

The Power of Film Music in the Orchestra Classroom: Utilizing Film Music to Enhance Pedagogical Approaches in the Orchestra Classroom

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Proposed Curriculum

This will be a three unit curriculum. Each unit can take as many days as needed based on the characteristics of individual programs. The end result will be a fully scored, recorded, and mixed soundtrack to accompany a silent clip from a film.

Unit 1: History and Composition	Unit 2: Refining, Rehearsing, and Recording	Unit 3) Music Mixing												
<p>Lesson 1.1: History of Film Music</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>- Familiarity with film music conventions and styles</p>	<p>Lesson 2.1: Refining Your Composition</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Finalized first draft of the acoustic composition Final acoustic composition</p>	<p>Lesson 3.1: What is Music Mixing?</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Final recording of acoustic composition Some experience using GarageBand and mixing techniques</p>												
<p>Lesson 1.2: How Can We Compose?</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Familiarity with film music conventions and styles Early development of the acoustic composition</p>	<p>Lesson 2.2: Rehearsing to Record</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Final acoustic composition Confident in performing acoustic composition</p>	<p>Lesson 3.2 Mixing Your Project</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Some experience using GarageBand and mixing techniques Culminating film with integrated score and audio mix</p>												
<p>Lesson 1.3: Composing Days</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Early development of the acoustic composition Finalized first version of the acoustic composition</p>	<p>Lesson 2.3: Recording</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Confident in performing acoustic composition Final recording of acoustic composition</p>	<p>Lesson 3.3: Presenting Your Project</p> <p><u>Enter lesson with:</u> <u>End Result:</u></p> <p>Culminating film with integrated score and audio mix Presentation of final work with process overview and personal reflections</p>												
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Student Learning Outcomes

- Enhance musical skills, including technique, listening, and interpretation, within the context of a familiar and engaging genre.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the role and impact of music in film, including its narrative functions and emotional effects.
- Develop an increased interest in and appreciation for orchestral music through the study and performance of film music.
- Demonstrate increased engagement and active participation in the orchestra classroom.
- Develop an understanding of the professional practices and career opportunities in film music composition, and performance.

Abstract

This project focuses on using film music to make orchestra classes in secondary schools more engaging and accessible for students. Many young musicians are introduced to orchestral instruments in school, but they often feel disconnected from traditional classical pieces, which can lead to a lack of interest. Film music offers a familiar and exciting way to connect with students while still teaching important musical skills such as technique, listening, and interpretation. The project includes three main parts: research and training, curriculum development, and assessment. After attending the Los Angeles Film Conducting Intensive’s “Studio Intensive” program to gain hands-on experience, I have designed a curriculum that features music from popular films that students already know and enjoy. The curriculum’s success will be measured through student interest, skill improvement, and teacher feedback. The goal is to inspire students and build a stronger connection to orchestral music through a genre they already know and love.

Research and Methodology

This project follows a multi-phase approach: research and training, curriculum development, and assessment.

Research and Training: I applied for a research grant to attend the Los Angeles Film Conducting Intensive’s “Studio Intensive” program to gain hands-on experience in film music recording and mixing. Insights from this program informed curriculum design.

Curriculum Development: A structured curriculum was developed for schools. Lesson plans include guided listening, rehearsal techniques, and performance activities.

Assessment and Refinement: The curriculum’s effectiveness will be evaluated through student engagement, technical improvement, and teacher feedback. Performance assessments and surveys will guide refinements, ensuring accessibility and effectiveness for educators.

The Los Angeles Film Conducting Intensive’s “Studio Intensive”

This past summer, I attended a three-day intensive at Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank, CA, designed to introduce classically trained musicians to the film music industry. We collaborated to record and produce an album and took part in masterclasses with industry leaders like Nathan Cole, Tito Puente Jr., and Rickey Minor.



We explored a range of recording technologies, including the use of overhead microphones for capturing high-quality sound.



View from inside of the Clint Eastwood Scoring Stage Booth at Warner Bros. Studios. Here, we learned about the importance of mixing recorded music to produce the desired end result.

References, Resources, Instructional Materials and Final Report



NAFME Standards



NYST Standards



Full Project Report



Lesson Materials

Acknowledgments

Research conducted by Vanessa Cruz with support from faculty mentor Professor Jennifer Kessler. This project was graciously funded, in part, by a grant from The Gilchrist Endowment.