Editor	Music Editor	Music Supervisor	Music Librarian
Composer	Director	Editor	Music Editor	Music Supervisor	Music Librarian
Scene	Time	Start	End	Description	Remarks
101	1:30	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
102	1:35	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
103	1:40	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
104	1:45	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
105	1:50	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
106	1:55	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
107	2:00	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
108	2:05	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
109	2:10	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	
110	2:15	0:00	0:15	Music for scene	

Click Tracks

An electronic metronome which facilitates the accurate synchronisation of music to events exactly – used extensively in creating music for animated films and cartoons.



Storyboards

A graphic organizer in the form of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualising a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or video game sequence.



Diegetic and Non-Diegetic Film Music

DIEGETIC FILM MUSIC – music within the film for both the characters and audience to hear *e.g. a car radio, a band in a nightclub or sound effects such as guns in the distance or screeching car breaks*. Also known as **SOURCE MUSIC** or **IN-VISION MUSIC**.
NON-DIEGETIC FILM MUSIC – music which is "put over the top" of the action to increase the effect of the film and for the audience's benefit and which the characters within the film can't hear *e.g. music to accompany a car chase*. Also known as **UNDERSCORE** or **INCIDENTAL MUSIC**.