The People Behind the Music:

How Collaboration in 21st Century Film Scores Creates Musical Spaces

for Marginalized Communities

by

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ABSTRACT

With over a century of culturally established associations for different musical sounds, the narrative properties of film scoring powerfully influence how societies and cultures perceive themselves through film. Film scoring in mainstream culture functions as a form of social practice in which consumers dictate the market that producers create for, while the ideas and philosophies portrayed in film shape consumer audiences' perceptions of what their societies look like. A surge of discourse in the 21st century surrounds issues of representation and inclusivity in mainstream media, including what constitutes appropriation versus appreciation in film scores using non-Western music traditions. Recent postcolonial ethnomusicological theory demonstrates that collaboration and co-authorship are inclusive ways that can both avoid the pitfalls of colonialist power structures and also create autonomy for participating marginalized groups. My research examines four contemporary films of the 21st century--*Kung Fu Panda 3, Moana, Black Panther,* and *The Breadwinner*--and the collaborations between film composers and source musicians that establish cultural and racial musical narratives. I analyze various musical techniques these composers learned through the collaboration process with contributing source musicians and the resulting musical space each film's soundtrack created for the representative demographic. This discourse opens other avenues of exploration into how mainstream media and the "global imagination" informs cultural music identities. I conclude my research with examples of film scores appearing outside cinema in social musicality; these examples demonstrate the impact that inclusivity in

film scoring has on many areas of mainstream culture, especially in racial representation discourse.

DEDICATION

In honorable memory of Chadwick Aaron Boseman (1976-2020), the heart and soul of all that *Black Panther* represents.

And to all hidden musical voices and selves, may you be recognized and honored.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Music as a storytelling device is a recurring element found in music cultures around the globe from Japanese kabuki theater to Western classical opera. Since the advent of film history, Hollywood film scores have functioned as supporting narrative devices to visual design and plot within films, establishing cultural music associations over decades of film history. These associations act as narrative suggestions, or a musical syntax, that informs audiences of concepts like mood, place, identity, ethnicity, etc. In his book *Global Soundtracks*, Mark Slobin discusses how "music intertextuality (film genres self-referencing) develops into musical transtextuality 'to refer to all that which puts on text in relation, whether manifest or secret, with other texts.'"[1] This referencing, or intertextuality, creates tiers of assumed meanings and connections that become embedded in the collective societal unconscious.[2] This results in genre-specific sounds and images that film creators rely on for narrative purposes. Film scoring's narrative properties have provided composers the opportunity to explore innovative sounds and style fusions to represent various characters, themes, communities, and even entire cultures.

Representing cultures and peoples is a common element in film, especially considering that film as a narrative art form allows exploration of non-Western cultures and lands for Western audiences. Many film composers attempt to sonically portray these

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[1]Mark Slobin, *Global Soundtracks: Worlds of Film Music*, (Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University. Press, 2008), 28.

[2]Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 14 and 18-19.

foreign cultures and "Others" through what elements they knew of specific non-Western music cultures.[3] With the growing fascination with the Orient following the Industrial Revolution, musical sounds like pentatonicism, parallel fourths, and modal scales became directly associated with the Other, regardless of whether these sounds were actually found in the specific non-Western culture being represented. Subsequently, film scores throughout the 20th century also relied on these commonly associated musical traits, or stereotypes, to differentiate non-Western characters and places from the rest of the Western elements within films. While essentialization is a common result when different cultures interact and stereotypes are often harmful and degrading, can this really be avoided? Where is the line between harmful cultural stereotypes and representing others as fully human?

In the following chapters, we will look at not only how musical stereotyping informs the film music industry and its audiences, but also how collaboration in recent 21st century film music productions are creating musical spaces in Hollywood for different ethnicities from around the world. Composers like Mychael Danna, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Hans Zimmer, and Ludwig Göransson have created musical narratives of non-Western stories by going to the people behind the music: the musicians, scholars, performers, ensembles, and the actual people who create the music of a given culture shown in a film narrative. One can argue that soundtracks for films like *The Breadwinner*, *Black Panther*, *Kung Fu Panda 3* and *Moana* are making space for non-Western peoples in Hollywood instead of defaulting to the well-established stereotypes of

[3]Charles Hiroshi Garrett, "Chinatown, Whose Chinatown? Defining America's Borders with Musical Orientalism," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 119-174.

non-Western music cultures in cinema. These films' scores demonstrate how collaboration between composers and musicians of various cultures are creating space for both Western and non-Western audiences to experience the music in what film composer Mychael Danna describes as a "human and emotional way."[4] This space visualizes the cultural experiences of non-Western audiences in film and also exposes Western audiences unfamiliar to said experiences.

METHODOLOGY

The topic of ethnicity in film score is rather broad; focusing on any one area, genre, or decade leaves many potential routes of inquiry. With this in mind, I narrowed my lens to four separate films that share a common approach to constructing non-Western musical narratives. I also focused primarily on films released in the last decade, 2010-2019, to keep my findings relevant to the Western film industry and culture immediately following.

Before analyzing various film scoring processes, I will contextualize how film music functions as a narrative property of visual storytelling. Following this discussion, I then review the psychology behind collective societal unconscious and the culturally ingrained musical narratives that are now embedded there through cinematic media. The psychology behind culturally ingrained associations of musical genres in Western film audiences will help further contextualize tropes and stereotypes in film scores and how people interact with them. I will refer to Slobin's terms "music intertextuality" and "music transtextuality" to explain the phenomena of how film music genres reference

4 Mychael Danna, interview with the author, February 14, 2020 via Zoom meeting.

themselves and build tropes on those references over time.

The first film I examine is DreamWorks' *Kung Fu Panda 3* (2016), the third installment of the popular animated franchise. I will talk here about the composer Hans Zimmer's previous experiences working with Chinese instruments and sound in film music and compare them to his collaborations with Chinese musicians and instruments for the *Kung Fu Panda 3* score. I then analyze Western and Chinese audiences' response to *Kung Fu Panda 3* in correlation with earlier uses of Chinese music narrative in films like *Mulan*.

I then investigate another 2016 film release, Disney's *Moana*. This film focuses on a Pacific Islander narrative that fuses different Pacific Islander ethnicities like Samoan, Maori, and Tahitian. I looked at the collaboration and research efforts between the composers Mark Mancina and Lin-Manuel Miranda and the Oceanic fusion group Te Vaka led by Opetaia Foa'i. I then analyze this musical narrative within the contexts of the Disney animated film formula, the visual design, and responses from Western and Pacific Islander audiences.

Of the four films I explored, Marvel Studios *Black Panther* is the only live action film. Because of the film's superhero genre and fantasy story elements, I felt it lent itself to many of the same imaginative properties usually associated with animation. I followed much of the same process as in the last two film studies: analyzing the collaborations between composer and musicians and engaging with responses from audiences.
The last film included in my study is Cartoon Saloon's *The Breadwinner*, released in 2017. I kept this film as the last example as I was able to interview the composer

Mychael Danna and wind instrumentalist Sandro Friedrich on the collaborative process with each other, director Nora Twomey, and the Afghanistan National Institute of Music. Based on this discussion with Danna and Friedrich, I examine how the film presents an Afghan musical narrative primarily through the act of collaboration by composer, director, and musician.

Film studies have indeed explored representations of ethnicity in film and film music, but most every source was published before 2010. I already incorporate several film and film music scholars' theory--Slobin's transtextuality, Roedder's "soft power," etc.--into how I analyze the films in this thesis. My research here will expand film music studies into the 2010's decade with my specific case studies and will also initiate multifaceted ways of thinking regarding the relationships between music culture, ethnicity, and socio-political themes.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXTUALIZING FILM SCORE AS NARRATIVE

In the earliest film genres like the silent horror film or animated cartoon, musicians improvised music and sound effects during screenings, borrowing popular Tin Pan Alley and other popular songs, as well as well-known classical repertoire, techniques, and styles.[5] Around the 1930's, film musicians' improvised scores shifted to primarily pre-composed scores created after the filming process, but before the screen release. Film composers still pulled melodic material from popular and classical music

[5] Daniel Goldmark, *Tunes for 'toons : Music and the Hollywood Cartoon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 16-20.

for convenience and to also create jokes, puns, or other themes by using familiar music.[6] As films began to include spoken character dialogue and film productions grew exponentially larger, composing a film score before theatrical release became a necessity. In the next two sections, I look at two scoring techniques that emerged in the early decades of film music.

Film scholar David Bordwell writes that "The rise of film, comic books, and the like encouraged theorists to rethink things. Now narrative is usually considered a transmedium phenomenon. A story can be presented not only in language but also in pantomime, dance, images, and even music."[7] The transmedium storytelling properties of film gives each of its media--dance, music, images, etc.--the ability to enhance or support the overall narrative of a film's plot.[8] Understanding the narrative properties of film scores is essential when examining the way they contribute to the themes and identities that a film is portraying. In these next sections, I will examine two common scoring techniques in Hollywood film--mickey-mousing and the leitmotif--that act as storytelling devices. I then discuss how these techniques have created subconscious cultural musical associations over the course of film history.

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6 Slobin, *Global Soundtracks,* Slobin discusses Max Steiner's filmography and how Steiner used music and sound to construct a sonic time period for his westerns and other period dramas.

7 David Bordwell, "Observations on film art," *David Bordwell's Website on Cinema*, October 30, 2008, http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/category/narrative-suspense/page/4/.

8 I use the term transmedium a little differently than Bordwell. Here, I refer to transmedium as a property of film storytelling because it combines visual, verbal, and musical elements all within the media of film.

2:1 SCORING TECHNIQUES

2:1:1 MICKEY-MOUSING

The term "mickey-mousing" originated from Walt Disney's pairing of musical sounds to visual actions in his early cartoons and became the go-to sound design technique of the animation industry.[9] It is a nickname for the technique of catching or hitting the action whereby the music sonically mimics the visually presented action. Weekly airing cartoons like Merry Melodies' *Looney Tunes* and *Tom and Jerry* had scores constructed entirely around characters' actions and movements on screen. A descending glissando on a slide whistle represented a falling anvil. Classical music like Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No.2 and popular songs like *Camptown Races* became musical storyboards for different scenarios (a piano concert or a horse race).[10]

An example of mickey-mousing through classical music and musical sounds paired with animation is illustrated in the Looney Tunes short *What's Opera, Doc*. Excerpts from Wagner's *Die Walküre* and *Das Rheingold* complement the Nordic background art along with the character design to confirm the mythos and location of the short. The narrative follows the typical Elmer Fudd hunting Bugs Bunny plot used in other shorts featuring the two characters. It opens with lightning flashes timed to the cymbal's crashes of the operatic score and soon, Elmer Fudd's silhouette appears, sporting a two-horned Viking helmet and spear. As he moves across the countryside, he begins singing "kill the rabbit" in time with the Valkyrie theme, punctuating the words

9 Goldmark, *Tunes for 'toons*, 6.

10 Goldmark, *Tunes for 'toons*, 107-132

with jabs into the rabbit hole with his spear. As the comical chase shenanigans of the cartoon continue, the visuals of Bugs Bunny running from Elmer Fudd fits arpeggiated strings that evoke the heightening intensity of the chase. Bugs Bunny attempts to evade Elmer's hunting spree by disguising himself as none other than Brünnhilde complete with brass brassiere, Viking helmet, and yellow braided hair. You can imagine what music plays at that very moment, that is, the Brünnhilde theme. The iconic costume design and stage set-like backgrounds pair with the music creating a multilayered realization of Wagner's operatic style and the Brünnhilde visual aesthetic.

2:1:2 THEMATIC MUSICAL PAINTING

Western Classical musical devices like the symphonic poem and tone painting were a major force in the development of thematic musical devices film composers use to reflect the mood, setting, or visual art in a film.[11] Tone painting and leitmotif, unlike mickey-mousing, is a direct sonic representation of thematic and symbolic presences of characters, objects, and ideas. These devices have origins in many different aspects of 19th century classical music. Programmatic music and the symphonic poem shaped music to follow a plot or describe a scene. Wagnerian opera embraced the leitmotif, a compositional technique that assigns specific melodies or rhythms to specific characters, objects, or themes.[12] Even musical timbres are sometimes assigned specific ideas or themes. For instance, a dramatic saxophone solo evokes the image of the "woman in the red dress," or overt feminine sensuality that often subverts male protagonist characters'

11 Prendergast, *Film Music, A Neglected Art*,73-74 and 185.

12 Prendergast, *Film Music, A Neglected Art*, 73-74 and 185.

motivations.[13] These sonic devices were prevalent in both animation and live action film to determine aspects like mood, image, or even color palette.[14] Western classical and popular musics like jazz influenced the 20th century film leitmotif as a narrative device, which in turn shaped the film industry over the course of the 20th century, resulting in an amalgamation of musical associations for specific images or art in film. Some famous examples include John Williams' scores for the *Jaws, Jurassic Park,* and *Star Wars* franchises, Disney's animated musicals, or Howard Shore's music for *The Lord of the Rings*.[15] This relationship between musical and visual art has the potential for shaping audience perceptions of film narrative. Kathryn Kalinak writes about this relationship in her chapter "How Film Score Works":

> Musical conventions become ingrained in a culture and function as a kind of musical collective unconscious, affecting listeners whether or not they are consciously aware of such conventions. Film music works in the same way, reinforcing one meaning out of many possible meanings, anchoring the image to specificity… Just as adjectives and adverbs pin down the meaning of the nouns and verbs they are attached to, film music pins down the image track. Film music polices the ways in which the audience perceives narrative and does so in a complex relationship with other elements of a film's narrative system.[16]

An example of the leitmotif's function in visual storytelling is film studio DreamWorks' *How To Train Your Dragon* film franchise. Two of the main themes consistent throughout all three films represent different visual or thematic aspects of the two main

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13 Philip Hayward, "Minstrelsy and musical framing in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*?" in *Drawn to Sound: Animation Film Music and Sonicity*, ed. Rebecca Coyle (London and Oakville, CT: Equinox Pub. 2010).

14 Goldmark, *Tunes for 'toons*.

15 Slobin, *Global Soundtracks*, 4.

16 Kalinak, *Film Music*, 14 and 18-19.

characters, Viking boy Hiccup and the dragon Toothless. The first theme is a descending, almost pentatonic melody in the strings associated with the dragon Toothless and sometimes dragonkind as a collective. These dragons are drawn in almost a caricature-ish style that accentuates their variety of sizes, shapes, and raw natural capabilities. The theme changes tone drastically throughout the franchise, reflecting different emotions and perceptions regarding the presence of dragons in the story. A wild glaring Toothless is supported by the leitmotif in raspy bagpipes, tense high strings, and pounding drum percussion, mirroring the fear of the unknown and Toothless' intimidating dragon strength. In an opposite light, this theme also appears during the bonding montage where Toothless accepts Hiccup; same theme, but the instrumentation varies greatly, using high metallophone registers, choral harmonic support, and upbeat snare drum rhythms. The second theme represents the relationship between protagonist Hiccup and Toothless as they learn to understand the other and change the world around them. Through heavy brass emphasis and rhythmic strings and percussion, this motif establishes the human and dragon bond between Hiccup and Toothless. The motif always accompanies the two when they are flying together, during their dangerous adventures, and other moments where the two specifically work in partnership. The progression of this theme's use in the three films matches the changes in Hiccup's characters as he grows and matures. In the first film, he is drawn as a young, skinny teenager in simple Viking clothing compared to the large armor plates and leather pieces of other Viking characters' costumes. He gradually grows up with Toothless, along with their friendship theme, and as he gets big enough to wear the Viking gear that would mark him as another Viking, he opts for less

bulky, customized armor that suits both his personality and his interactions with dragons. Similarly, the friendship theme between Toothless and Hiccup expands over the course of the three films, moving beyond direct references of their relationship to encapsulate the theme of human/dragon coexistence as a whole.

The way these two motifs accompany the visual design and screenplay adds to the films' story of Hiccup and Toothless, eliciting specific emotions, ideas, or perceptions from the viewer depending on how the instrumentation, timbre, etc. influence the visual images onscreen. Kalinak addresses the power film scores may have in steering the emotional journey through a visual story and how Hollywood composers have tended to construct leitmotifs through melody, either as short as a motif of a few notes or as extended as a theme. Leitmotifs can be developed and varied through the score (or repeated verbatim), reinforcing association and becoming more and more powerful as a film progresses. The final reiteration of a leitmotif—especially when it coincides with the end of a film—can have an enormous emotional impact.[17]

2:1:3 DIEGESIS VERSUS NON-DIEGESIS

An important distinction to make is the roles of diegetic and non-diegetic music. Diegetic music happens in the context of a film's plot, such as a radio playing music as the protagonist walks into a diner, Bugs Bunny playing a banjo and singing, or Mr. Tumnus's performance of a Narnian flute lullaby in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. These musical examples are directly interacting with the characters, whether the characters are listening to, interacting with, or performing the music. Diegetic music

[17] Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction*, 12.

functions to ground the audience in the setting of the story or, as Slobin puts it, "an ethnography of the story's music culture."[18]

Non-diegetic music, on the other hand, functions primarily as a narrative device. This includes the background score, musical sounds paired with specific images or actions, and popular songs that are not being played by any object or character within the story. Non-diegetic music constructs the world in which the story takes place and also establishes mood, image recognition, and character development. Leitmotif is a non-diegetic musical device that the average viewer can easily recognize. Score cues like John Williams's main theme for *The Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Alan Silvestri's Marvel Cinematic Universe theme, and Hans Zimmer's gallivanting, sea chanty-like *Pirates of the Caribbean* theme are all instantly recognizable to most film audiences because their iconographic status came from their effectiveness in establishing their stories' settings or characters. Mickey-mousing can also provide a kind of non-diegetic music in a given scene—such as a car wreck paired with crashing cymbals or a character's dialogue intonation matching the melody of the music or amplified by percussive sounds, although this technique has since been eclipsed by the use of leitmotifs to illustrate more abstract concepts like character relationships or mystery. Both diegetic and non-diegetic film scores have storytelling functions in different genres that Siu-Lan Tan mentions in their research study keynote, a summary of the study conducted by Tan, Annabel J. Cohen, Scott D. Lipscomb, and Roger A. Kendall on psychological responses to film score. Tan found that adult participants would associate positive themes like love, nostalgia, etc., to

18 Slobin, *Global Soundtracks*, 8-12.

"positive" music attached to a film scene while adult participants who watched the same scene with "negative" music instead correlated negative themes with the characters, such as murder, rage, or grief.[19] Film score therefore has an inherent connection to the human psyche and subconscious cultural associations between music and visual art in film, one that calls for examination from both psychological and sociological angles.

2:2 PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSES TO MUSICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Many studies have been conducted on human psychological responses to film and its visual or thematic aspects. Howard B. English's 1942 article responding to Disney's *Fantasia* describes how "musical sounds have no fixed meanings because they may mean so many things. Visual forms, on the other hand, are much less symbolic and abstract."[20] English claims that because of music's ambiguity, it cannot fully function as an avenue for concrete thematic reproduction in the same way a visual image can, since "a verbal or visual experience does not . . . immediately or imperatively suggest music or indeed any stable pattern of sounds."[21] While English's argument could easily be applied to the film music of his era, compositional techniques like mickey-mousing or using classical works are often considered timeless and are still in use. Regardless, film scoring of the late 20th-

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19 Siu-Lan Tan, "Music and the Moving Image Keynote Address 2015: The Psychology of Film Music: Framing Intuition," *Music and the Moving Image IX*, no. 2 (2016), 23-38. https://muse-jhuedu.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/article/619748. Tan defines "positive" music as standardized Western aural associations like major keys, simple consonant harmonies, etc. Tan also defines "negative" music as the opposite of "positive" music, using aspects like minor keys, dissonance, or clashing timbres. These definitions are largely informed by long histories of WEAM associated minor modes with sadness or evil and major modes with happier ideas.

20 Horace B. English, "*Fantasia* and the Psychology of Music," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 2, no. 7 (1942), 28-29.

21 Other musicians and artists besides English have also discussed the connections between visual and musical art. I chose English's opinion since it pertains specifically to an animated film.

early 21st centuries should be evaluated from an updated and currently relevant perspective. In their 2015 keynote presentation about research on psychological responses to music and the moving image, Siu-Lan Tan's stresses that film scoring is actually an active force in replicating the visual images and actions on screen.

> Film music accomplishes much more than simply mirroring, doubling up on action, or intensifying the emotional tone of the moving images—and that music is powerful enough to shape our perception and cognition of elements of story within a film scene, even when the music is not in the "spotlight" of our conscious attention.[22]

Tan is claiming that, given the results of their research data, music has ascribed emotions and concrete associations that directly affect a person's experience with the film.[23] Considering the influences of opera, symphonic poem, and programmatic music on the early film industry, we may assume that elements of classical music have at least to some extent influenced psychological responses to the film score.

Because of the compounded influences of film scoring techniques--thematic musical painting, mickey-mousing, leitmotif--and psychological musical associations in the societal collective subconscious, film scoring in the 21st century often functions in a more metaphysical and abstract manner than in the previous century. Slobin's music intertextuality--music referencing itself and others like it--turns into music transtextuality in which story narratives rely on previous decades of accrued film scoring context. These terms are differentiated by their scope: music intertextuality refers to the connections and relationships among film music of the same genre or time period while music

22 Tan, "Music and the Moving Image," 23-38.

23 For more on Sui-Lan Tan's research process data, see Tan, "Music and the Moving Image," 23-38.

transtextuality broadly covers the changes, and relationships among these genres and periods over longer stretches of time. I now present a small case study to explain this point.

2:2:1 *THE INCREDIBLES*

Disney/Pixar's *The Incredibles*, directed by Brad Bird and scored by Michael Giacchino, is a 2004 digitally animated film following the story of outlawed superheroes attempting good deeds with their superpowers even though such actions are illegal. Considering the superhero theme of the film and the plot, which plays on the idea of doing good when good is labeled as "bad," one would assume that the score would use the "superhero" sound that is prevalent throughout its namesake film genre: majestic brass, soaring string motifs, and strong, emotionally tense harmonies that tonally resolve to show the heroic turmoil and super-powered feats of the cast. In "Cue the Big Theme? The Sound of the Superhero," Janet Halfyard describes this iconic musical trope:

> What gives the formula its heroic character is largely the harmonic stability created by the use of tonic-dominant harmony and corresponding intervals such as prominent open fifths, alongside the energetic character of the march rhythms.[24]

By contrast, in *The Incredibles*, while the main melodies are constructed with many open fourths and fifths comparable to the "superhero" sound, Giacchino's score for the film subverts this subconscious expectation. Giacchino scored the music for a large jazz orchestra, reminiscent of big jazz bands of the 1935-onward swing era, reflecting the

24 Janet K. Halfyard, "Cue the Big Theme? The Sound of the Superhero," *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*, ed. Carol Vernallis,et.al (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

film's nuclear mid-century period setting.[25] The film's art design features a functionalist style--a style used in furniture design, architecture, and sculpture that emphasizes the simplification of an object's functionality to its base elements--to the backgrounds, characters, furniture, and even outfits. The score helps demonstrate the visual art through Giacchino and Bird's musical decisions.[26] In an interview for *The Incredibles* DVD release, Bird mentions his reasons behind the musical sounds he wanted from Giacchino.

> I was looking for a specific sound, and it was kind of keyed into the design of the movie which is kind of the future as seen from the mid-sixties, sort of. It's supposed to be…of a period but also timeless so I was looking for the equivalent in the music as well.[27]

Bird and Giacchino's close collaboration on the film's plot and score was the key factor in its exceptional box office success and critical reception. Their consistent communicative involvement in the project allowed the film scoring techniques and story plot to concurrently further the emotional impact of the film.[28]

Another major music association subversion in the score is how the orchestration, harmonies, and rhythms resemble what audiences would assume is "spy" music rather than the expected "superhero" sound. During the middle act of the film, Mrs. Incredible infiltrates an enemy base to rescue Mr. Incredible from the villain. The score deliberately

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25 Giacchino discusses the influence of John Barry and Korngold on his score for *The Incredibles* and the importance of communicative collaboration between director and composer. Preston and Steve's Daily Rush, August 19, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InFYBzCaZbE.

26 Brad Bird interviewed for *The Incredibles* DVD release special features.For more on functionalism, see "Functionalism; architecture," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, April 11, 2013, accessed November 24, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/art/Functionalism-architecture.

27 Brad Bird interviewed for *The Incredibles* DVD release special features.

28 Giacchino interview for Preston and Steve's Daily Rush, August 19, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InFYBzCaZbE.

matches her punches and kicks with trumpet blasts, pairs her creeping behind enemy guards with light rapid percussion riffs, and crashes cymbals when doors or walls collide, resembling the mickey-mousing techniques reminiscent of early comedy cartoons. The creeping dissonant jazz harmonies combined with this mickey-mousing allude to the musical "iconography" of the James Bond franchise, which uses similar techniques—punctuating brass and percussion aligned with action shots, creeping harmonies, etc.—repetitively through all its 26 films.[29] John Burlingame quotes John Barry, creator of the James Bond theme, in his book *The Music of James Bond*:

> It was a mix of all kinds of things," Barry explained many years later, "jazz, classics, pop. I just found myself doing it—I looked at it and said, 'That's working.' That became the Bond style." The approach was as much practical as it was creative: "If you had a car chase, the damned car was right in your face; even the fistfights were noisy, so you had to come up with an orchestrational palette that would cut through all that. Big strong brass chords, sustained strings to retain the tension, and percussion, of course. It was the only thing that worked. You couldn't put soft violins in there. It was an overall mood, all minor keys, very sinister. It was distinctive, and it really set the tone for those Bond movies.[30]

These sounds do not conform to the assumed "superhero" musical aesthetic established in film scores like Williams' *Superman*, but rather they create a "super spy" aesthetic through references to a classic spy franchise. The final product is an example of Slobin's music transtextuality: a fusion of two genres' musical and visual tropes—superhero and super spy—which creates multilayered themes and meanings for the film's story.

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29 Jon Burlingame, *The Music of James Bond*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 257. John Barry quote: "Bond music... has been hugely influential is evidenced by the many homages and parodies that have surfaced in recent years, notably Giacchino's music for *The Incredibles*."

30 Burlingame, *The Music of James Bond*, 257.

CHAPTER 3

COMPARING EXAMPLES OF OLD AND CONTEMPORARY ETHNIC NARRATIVES IN FILM SCORING

The connections between culturally ingrained music associations and film scoring in Western culture have created a wide catalog of coded sounds and tropes that help film composers demonstrate ideas like genre, emotions, ethnicity, identity, etc. However, the focus of Western musical sounds as "real" music in film score often separates non-Western musical sounds as an "Other" within film. Ernö Rapée's 1925 treatise "Musical Accompaniment to the Feature Picture" illustrates how the predominance of Western classical music traditions informed assumptions about audiences' expectations of film music and musical tastes in general.

> The danger of monotony is often encountered playing an oriental picture, as the playing of oriental music for an hour or longer will naturally get on the nerves of almost any listener, more so as oriental music is of a very specific type. [Sic] In that case grasp every opportunity the picture will afford and play some English, French, Italian or American music to break the monotony. [31]

Rapée assumes that "oriental" music, or musics not of Western classical origins, are all inherently monotonous and, ultimately, boring to audiences' ears. This generalization--most obvious in the phrase "as oriental music is of a very specific type"--implies that all non-Western musics are based on monotone forms and are therefore less desirable for narrative functions in film. While Rapée's solution to this problem is to "play some

[31]Ernö Rapée, "Musical Accompaniment to the Feature Picture," in *The Hollywood Film Music Reader*, ed. Mervyn Cooke, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 23.

English, French, Italian, or American music to break the monotony," this only confirms the hierarchical nature of Western music traditions as the basis of Hollywood film scores. Depictions of non-Western ethnicities appear in many popular film genres of the 20th century—the cowboy western, the period drama, and even adventure sagas like *Indiana Jones*—instituted many musical stereotypes commonly associated with non-Western ethnic groups. The cowboy western often portrayed indigenous American people and their communities as the war-crying, painted warriors plaguing the West and fighting the heroic, virtuous white cowboys.[32] In his dissertation "Film Music and Film Genre," Mark Brownrigg outlines the musical elements that establish the musical ethnicity:

> A primal drum ostinato on timpani, bass drum or a hide drum or some kind, parallel fourths or fifths sounded on bass instruments, and a melody frequently but not exclusively based on notes drawn from the pentatonic scale, likewise voiced in parallel fifths or fourths.[33]

He expands his analysis further and links the narrative functions of film scores to audiences' listening assumptions.

> Given the degree of collusion between music and narrative in Hollywood filmmaking, it can be of little surprise that two-dimensional characters such as Indians, with a very limited function within many texts, are in turn underscored by two-dimensional music. Like any stereotype, mobilization is possible with only the most rudimentary strokes from the filmmakers; ideology does the rest via the prejudices of the audience.[34]

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32 For more discussion of stereotypes and representation of indigenous peoples in film music, see the following: Janice Esther Tulk, "An Aesthetic of Ambiguity: Musical Representations of Indigenous Peoples in Disney's *Brother Bear*," *Drawn to Sound: Animation Film Music and Sonicity* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2010) and Sarah Laskow, "The Racist History of Peter Pan's Indian Tribe," *Smithsonian Institution*, December 2, 2014, www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/racist-history-peter-pan-indian-tribe-180953500/.

33 Mark Brownrigg, "Film Music and Film Genre," PhD diss. (University of Stirling, United Kingdom, 2003), 80.

34 Brownrigg, "Film Music and Film Genre," 82.

This musical stereotype of indigenous people is easily identifiable from a white perspective, but ultimately diminishes indigenous cultures as less musical, even ostracizing native presenting characters as a villainous "other."[35] Tara P. McCrink Burcham illustrates in her dissertation how this vilification affects indigenous people. She quotes indigenous film director Sherman Alexie who commented the following in a film commentary: "In the movies, Indians are always accompanied by ominous music. And I've seen so many Indian movies that I feel like I'm constantly accompanied by ominous music. I always feel that something bad is about to happen."[36]

Musical stereotypes of indigenous peoples are also present in animated films and cartoons aimed at young audiences. Films and other media aimed at families—like Disney's *Peter Pan*, the *Little House on the Prairie* television show, and Shirley Temple movies to name a few—began relying on what became familiar "Indian"-identified musical devices to assign indigenous identities to characters, locations, or themes.[37] Similarly, period dramas of the Civil War era southern states established filmic conventions of essentialized "Black speech" in both speech and song, with Black and Black-coded characters only knowing how to sing spirituals and sometimes jazz.[38] Uses of "Asian" music film scores were often Western pentatonic scales played by flutes,

35 McCrink-Burcham, *The Postmodern Indian,* 24.

36 McCrink-Burcham, *The Postmodern Indian,* 24.

37 Amy Fatzinger, "'Can you imagine, a real, live Indian right here in Walnut Grove?': American Indians in television adaptations of *Little House on the Prairie*," *Dialogue: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Popular Culture and Pedagogy* 2, (1), 2014.

38 Youyoung Lee, "A History Of Blackface In Films, In All Its Incarnations." *The Huffington Post,* December 7, 2017, www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/01/history-of-blackface_n_4175051.html.

oboes, and strings, reflecting Western late 19th century compositional orientalism.[39] All of these examples are reflected in the popular tunes and easy-to-learn songs for music books and curricula that teachers then taught in schools and lessons, further disseminating these cultural associations of non-Western musics into younger generations. Some examples include the song "From a Wigwam" in John Thompson's 1936 piano book *Teaching Little Fingers to Play*, "Caravan" from *Alfred's Premier Piano Course Level D*, and "Gypsy Camp" from Carol Matz's *Famous and Fun Favorites Series*.[40]

All of these genres, along with others, ultimately function via Western cultural lenses. In his book *Film Music: A Neglected Art,* Roy Prendergast discusses the artistic value of music written for animation and film, but claims that "accurate" non-Western music styles were not considered as dramatic or evocative as Western neo-classical film score styles. He writes:

> A related device is the use of musical devices that are popularly associated with foreign lands and people; for example, using the pentatonic idiom to achieve an Oriental color. The 'Chinese' music written for a studio film of the 1930s and '40s is not, of course, authentic Chinese music but rather represents our popular Occidental notions of what Chinese music is like. The Western listener simply does not understand the symbols of authentic Oriental music as he does those of Western music; therefore, Oriental music would have little dramatic effect for him.[41]

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39 Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music, A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Films,* 2nd ed. (New York: Norton Publishing, 1992). See chapter 6 for more on orientalism in film music.

40 John Thompson, *Teaching Little Fingers to Play* (Cincinnati: Willis Music Co., 1936),Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco, *Prep Course for the Young Beginner, Levels A-C: Alfred's Basic Piano Course* (Milwaukee: Alfred Music Publishing, 1990), Nancy and Randall Faber, *Piano Adventures: Basic Piano Method, Primer-Level 4* (Ann Arbor: Alfred Music Publishing and Faber Piano Adventures, 2000), John Thompson, *Easiest Piano Course, Parts 1-4* (Barnett, England: Willis Music Company and xheight Limited, 1996), andCarol Matz, *Famous and Fun Favorites Series, Levels 1-4* (Milwaukee: Alfred Music Publishing, 2005).

41 Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art,* 214.

Prendergast touches the surface of a deep-rooted assumption within Western music culture, specifically in visual media production: Western audiences cannot resonate with or appreciate non-Western music styles. This assumption, if carried to its ultimate conclusion in film music production and transtextual influences, can exclude "Other" music cultures in media musics, which distances film audiences from the cultures present on-screen, the people behind the music.[42] In recent years, film composers have begun intentionally drawing from the wealth of non-Western music traditions when writing film scores to go with various places and characters from around the world. Titles like Disney's *The Lion King* and *Brother Bear* are two examples of composers seeking out non-Western sounds to portray non-Western people, places, and themes. Zimmer's score for *The Lion King* sprinkles Swahili in the vocal background of several of its big musical numbers as well as African-inspired rhythms and instrumental textures.[43] Since the film is set in the Serengeti, using African language and rhythms helps establish the geographical location. The Black voice actors for the characters in addition to the vivid design of African animals of the Serengeti biome work in tandem with Zimmer's score in establishing an easily identifiable, although somewhat essentialized, "African" ethnicity of the anthropomorphic characters for Western audiences.[44]

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42 Patricia Estrada, "Latino/Hispanic Participation in Music Programs: Determinants and Recruitment," Honors thesis, (ASU Barrett's Honor College, 2013). See here for more on how Western hegemony in music excludes minorities and non-white ethnicities.

43 Tulk, "An Aesthetic of Ambiguity," 120.

44 Coyle and Fitzgerald, "Musical Storytelling in The Little Mermaid and The Lion King," 223-249.

Similarly, Disney's 2003 animated film *Brother Bear* uses non-Western vocal and lyrical sounds to develop a musical indication of the indigenous characters living in the northern Arctic frontier during post-Ice Age North America. Two young brothers go through emotional and spiritual journeys to find forgiveness for the accidental death of their older brother when hunting a bear. The symbolism of animal and human spirits interacting in both life and the afterlife established the animistic spirituality of the humans in the story. *Brother Bear's* art design establishes human "indigeneity" through visual characteristics like darker skin tones and hair, wide noses, narrow, monolid eyes, and outfits seemingly made of furs and animal skins. These features visually distance the story from white or Western culture altogether. The score also features musical devices that establish indigeneity, although the composition relies on the intertextuality of subconscious musical associations for indigenous music to pair visual with sonic indigeneity. While the majority of the songs and montage numbers were written and sung by Phil Collins and feature singer Tina Turner, composer Mark Mancina wrote score cues that used choral music for the emotionally climactic scenes sung by the Bulgarian Women's Choir. Here, the choir sings Inuit text with traditional Bulgarian music styles and compositional techniques, and to Western audiences, this music sounds "ethnic" since neither aspect conforms to Western music styles or sounds.[45] Regardless of the fact that Bulgarian vocal singing is not from indigenous North American cultures, the "otherness" of the vocal style and the lyric's language triggers the subconscious

[45] I discussed previously the cultural assumption of excessive drum or percussion as representing the "Other." Here, another cultural assumption of "Otherness" is vocal and linguistic sounds outside of Western Romantic languages or traditional music. See Tulk, "Aesthetic Ambiguity," 121.

association of non-Western communities with any music outside Western traditions. In her article "An Aesthetic of Ambiguity: Music Representations of Indigenous Peoples in Disney's *Brother Bear*," Janice Esther Tulk writes about the "tool-box of exoticism," a term to describe the many musical stereotypes accumulated over decades of film to represent indigenous and non-Western peoples. She shows how Mancina and Collins' compositional choices stem from this "tool-box" which creates an ambiguous indigeneity for the story's characters and setting.

> This tool-box of exoticism appears to have expanded to include additional categories of musical stereotypes in Brother Bear . . . the music of the Bulgarian Women's Choir has become a stereotyped musical gesture referencing the supernatural or spiritual . . . Their sound cannot be placed when heard in the context of the film especially since they are singing in the style they cultivate but in an Inuit language that is foreign to them.[46]

Tulk affirms the existence of the decades of accumulating musical stereotypes for the "Other" in film and film score. These stereotypes, or culturally ingrained musical associations, aurally represent the visual designs and setting of the indigenous characters and their spiritual manifestations. Ultimately, the film's art design and themes are ambiguous about which ethnic groups or cultures are represented, so the film score also contributes coded "ethnic" musical sounds to this ambiguity.

Recent films of the late 20th into the 21st centuries show that many films are using multiculturalism and ethnic diversity to create musical narratives for non-white, non-Western characters and locales. However, current cultural power structures in Hollywood still favor Western-focused musical values while excluding others. According

46 Tulk, "An Aesthetic of Ambiguity," 132.

to Mark Weber and his address for The Institute for Historical Review's conference "Hollywoodism":

> An important and socially harmful consequence of Hollywood's furious scramble for dollars is the production of motion pictures and television shows aimed at the largest possible markets, and which, therefore, often pander to a base cultural level. That's bad enough. But in addition, Hollywood has a long record of turning out films that are made to further ideological, ethnic or political goals.[47]

Weber brings to light the production and marketing priorities of Hollywood film as a business which in turn impacts how and why producers and composers create their content. Rather than valuing inclusivity or ethnic representation as a way to create art that many different audiences can engage with, this commodification of diversity ends up commodifying different ethnicities and cultural identities as just a means for capital gain. Producing films that appeal to the largest demographic is a logical business move and thus, writing film scores in a way that Hollywood audiences can best engage with them can contribute to a film's box office success. So what demographics is Hollywood catering to? Scholars have already established how early 20th century Hollywood composers like Rapée assumed their audiences would not, or could not, tolerate extended amounts of non-Western music styles, so that means the default music for a Hollywood production is of Western classical origins. Even jazz musics in cinema were not considered "a touchstone for artistic authenticity and highbrow seriousness" in film until the 1950s.[48] It is important to acknowledge the Western cultural origins of Hollywood

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47 Mark Weber, "Hollywood's Agenda, and the Power Behind It," address given at the "Hollywoodism" conference in Tehran, Iran, on Feb. 6, 2013.

48 Morris Holbrook, *Music, Movies, Meanings, and Markets: Cinemajazzamatazz,* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 186.

film music in order to understand the cultural dynamics, or what musicologist Alexandra Christina Roedder calls "soft power," that influences how and why film music is written.[49]

The cultural hegemonic space that Hollywood occupies has, according to Weber, a direct impact on the creation of film music. Promoting inclusivity through including non-Western musics into Western media is a worthy endeavor to be sure, but it is not that simple. Patricia Estrada writes about how inclusivity is not as simple as suddenly including a lesser represented demographic into mainstream culture. In her thesis titled "Latino/Hispanic Participation in Music Programs: Determinants and Recruitment," she examines cultural values placed on music education and function in both Hispanic and white demographics and argues that current attempts at inclusivity are not effective. She writes:

> The multiculturalism movement may have progressive intentions that seek to find and incorporate the value of all cultures and peoples into a curriculum, but it may also be a soft word that does not challenge the power structures that place students of color and non-white cultures at a disadvantage.[50]

Estrada affirms that simply inserting non-Western music into current music curricula and visual medias does little to change the power structures that monopolize media and the arts, but rather stagnates progress, even dissuading non-white audiences from participating in music. In his book *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*, indigenous American scholar Dylan Robinson discusses how the very act

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49 Alexandra Roedder, "'Japanamerica' or 'Amerijapan'? Globalization, Localization, and the Film Scoring Practices of Joe Hisaishi," PhD diss. (University of California, Los Angeles, 2013).

50 Estrada, "Latino/Hispanic Participation in Music," 10.

of striving for inclusivity in music can still be a contributing factor in the systemic exclusion that these acts are trying to reform. He writes

> Such inclusionary efforts bolster an intransigent system of presentation guided by an interest in— and often a fixation upon— Indigenous [and non-Western] content, but not Indigenous [and non-Western] structure. This apathy toward Indigenous structures of performance and gathering leads to epistemological violence through art music's audiophilic privileging of and adherence to its own values of performance and virtuosity… Inclusionary music, which on the surface sounds like a socially progressive act, performs the very opposite of its enunciation.[51]

Because systemic exclusions and favoring of Western structures and sounds are fundamental parts of Western art music and mainstream music cultures, it is impractical to expect changes overnight when initiating inclusivity. Changing societal norms and the resulting cultural values is a constant process of reevaluating cultural norms, asking questions, and willingness to learn from those with different perspectives. For this reason, musical inclusivity in visual media requires proactive solutions.

CHAPTER 4

ETHICS OF THE DISCUSSION

I sidetrack away from film scoring in this next section to address a few issues attached to the idea of ethnic representation and inclusivity in the arts and media. Much of the ethnomusicological work that came before me focuses primarily on "the field," immersing oneself in a music culture to understand its ways and meanings, and the

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51 Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 6.

description of said fieldwork experiences in the researcher's conclusions and writing.[52] These are legitimate methods of research, but social, economic, and racial equality are major contemporary issues that I personally feel prohibit me from simply "immersing" myself in a music culture to reflect on just my own personal experiences with it. I have to actively address the socio-political issues that affect the people of the music cultures that I am researching. Because I am primarily examining common elements in Hollywood film scoring, I have to factor in the impact of social topics like race/ethnicity, gender, social equality, white supremacy, and more. Thus, I took a look at how music and arts function within socio-political movements and cultural progression.

4:1 MUSIC IN SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS AND PROTEST

The arts have been instruments of protests, revolution, and societal issues as far back as recorded history shows. Today, music continues to be a way for individuals to express their perspectives on issues that affect them and their communities as well as creating awareness for others . With our ever growing globalized society and recent pushes towards balancing out cultural hegemonic power structures away from primarily White, Western values, many non-Western music traditions are empowering ways for marginalized musicians or music traditions to voice their opposition to social injustices. In his article "Indigeneity," Jonathon P. J. Stock writes that

[52]For more on ethnomusicological fieldwork, experience, and research, see Gregory F. Barz, and Timothy J. Cooley, *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, (Cary: Oxford University Press, 2008).

> A people's decision to identify as indigenous can bring them strategic agency in the struggle for equality and respect within the settler nation and provide them with access to a transnational network of partners or advisors. Acts of performance (including music) are typically fundamental to establishing, asserting and maintaining this identity.[53]

In addition to his examples of ethnomusicologists working for social change, Stock provides examples of indigenous groups who have used music to gain agency or validate their cultural heritage; this affirms the use of music as a means of reclaiming displaced cultural identities, repudiating systematic oppression and colonization, or empowerment. For example, the Black Lives Matter movement has produced many protest songs and anthems written by Black musicians who strive to shed light on systematic oppression in order to create a better social environment for African/American and Black communities.[54] These songs/anthems commonly feature Black associated musical styles like rap, hip-hop, or "urban" coded pop sounds that musically indicate the Black identities of the movement's individuals.

Similarly, indigenous American musicians have also utilized their native music traditions within contemporary music venues to 1) create awareness of the many indigenous cultures and identities that still exist and 2) voice their opposition to injustices against sacred indigenous lives, lands, religions.[55] With the recent Dakota Access Pipe Line expansions (DAPL), Prolific the Rapper and The Tribe Called Red combined their

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53 Jonathan P.J. Stock, "Indigeneity," *Music and Arts in Action*, 6, no. 2 (2018), 69.

54 Barbara Spanos and Sarah Grant, "Songs of Black Lives Matter: 22 New Protest Anthems," *Rolling Stone*, July 13, 2016, https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-lists/songs-of-black-lives-matter-22-new- protest-anthems-15256/.

55 Álvaro Fernández-Llamazares,. "Weaving Musical Spaces of Indigenous Resistance for Environmental Justice," *ENTITLE Blog - a Collaborative Writing Project on Political Ecology*, 23 March 2017.

individual styles of rap and indigenous vocal singing to footage with the noDAPL protests that led to police and military violence against indigenous protestors. The rhythmic texture of rap with the Plains-style chant-like singing meshes old traditions with modern styles, creating a musical representation of modern indigenous communities fighting for preservation of their current existence in relation to their cultural pasts. Other examples include artists like Buffy Sainte-Marie and Tanya Tagaq who infuse their music with themes of indigenous identity and histories of social injustices against indigenous communities.[56]

These examples provide a glimpse of how minorities and marginalized communities engage with music as a means of empowerment and legitimizing their cultural perspectives. So how does this factor into film scoring? According to social scientist Elfriede Fürsich,

> Contemporary mass media operate as a normalizing forum for the social construction of reality. They are important agents in the public process of constructing, contesting or maintaining the civic discourse on social cohesion, integration, tolerance and international understanding. Moreover, the media's power to steer attention to and from public issues often determines which problems will be tackled or ignored by society. Only those issues that gain publicity have the potential to make people think about social and political ramifications beyond their immediate experience and arouse political interest.[57]

Film, a form of mass media, would therefore contribute and benefit from these social and political ramifications. As previously discussed, much of Hollywood film music functions as a narrative device for cinematic storytelling and with the many decades of

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56 Stephanie Wong Ken, "Legendary Singer Buffy Sainte-Marie On the Power of Native American Music," *BitchMedia,* September 21, 2017.

57 Elfriede Fürsich, "Media and the Representation of Others," *International Social Science Journal* 61, 199, (2010), 113–30.

accumulated cultural associations of various musical sounds, film scores are often in the position of musically narrating ideas like ethnicity, cultural demographics, racial identity, and more. Film scores' representations of different communities will have a significant impact on audiences' reception and engagement with films; especially with how Western audiences internalize ideas about non-Western musics and ethnicities and also how non-Western audiences feel represented and/or stereotyped. Thus, as I dive into four film score case studies in the next chapter, I will be assessing negative or positive audience reception of the film scores in addition to analyzing their musical elements and collaborative composition productions. Like any work of art, understanding both the creator's and audiences' perspectives of the work in relation to its historical and cultural placement is essential to getting a better sense of its cross-cultural impacts on different societies.

CHAPTER 5

FOUR CASE STUDIES

5:1 *KUNG FU PANDA 3*

The first film I researched, DreamWorks 2016 animated feature film *Kung Fu Panda 3*, was actually the reason I ended up pursuing ethnomusicological research. It was the first film with a score involving non-Western instruments as a core part of the orchestration that I took notice of. Directed by Jennifer Yuh Nelson and Alessandro Carloni and scored by Hans Zimmer, *Kung Fu Panda 3* is a computer animated 95-minute long film comedy that relies substantially on its visual and musical design to

establish the ethnicity of the characters and narrative.[58] The biggest defining feature of these films is two Chinese cultural icons, martial arts and the giant panda. The character and background design contain many elements commonly associated with Chinese landscape, mythology, and nature. Chinese-specific flora and fauna like bamboo, peach trees, tigers, and pandas combined with backgrounds of terraced rice fields and dramatic mountain scapes firmly ground the setting in a Chinese locale. Notwithstanding, the temples and pagoda architecture within the towns the characters live in and their traditionally stylized Chinese costumes further convince audiences of the time and location of the story--ancient China. All of these visual design elements, as author Qing Zhao writes in her thesis, share "great similarity to traditional Chinese paintings."[59] As the third installment of the *Kung Fu Panda* franchise, this film continues the trilogy's overarching plot that explores the titular character Po's dream of being a kung fu master as he trains, fights villains, and comes to terms with his past. *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s individual plot introduces Po's long lost panda family, a new villain connected to the kung fu masters of the previous two films, and continues many of the thematic elements of the first two films, such as community strength, and Buddhist practices of inner peace.

The productions of the second and third Kung Fu Panda films gleaned much visual and thematic inspiration from the directors and producers' trips to Beijing, Chengdu, and Mt. Qingcheng. Production designer Raymond Zibach described these trips

58 Qing Zhao, "Seeing 'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films—An Analysis of *Kung Fu Panda, Rio,* and *Madagascar*," Master's thesis, (Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, 2015), 22 and 50-52.

59 Zhao, "Seeing 'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films," 22.

as necessary research for the films so the crew could "absorb its [China's] colors, its misty atmosphere, and its magic."[60] In a similar vein, what distinguishes *Kung Fu Panda 3* from the first two films is that its score's production relied substantially on collaborative efforts between German-born Hollywood composer Zimmer and Chinese instrumentalists and musicians. Zimmer wrote most of the scores for all three films, but for *Kung Fu Panda 3,* he sought out ways to actively engage Chinese musicians performing on instruments into the score's orchestration which, like the visual and thematic design, affirm the Chinese musical narrative. In this section, I will contextualize prior examples of "Chineseness" represented in Hollywood film and then relate it to *Kung Fu Panda 3* and existing scholarship on this franchise. I will first outline basic features of this film and then examine its scoring and collaboration process between Zimmer and recording musicians to see how they created space for Chinese sounds and music styles in a Hollywood animated feature. Lastly, I will compare various responses from critics and audiences, both Chinese and American, to analyze how this score contributed to film as a social practice and portrayal of "Chineseness."

The *Kung Fu Panda* franchise isn't the first Hollywood blockbuster that draws from Chinese myth and culture. Disney's internationally very well received *Mulan* features a Chinese legend and depicts a strong heroine in ancient China with catchy songs and comedic and talking animal sidekicks, a trademark of the Disney Renaissance of the

60 Jonathan Landreth, "*Kung Fu Panda 2*: Hollywood works harder to win Chinese audiences," *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 28, 2011, https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2011/0528/Kung-Fu-Panda-2-Hollywood-works-harder-to-win-Chinese-audiences.

1990's.[61] However, to Chinese audiences, Mulan seemed too diluted and divorced from the original Mulan legend, primarily because of various themes they equate to "Americanism" added to the story.[62] According to Qiuyue Guo's statements in their thesis "Chinese Perceptions of American Stereotypes in DreamWorks Animation *Kung Fu Panda*," these "Americanisms" often included individualism, coming of age through self-discovery, and random jokes showing American perceptions of "Chineseness" versus cultural values of national and familial pride, loyalty, honor, and self-sacrifice essential to many Chinese communities.[63] In her book *From Fu Manchu to Kung Fu Panda: Images of China in American Film*, Naomi Greene examines the box office failure of Disney's *Mulan* in mainland China in relation to its outsider view of Chineseness. According to Greene, "Chinese audiences simply could not warm to a Disney heroine who had more in common with Snow White and Cinderella than with the woman warrior of Chinese legend."[64] It is not uncommon for filmmakers who depict other cultures to rely on essentializations or constructed perspectives of that culture, especially considering

61 For more on Disney's formulaic story and character writing, see the following:

Sideways, "How Disney Uses Language," YouTube video, April 23, 2019, 15:49, https://www.youtube.com/watch ?v=btxZGzWlsMw, and Sideways, "What Makes Disney Music Sound Nostalgic," YouTube video, June 30, 2019, 20:51, https://www.youtube.com/watch ?v=JX0gZY9VKlM. 20:51. MsMojo, "The Evolution of Disney Princesses," YouTube video, February 9, 2020, 17:42, https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=wfc7seVo3fY.

62 Qiuyue Guo, "Chinese Perceptions of American Stereotypes in Dreamworks Animation *Kung Fu Panda*," Masters thesis, (University of Wyoming, Laramie, 2011), 1-2.

63 Guo, "Chinese Perceptions of American Stereotypes," 1-2.

64 Naomi Greene, *From Fu Manchu to "Kung Fu Panda": Images of China in American Film* (Manoa: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 204.

expanding globalization following technological advancements.[65] Globalization's role in cross-cultural portrayals in media and the arts "can be an opportunity for a certain country to move from the periphery to the spotlight." On the other hand, the westernized representations of non-American countries are also exploited as a reservoir of exotic cultural stereotypes for capitalist purposes.[66] The line between cultural inclusion and cultural appropriation is very obscured and can vary depending on individual perceptions. In Qing Zhao's dissertation "'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films — An Analysis of *Kung Fu Panda*, *Rio*, and *Madagascar*," Qiuyue Zhao critiques globalization as just a newer form of westernization, or Americanization.

> The seemingly positive notion of "globalization" guides audiences around the world to identify with American ideology and agree with American value systems, and at the same time, increasingly distance oneself from indigenous ones.[67]

There are definite advantages to giving other cultures visibility through film and media narratives, but at the same time it can be a source of cultural appropriation or capitalist exploitation of the "exotic" appearances of these cultures. In the case of *Mulan*, directors Tony Bancroft and Barry Cook used long-time Disney consultant Robert San Souci's

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65 There is a much longer history of exoticism in Western culture and arts but for the purposes of this thesis, this fact will be an assumed influence to consider when looking at each of the case studies in this thesis. For more scholarship concerning colonial influences and exoticism in Western culture and art, see the following: Mark Slobin, *Global Soundtracks: Worlds of Film Music,* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008); Kathryn Marie Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction.* Very Short Introductions series: 231. (New York: Oxford University Press. 2010); Kelle Neal, *'Part of Your World': Disney's Portrayal of Ethnic Minorities*, Master's thesis (Tennessee State University, Nashville, 2010) and Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music, A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Films,* 2nd ed. (New York: Norton Publishing, 1992), chapter 6.

66 Zhao, "Seeing 'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films," iii.

67 Zhao, "Seeing 'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films," 68.

modern novelization of the orally-transmitted Chinese legend.[68] Not only would this legend's version show a Western author's perspective, regardless of how much the "heart of her story" was preserved and "honestly presented," but Disney's *Mulan* is a Western interpretation of another Western interpretation meant to make it "interesting to the widest possible audience."[69]

Mulan's film score contributes to this Americanized *Mulan* that Greene discusses. Scored by Jerry Goldsmith, the instrumentation features a handful of Chinese instruments like the *dizi* bamboo flute with gongs and drums among the full orchestra and extra-large brass section.[70] These Chinese instruments involve unusual timbres for Western audiences and are used throughout the film to emphasize the ancient Chinese locale, but ultimately "do[es] not convey enough obviousness of Chinese elements in the melody to Chinese audiences" that would convey anything beyond an American impression of "Chineseness."[71] Any "Chinese" instrumental cues--somber drum tolls, dizi flute ornaments, or gong strikes--are often outshined by the enormous brass sound, Disney musical-style songwriting, Western orchestration styles, and even synthesizer rave beats. Pentatonicism, a musical element often associated with the "Orient" or "Asianess," is scattered throughout the melodic content of the score to suggest the Chinese locale when

68 Neal, "'Part of Your World,'" 46.

69 Neal, "'Part of Your World,'" 47.

70 "Full Cast and Crew," *Mulan* (1998), IMDb, Accessed August 13, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120762/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm.

71 Xiao Wang, "*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*: The relocation of Chinese musical traditions in Western form," (paper presented at ECREA Diaspora, Migration and the Media Section 2014).

the visuals focus on specifically Chinese-presenting objects like architecture, costumes, or mythos, but these moments function specifically to remind viewers of the story's ethnicity. It is important to note that much of the power dynamics and production schedules of many Hollywood films often do not allow film composers much artistic freedom; many producers and directors often have very specific ideas that the composer must adhere to. Regardless, the predominance of Western film scoring techniques like mickey-mousing and leitmotif takes centerstage in the musical narrative which fragments the use of Chinese instruments or melodic references. While the score for *Mulan* sounded Chinese enough to Western audiences because of these scattered "exotic" timbres, it did not achieve the same effect for people from China who have different cultural, musical, and personal ties to both the Mulan legend and to Chinese musics. To them, Disney's *Mulan* does not portray their Chinese ethnicities or cultures; to them, they aren't being seen.[72]

In comparison, the scoring process for *Kung Fu Panda 3* was more involved and comprehensive through the collaborative efforts between composer and musicians. Hans Zimmer, well-known for his Oscar-winning score for Disney's *The Lion King* and acclaimed themes from *The Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003) and *Inception* (2010), has previous experience using various Asian instruments and melodies when he scored soundtracks for *The Last Samurai* (2003) and *The Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's*

[72]For more on Chinese audiences' responses to Disney's *Mulan*, see the following: Qing Zhao, "Seeing 'Developing' Countries through American Animated Films—An Analysis of *Kung Fu Panda, Rio,* and *Madagascar,*" Master's thesis, (Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, 2015), 77. Qiuyue Guo, "Chinese Perceptions of American Stereotypes in Dreamworks Animation *Kung Fu Panda,*" Master's thesis, (University of Wyoming, Laramie, 2011), 1-2 and 21. Kelle Neal, *'Part of Your World': Disney's Portrayal of Ethnic Minorities*, Master's thesis (Tennessee State University, Nashville, 2010), 47.

End (2007).[73] Zimmer worked with DreamWorks composer John Powell on the first two *Kung Fu Panda* film scores in 2008 and 2011, and although Powell did not return to compose for *Kung Fu Panda 3*, much of the leitmotif material and instrumental choices carried over into the final film score of the trilogy.[74] One of Zimmer's most important compositional philosophies is the idea of sonic environments creating a narrative. In an interview with *Music Tech*, he says that

> A director will phone me up and say 'I want to tell you a story'. As they're telling me the story I'll start to get ideas and the main one will usually be, 'What's the sonic world that we're going to go and drop the audience into?' So it's not just instruments, I think if you just drop an orchestra on top of the sound effects then they're too separate. What I try to do with my work is figure out how to bleed into the picture, bleed into the frame and bleed into the story. Blurring the lines between the sound design and the music. So sometimes you can't tell what's what.[75]

Thus, the musical decisions and orchestration choices in *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s score were intended from the beginning to generate an immersive narrative for the viewer which will explain the collaborative work between Zimmer and recording musicians that I will discuss later on.

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73 Heather Phares, "Hans Zimmer, *The Last Samurai* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack," *All Music*, Accessed August 22, 2020, https://www.allmusic.com/album/the-last-samurai-original-motion-picture-soundtrack-mw0000328630. "Full Cast & Crew," *The Pirates of The Carribean: At World's End* (2007), IMDb, Accessed August 22, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0449088/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm.

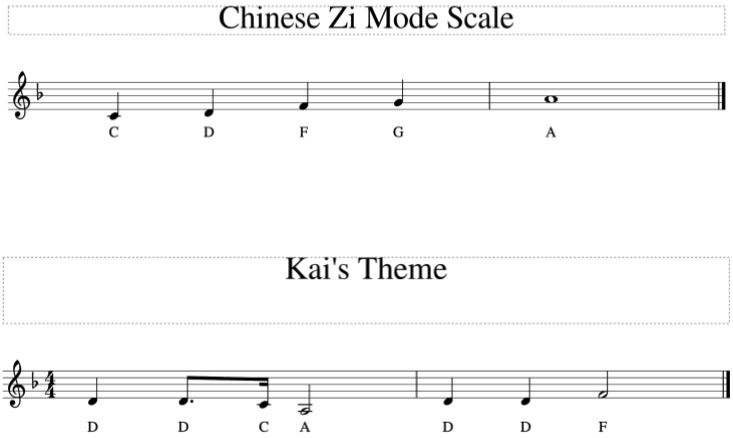
74 John Powell is credited for composing the first two *Kung Fu Panda* film scores with Hans Zimmer, though he did not return to work on the third film. See the following: "Full Cast and Crew," *Kung Fu Panda* (2008), IMDb, accessed August 2, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0441773/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm, "Full Cast and Crew," *Kung Fu Panda 2* (2011), IMDb, accessed August 2, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1302011/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm, "Full Cast and Crew," *Kung Fu Panda 3* (2016), IMDb, accessed August 2, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2267968/fullcredits/?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm.

75 Andy Price, "Hans Zimmer Interview – The Art of Film Scoring," *Music Tech*, July 24th, 2018, https://www.musictech.net/features/hans-zimmer-interview/.

Like in the preceding films, Zimmer incorporates two Western film scoring techniques I discussed in Chapter 2--leitmotifs and mickey-mousing--as well as other elements like a full recording orchestra, melodic material positioned in high registers and harmonic material mostly in lower registers. He places a strong emphasis on following the action sequences, punches and explosions with percussion and gong strikes to musically enhance the visual impact. One specific track, "Hungry For Lunch," takes place at the beginning of the film and uses percussion to punctuate the main characters' movements as they run through the city. The strings section and erhu play a descending pentatonic motif throughout the scene in various registers, higher variations for when Po jumps into the sky and lower ones as he falls back down to earth. In addition to following the action, or subtle mickey-mousing, this melodic leitmotif is used throughout all three *Kung Fu Panda* scores as the Dragon Warrior theme in reference to Po's destiny and warrior identity. Its use here functions two-fold--both as sonic support for the action shots and also to remind the audiences in a subtle way of Po's journey as a kung fu warrior up till now.

In a similar manner, Zimmer's theme for the villain Kai, based on a melody from *Imagine Dragons*' song "I'm So Sorry," accentuates character motions and narrative.[76] The four notes of this melodic motif also fit into the traditional Chinese *Zi* mode scale.

[76] Imagine Dragons, Smoke + Mirrors, KIDinaKORNER, Interscope, 2015.



Figures 1-2. Chinese *zi* mode scale (transposed to C) and Kai's theme transcribed from soundtrack audio.[77]

This relationship between Kai's theme and the *Zi* modal scale adds a more substantial pentatonic sound to the theme that, while fitting into the Western musical association of pentatonicism as Asian, also speaks to many Chinese audiences because this is a modal scale that much of their traditional folk music is based on. Kai's visual design--a musk ox wearing an ancient style of leather armor--already strongly suggests his Chinese ethnicity which is further enhanced by his musical cue. When he slowly walks into frame or towards the main characters wielding a pair of blades on chains, this villain theme on *pipa* and *erhu* accompanied by heavy gong strikes plays in time to Kai's threatening swings of his chain blades. The orchestration supports the solo pipa and erhu with the strings and brass playing the melody while the percussion follows the gong strikes, but

[77]Images transcribed from soundtrack audio and accessed from Chih-Fang Huang, et al, "Analyzing the Perception of Chinese Melodic Imagery and Its Application to Automated Composition," *Multimedia Tools and Applications* 75, no. 13 (2016), 7631–7654.

these are not the timbral focus. The track puts the solo instruments and gongs at center stage which elevates the "Chineseness" of their sonority as the most apparent feature.

In addition to Po's Dragon Warrior theme and Kai's villain theme, the rest of the soundtrack functions primarily as non-diegetic action accompaniment with percussive hits matched to punches and explosions while the various melodic themes are sprinkled throughout the film whenever the animation or narrative references the main characters. The Chinese instruments featured in Zimmer's score have an important history in the Chinese Silk and Bamboo musical tradition, a folk music style which has had a long cultural influence in Southern China since the late Qing dynasty.[78] Thus, it is a logical assumption that Chinese audiences are familiar with and will respond to these musical sounds. One concern about these instrument placements is that they could be drowned out by the Western orchestra, but cellist Jian Wang commented that the folk music instruments' expressive force in *Kung Fu Panda 3* was never lost to the Western musical instruments, because every instrument had its own color.[79] In score cues like "The Hall of Heroes," the pipa, a four-stringed plucked lute, features traditional performance techniques including but not limited to: *lunzhi* (rolling five-finger tremolo), *tui* (neighbor tone createdby pulling string along fret), and the percussive *sao* (rapid arpeggiation to accent an important note).[80] The bowed erhu shares timbral similarities to the Western

78 Ellen Koskoff, "China," *The Concise Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, no.2, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1087-1117.

79 Jian Wang quoted in "The Music in *Kung Fu Panda 3*, the Core of the Chinese Traditional Music," *Kung Fu Fun For Everyone*, February 22, 2016, accessed June 7, 2020, https://www.kungfun.com/kung-fu-movies/kung-fu-panda/the-music -in-kung -fu-panda-3-the-core-of-the-chinese-traditional-music.html.

80 John Lawrence Witzleben, *"Silk and Bamboo," Music in Shanghai the Jiangnan Sizhu Instrumental Ensemble Tradition* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995), 48.

cello, especially in performance techniques like vibrato, or *langyin*, for sustained notes.[81] Throughout the score, the erhu and cello would often switch roles between tracks and use these similar techniques which blended their distinct timbres to the point that it can be difficult to discern which one is which. The *guzheng,* a plucked zither, adds its crisp, harp-like timbre in tracks like "Legend of Kai" and "The Spirit Realm." While not as timbrally noticeable as more aurally gripping instruments like the lamenting erhu and tremulous pipa, the guzheng enhances the orchestration with its harplike qualities and performance techniques like pitch slides (bending the strings near the bridge) and a tremolo similar to the pipa's *lunzhi* (thumb rotates over one note). Other solo instruments like the piano and cello are used for the theme "Oogway's Legacy" which represents the concept of kung fu across all three films. While not instruments of Chinese origin, these instruments are used for their emotional timbre in line with Zimmer's goal of evoking an immersive musical narrative.

To analyze the collaboration process, I will focus on several main stages of production: instrumentation, source musicians, and recording sessions. As stated previously, Zimmer gave much more melodic and timbral prominence to traditional Chinese instruments like the erhu and pipa among others. He also contracted Chinese musicians like Lang Lang (piano), Jian Wang (cello), Gan Guo and Karen Han (erhu, zhonghu, and gaohu), Cynthia Hsiang (guzheng) and Man Wu (pipa) to feature as

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81 Witzleben, *"Silk and Bamboo,"* 45.

soloists.[82] He also traveled to Shanghai to study with traditional Chinese instrumentalists and ensembles of the Silk and Bamboo tradition, consulting with Sichuan-born Chinese music specialist Roc Chen in the score recording and orchestration process.[83] While not a featured soloist, Chen's experience as a composer for Asian and Hollywood films provided an intercultural perspective of Chinese musics meshing with Western film scoring styles. In his words:

> As a Chinese Music Consultant, I offered a variety of suggestions to guide music in the right way based on my knowledge and experience with Chinese instruments, articulations, and of course also the Chinese culture. Since I know the taste of both Eastern and Western audiences, I felt I was quite good at balancing the project.[84]

Zimmer and Chen also translated The Vamps' performance of Carl Douglas' song "Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting" into Chinese to match the rhythmic and aesthetic of the iconic song for the credits roll. The translated portion of the song was performed and recorded in Shanghai with local choirs and orchestras, thus infusing the score with even more Chinese language and voices.

The inclusion of traditional instruments establishes both the ethnic narrative through musical "Chineseness" and also imbeds Chinese musicians in the very fabric of the score's production. Zimmer worked directly with the featured musicians during the recording process, sometimes even in one-on-one playing sessions. A behind-the-scenes

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82 "Kung Fu Panda 3," Hans-Zimmer, accessed August 3, 2020, http://www.hans-zimmer.com/index.php?rub=disco&id=1425.

83 Roc Chen, interview by Zdravko Djordjevic, *The Audio Spotlight*, August 3, 2016, https://theaudiospotlight.com/roc-chen-interview/.

84 Roc Chen, interview by Zdravko Djordjevic, *The Audio Spotlight*, August 3, 2016, https://theaudiospotlight.com/roc-chen-interview/.

video of Zimmer's recording session with Chinese pianist Lang Lang and pipa performer Man Wu provides a valuable glimpse at their interactions.[85] Zimmer and Lang Lang's segment of the video shows them in Zimmer's personal office: Lang Lang situated at the grand piano and Zimmer with the score on his computer setup. The camera bounces between both musicians, demonstrating how they each engaged with the music, with Lang Lang's performance gluing the shots together. As the video tracks between different segments of them recording various score cues, the camera focuses on the moments when both Zimmer and Lang are wordlessly communicating musical gestures and entrances to each other. Zimmer describes this in an interview with *DIY Magazine*:

> That's the great thing about being in music and it's happened to me time and time again where I get to work with people from different cultures. They might not speak English or German or whatever is useful in my case, you spend a couple of hours with the translator not getting anywhere and then you just sit down and start playing and then four or five hours go by and you haven't noticed that you haven't said a word to each other but it works really well.[86]

To be clear, Zimmer is not saying that music is a universal language. Rather, he emphasizes how intimate and uniting human interactions through music making are. The latter half of the video strengthens this statement as Zimmer and Wu Man jam together on pipa and guitar in the recording booth. Zimmer asks Man about the traditional; Chinese melody used in the score cue they were playing, saying that her knowledge "shows a lot of cultural integrity."[87] Zimmer and Man both smile and laugh throughout

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85 FilmIsNow, "Kung Fu Panda 3 (2016) Behind the Scenes - Music," by *FilmIsNow Movie Bloopers and Extras*, YouTube video, 7:38, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vl5M4bq5M7Y.

86 Christa Ktorides, "Hans Zimmer Talks *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s Score," *DIY Magazine*, March 11, 2016, diymag.com/2016/03/11/hans-zimmer-talks-kung-fu-panda-3s-score.

87 Unfortunately, the video is unclear which traditional melody the score cue was based on and no information on the soundtrack's creation gives any indication on the source melody. For this point, I will defer to Zimmer and Man's

the recording session, showing the same wordless communication Zimmer and Lang used in the beginning of the video which even further illustrates Zimmer's point on music making connecting human beings even with different languages or backgrounds.

At this point, I must divert and address some points from a more critical standpoint. My purpose is to keep my analysis as objective as possible by acknowledging the backgrounds and limitations of the various composers and musicians involved in this project. Instruments and collaborative efforts aside, Hans Zimmer is still a Western Hollywood composer writing a film score about a non-Western ethnicity and using their instruments. Some of the Chinese performers like Lang Lang and Jian Wang are classically trained in Western music and perform Western repertoire exclusively. Man's pipa performance career focuses on both traditional and contemporary pipa repertoire. The resulting collaborations for *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s soundtrack is, like Roc Chen described, "a meeting of East and West" music sounds. With this in mind, I am not claiming that *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s soundtrack is a "more authentic" musical representation than *Mulan* or other film scores like it. Rather, I am emphasizing that *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s music production and Zimmer's compositional decisions made a larger global impact for both Western and Chinese audiences.

Unlike Disney's *Mulan,* each of DreamWorks' *Kung Fu Panda* films were great box office successes in China, with the major contributing factor being the two quintessential Chinese cultural icons as the series' focus--martial arts and the panda bear. Undoubtedly, there has been debate about whether *Kung Fu Panda* is another

discussion in the video as reference to this traditional melody. Hopefully, future research could locate this tune and its origins.

Westernized essentialization of "Chineseness," primarily with the differing cultural values present in the films' themes.[88] However, my research lies in the musical ways the films depict Chineseness, and this is where the collaborative process in film scoring in *Kung Fu Panda 3* becomes important. While the first two films in the *Kung Fu Panda* franchise provide context for the trilogy's plot, characters, and world building, *Kung Fu Panda 3* received more proactive collaboration in the film scoring process between Zimmer and Chinese soloists than the previous two films. Contrary to Zimmer's stylistic tendency to favor synthesizer and electronic sounds, he intentionally left out these sounds in favor of embodying the score with live instrumental performances.[89] He even relocated some of his recording sessions to Shanghai in order to get a more personal interaction with the local choir and orchestra contracted for the performances. In-person recording interactions, lack of electronic sounds, and traditional Chinese instruments of the Silk and Bamboo tradition contributed to what has been described as a unique "human touch" in Zimmer's score.[90] *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s film score, while not composed entirely of

88 "Still, if *Kung Fu Panda* embodies that convention and the aesthetic of a long tradition of martial arts films, in one critical respect, it stands apart from this tradition. For one has to remember that kung fu films were not only about arduous apprentices and wise kung fu masters, or about flying daggers and death-defying stunts. On the contrary: all these elements were at the service of a deeply moral and ethical vision of the world. It is here that the homage to the world of *wuxiapian* [your definition here] felt in the story and the action of *Kung Fu Panda* turns sharply to subversion, or to what I have called a hollowing out, and erasure, of a deeply rooted national tradition." Greene, *From Fu Manchu*, 208.

89 "The Music in *Kung Fu Panda 3*, the Core of the Chinese Traditional Music," *Kung Fu Fun For Everyone*, February 22, 2016, accessed June 7, 2020, http://www.kungfun.com/kung-fu-movies/kung-fu-panda/the-music-in-kung-fu-panda-3-the-core-of- the-chinese- traditional-music.html. Andy Price, "Hans Zimmer Interview – The Art of Film Scoring," *Music Tech*, July 24th, 2018, https://www.musictech.net/features/hans-zimmer-interview/.

90 "The Music in *Kung Fu Panda 3*, the Core of the Chinese Traditional Music," *Kung Fu Fun For Everyone*, February 22, 2016, accessed June 7, 2020, http://www.kungfun.com/kung-fu-movies/kung-fu-panda/the-music-in-kung-fu-panda-3-the- core-of-the-chinese- traditional-music.html.

traditional Chinese instruments and melodies, grounds audiences' recognition of the characters and themes as a multifaceted representation of "Chineseness."

Despite *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s global success and box office hit in China, many cultural scholars and critics have found incongruencies within the film(s) concerning Chinese cultural elements despite the DreamWorks' film crew's best intentions.[91] Audiences' reception of the film was an equal mix of enthusiasm and disdain depending on various individuals' perspectives. In his article "*Kung Fu Panda* prompts soul-searching in China" for *Reuters*, Simon Rabinovitch confirms this dichotomy.

> Zhao Bandi, a Chinese artist who features pandas in his work, also called for people to shun the film, saying that foreigners were profiteering from China's national symbol. But Zhao has since come under fire from Chinese critics for misguided nationalism, while theatre operators have reported packed houses for *Kung Fu Panda*.[92]

Rabinovitch compares the dual reactions of Chinese audiences to show that Chinese reception of a film based on their culture(s) is more complex than just a stamp of approval or disapproval. Subcultures exist within cultures and there are many nuances and small details that shape each individual's experience with the film. Rabinovitch goes on to describe positive responses from others, like these comments from Wu Jiang, president of the China National Peking Opera Company and Lu Chuan, a young film director:

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91 "Despite calls in China to boycott *Kung Fu Panda*, the animated movie about a panda with a passion for martial arts has become a huge box office hit." See David Barboza, "In China, Jeers and Cheers for Kung Fu Panda," *The New York Times*, June 30, 2008, https://www.nytimes .com/2008/06/30/business/media/30panda.html.

92 Simon Rabinovitch, "*Kung Fu Panda* prompts soul-searching in China," *Reuters*, July 5, 2008, https://www.reuters.com/ article/us-china-film-panda/kung-fu-panda-prompts-soul-searching-in-china-idUSPEK34047220080705.

> [Wu Jiang]The film's protagonist is China's national treasure and all the elements are Chinese, but why didn't we make such a film? . . . [Lu Chuan] *Kung Fu Panda* as a fresh and rich take on Chinese culture, mixing references to martial arts films with classic legends.

Film music reviews also acknowledge the efforts put into the musical collaborations for *Kung Fu Panda 3,* like the following from *Film Music Magazine*:

> Zimmer and Powell have obviously done their homework, giving listeners everything they'd expect to hear in a "Kung Fu" score, from rapid-fire percussion to the Asian wind sounds of the Erhu to booming voices and the lilting string plucks of the Koto[guzheng]- all topped off with contempo symphonic writing.[93]

Even responses in tweets, review blogs, and other internet platforms provide a glimpse of how audiences reacted positively to the film's depiction of Chinese cultures and musics.

> @coheteboy
> What's amazing about @DWAnimation #KungFuPanda3 is that Hans Zimmer gets the best asian musicians, but casting doesn't come close to trying.[94]

> Chris Motionless
> I love all Kung Fu panda movies because I'm from China[95]

> @breaver1
> Kung Fu Panda 3 is awesome. CG and music is masterpiece, and I see deep understanding of Chinese and Japanese culture in it.[96]

> @NotAsianDave
> Im watching kung fu panda 3 like a true asian.[97]

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93 Daniel Schwieger, "CD Review: *Kung Fu Panda*," Film Music Magazine, June 25, 2008, http://www.filmmusicmag.com/?p=1637.

94 David Yeh (@coheteboy) "What's amazing about @DWAnimation," Twitter, February 1, 2016, https://twitter.com/coheteboy/status/694327893808119808.

95 Chris Motionless, "I love all Kung Fu panda movies because I'm from China," *Common Sense Media*, kids review, March 18, 2017, https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/kung-fu-panda-3/user-reviews/child.

96 Breaver (@breaver1), "Kung Fu Panda 3 is awesome," Twitter, February 1, 2016, https://twitter.com/breaver1/status/694052742193553408.

97 A #1 at Wendy's (@NotAsianDave), "Im watching kung fu panda 3 like a true asian," Twitter, February 26, 2016, https://twitter.com/NotAsianDave/status/703386856256311297.

> @kyr4nb
> In other news I am once again getting emotional remembering the Kung Fu Panda 3 soundtrack.[98]

In an interview, pianist Lang Lang comments that "In a way, when you listen to it [the soundtrack], you feel like 'wow, this music is very close to me.' You don't feel like this music is from far away, you feel that you are also part of this culture."[99]

These are but a few examples of various opinions on the film, but suffice it to say, the music has not been a source of controversy for most viewers. The point here is not about whether *Kung Fu Panda 3*'s film score is an "authentic" or "accurate" representation of Chinese musics or not; there is no way to confirm a universal standard of what "real" representation looks like. Rather, by looking at Zimmer's compositional choices in relation to his collaboration with Chinese soloists to infuse the musical narrative with the musicians of the film's representative ethnicity, we can see how a space for Chinese music culture and musician visibility was created and resulted in a largely positive Chinese audience reception of their representation.

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98 -˙ɲew ˙- 3D kyran XL (@kyr4nb), "In other news I am once again getting emotional remembering the Kung Fu Panda 3 soundtrack," Twitter, February 5, 2018, https://twitter.com/kyr4nb/status/960548543651024896.

99 Flicks and the City Clips, "*Kung Fu Panda 3* Pianist Interview- Lang Lang," by Flicks and the City Clips, YouTube video, January 15, 2016, 4:34, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=269&v=b0C_25qwg3k&feature=emb_logo.

5:2 MOANA

In 2014, Disney contracted Broadway composer and singer Lin-Manuel Miranda and orchestrator Mark Mancina to research and compose songs for a new film about ancient Oceania.[100] *Moana* tells the story of a young Pacific Islander girl Moana, the daughter of the village chief, who voyages across the ocean to restore the heart of Te Fiti, a goddess inspired from Hawaiian, Maori, and other Oceanic mythologies. In the aftermath of the global sensation of Disney's musical hit *Frozen* (2012), both composers faced very high expectations from both the Disney corporation anticipating profits and audiences who are anticipating the next Disney masterpiece. In light of Disney's established brand of family films featuring Broadway-style songwriting, the composers recognized the expectations of both Western audiences who are used to the "Disney formula" and the expectations of Pacific Islander audiences hoping to see their cultures and music validated through *Moana*.[101] In her article with Samoan filmmaker and visual anthropologist Dionne Fonoti, A. Mārata Ketekiri Tamaira says that "Given the long-standing opposition by Indigenous communities to the appropriation of their cultures and

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100 The Pacific Ocean is home to many Pacific Islander communities and languages, categorized into Polynesia in the east covering the largest portion, Micronesia in the northwest near the Phillipines, and Melanesia in the southwest near Papua New Guinea. For the purpose of this thesis, I will be referring to these regions collectively as Oceania.

101 "What Hamilton's preponderance of lyrical references really shows is author Lin-Manuel Miranda's profound love [for] and understanding of hip-hop, which perhaps accounts for his ability to interweave it so neatly with more traditional musical fare." Alexis Petridis, "Break It Down: How Hamilton Mashed Up Musical Theatre and Hiphop," *The Guardian*, December 1, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/dec/01/hamilton-mashed-up-musical-theatre-and-hiphop-lin-manuel-miranda. Miranda has a history of presenting non-mainstream or culturally varied musical styles in a Broadway musical format and finding great success. For more on Disney's formulaic storytelling and identifiable film structure, see the following:
Adam Belloto, "The Tried-and-True Formula for Real Disney Magic," *Film School Rejects*, November 17, 2014, https://filmschoolrejects.com/the-tried-and-true-formula-for-real-disney-magic-fb00a260bc73/
Lisa James, "How to Keep Your Brand Magic: The Disney Formula for Success," *The Future of Commerce*, May 23, 2019, https://www.the-future-of-commerce.com/2019/05/23/disney-formula-for-success/.

the debates over the question of 'authenticity,' it seemed inevitable that Moana would become a contested site."[102] However, Disney's production crew decided early on that Moana "would not go any further until [directors] Musker and Clements actually went to Polynesia [to research], marking the beginning of a process that makes *Moana* one of Disney's most culturally authentic endeavors yet."[103] This statement shows a noticeable contrast to numerous claims of cultural insensitivity in both past and present Disney feature films.[104] Thus, it is logical to conclude that Oceanic communities would be apprehensive about a Western Hollywood corporation depicting their cultures in a global feature film.

Miranda and Mancina could have easily written all big musical numbers and classically referenced music already familiar to Western-oriented audiences, which would not prioritize Polynesian musical sounds, or they could have written a score in more traditional Polynesian music styles, which would then distance the film from Western audiences as foreign and unfamiliar. It is true that the various Oceanic regions of the Pacific have incorporated Western musical elements into their music traditions over the

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102 A. Marata Ketekiri Tamaira and Dionne Fonoti, "Beyond Paradise? Retelling Pacific Stories in Disney's *Moana* (Critical Essay)," *The Contemporary Pacific* 30, no. 2 (September 22, 2018), 297–327.

103 Joanna Robinson, "How Pacific Islanders Helped Disney's *Moana* Find its Way," *Vanity Fair*, November 16, 2016, https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/11/moana-oceanic-trust-disney-controversy-pacific-islanders-polynesia.

104 For writings on cultural insensitivity and Disney movies, see the following: Chris Bodenner, "Does Disney's Pocahontas Do More Harm Than Good? Your Thoughts," *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 30, 2015, https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment /archive/2015/06/pocahontas-feminism/397190/. Yohana Desta, "Don't Worry: *Mulan* Will Not Feature a White Male Lead," Vanity Fair, October 10, 2016, https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/10/mulan-white-male-lead-disney. Hillary Busis, "6 Disney Movies That Definitely Won't Get Live-Action Remakes," *Vanity Fair*, May 25, 2016, https://www.vanityfair.com/ hollywood/2016/05/disney-movies-not-getting-remakes.

last few centuries due to colonization.[105] However, there is more to a music culture than just musical sound, namely the ceremony, spirituality, and community aspects of music making found throughout Oceanic cultures.[106] Since *Moana* is specifically an Oceanic narrative, using Hollywood film scoring styles might substantiate Pacific Islanders' apprehensions about their music cultures represented at the hands of the Disney corporation. Tamaira mentioned the impact of the debates about cultural "authenticity" that surround this issue, but when considering the vast cross-cultural influences between Oceania and Western cultures over many centuries, authenticity is relative to the individual's perspective. Thus, the task of identifying and implementing "real" Oceanic music in *Moana* would be rather futile. In this chapter, rather than evaluate supposed "authenticity" in *Moana*'s film score, I will focus on how collaboration between composers and Pacific Islander musicians created space for Oceanic music cultures in Hollywood film. Through examining the collaborative process and musical elements followed by an analysis of the variety of audiences' responses, I will discuss the ways *Moana*'s film score acts as cultural representation and makes space in Hollywood for Oceanic communities through Disney's collaborative efforts with Pacific Islander musicians.

105 For more on Western influence in Oceanic music cultures, see Mervyn McLean, *Weavers of Song: Oceanic Music and Dance*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999).

106 For more on social aspects of Oceanic music cultures, see McLean, *Weavers of Song*, 1999.

Miranda and Mancina began their work by collaborating with Samoan singer Opetaia Foa'i, director of the contemporary Polynesian fusion band *Te Vaka*.[107] In my interview with Foa'i about his work and reactions to the *Moana* soundtrack, he talked about how he became involved in this collaboration.

> Early 2013 Julie [Foa'i] noticed our entire catalogue being bought online and saw that it was Disney. They were searching for a songwriter that might help forward their vision for the film. Later we got a call from the Producer saying "Think *Lion King* set in the South Pacific 3000 years ago and we want you to be the Songwriter". . . [108]

This musical collaboration initiated Disney's extensive research of Oceanic cultures for the film's design, plot, and music, resulting in the formation of the Oceanic Trust, a group of anthropologists, cultural practitioners, linguists, and choreographers from the areas of Samoa, Tahiti, Mo'orea, and Fiji. This organization contributed the input and research for the film's design, mythology, and musical narrative where, as Joanna Robinson wrote for *Vanity Fair*, "fine attention to detail and constant feedback from the Oceanic trust helped shape the film on every level."[109] Opetaia Foa'i and his band musicians' Pacific Islander heritage provided a personal image of pan-Oceanic ways of life and music traditions.[110] In March of 2014, Mancina, Miranda, and crew traveled to

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107 In my interview with Foa'i, he remarked that he thinks of Te Vaka as a contemporary Polynesian band, though I will continue to use the term Oceanic to refer to the region specifically outside of the band's performing members.

108 Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

109 Joanna Robinson, "How Pacific Islanders Helped Disney's *Moana* Find its Way," *Vanity Fair*, November 16, 2016, https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/11/moana-oceanic-trust-disney-controversy-pacific-islanders-polynesia.

110 I use the term pan-Oceanic to refer to musical elements and cultural themes that are found throughout various communities of the Polynesia region. This term represents a constructed musical and cultural identity across these communities through their cultural similarities, not unlike pan-indigenous American cultures.

Samoa and New Zealand to visit the Pacifica Music Festival featuring varieties of South Pacific musics and ceremonies. Foa'i mentioned that when he first met Miranda and music supervisor Tom McDougall, who was eager to see them collaborate, put them in a music studio which Foa'i mentioned was "the best and quickest way of getting to know each other."[111] Inspired by the musical experiences with the peoples and cultures of the South Pacific, Mancina and Miranda spent hours working with Foa'i to design the film score. As the Disney music team encountered the Pasifika festival and jammed with Foa'i, it became apparent how evocative of Pacific Islander cultures the film score could be for the film's plot and immersive experience. In videos of these early collaborative meetings, Miranda tells the other music crew:

> We [Miranda and Mancina] came back from that trip [Pasifika music festival in New Zealand] so changed by this culture and by seeing this way of life so let's get that in the movie. Let's get our pulse to the pulse of what it's like to live in this village [Moana's village in the film][112]

From Foa'i's perspective, this was an opportunity to "have the language of the South Pacific firmly in the songs and ensure the proper respect [be] given to the [Foa'I's] ancestors."[113]

In addition to working closely with Foa'i and *Te Vaka*, Disney also contracted performing arts creator and choirmaster Iglesias Este and his choir *Pasifika Voices* from

111 Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

112 PMC Reporter, "Pacific choir records for big budget Disney film *Moana*," Asia Pacific Report, August 30, 2016, https://asiapacificreport.nz/2016/08/30/pacific-choir-records-for-big-budget-disney-film-moana/.

113 Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

the University of the South Pacific as vocal features in the score.[114] Like *Te Vaka*, *Pasifika Voices*' members come from various Oceanic backgrounds like Fiji and the Solomon Islands; using this choir literally adds more Oceanic voices to the film score's Oceanic narrative.

Throughout the collaboration and film scoring process, the music team focused on important musical aspects of many Oceanic cultures, specifically percussion and voice tonal characteristics.[115] I asked Foa'i in our interview if he had prioritized any specific aspects of Polynesian music styles (rhythms, instruments, melodies, etc.) for the film score and how they were used. His reply demonstrates how his role in this score collaboration allowed his own personal Pacific Islander identity and musical values to be a core part of the film's narrative.

> The old chants [were] my focus because 2-3 thousand years ago, chants were the way of telling stories so in trying to find the soul of a song, I would often sit with a wooden box and play with my hands. It was important to make that spiritual connection before an idea would come and it would be recorded . . . I think the orchestra played a strong part but the chants and melodies, that I had my Te Vaka group perform in Warner Bros. studios, highlighted much cultural input to the score.[116]

To Foa'i—and later many Oceanic audiences, Foa'i confirmed—the focus on old chants helped illustrate the spiritual and cultural meanings this music has for Oceanic communities within the film score narrative. This is especially poignant considering

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114 PMC Reporter, "Pacific choir records for big budget Disney film *Moana*," *Asia Pacific Report,* August 30, 2016, https://asiapacificreport.nz/2016/08/30/pacific-choir-records-for-big-budget-disney-film-moana/.

115 *Moana*, directed by Ron Clements and John Musker, featuring Dwayne Johnson, Auli'i Cravalho, and Lin-Manuel Miranda (Walt Disney Pictures, 2016), 0:15:00 to 0:20:00. The protagonist Moana receives a vision of her voyaging ancestors sailing across the ocean after drumming the ceremonial drums on an ancient outrigger.

116 Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

Moana's plot hinges on the main characters looking back to their ancestors' way of life and continuing their cultural traditions.

Additionally, the feature songs sung by main characters, while constructed in the standard Disney Broadway-musical formula that Western audiences find familiar and catchy, use indigenous rhythms and percussion as both a link between Polynesia and the West and also the main source of musical intensity. In the song "You're Welcome" sung by Samoan/American celebrity Dwayne Johnson, the text is constructed on a simple melody with traditional wooden instruments and polyrhythms driving the energy of the text and background action on screen. "I Am Moana," sung by Hawaii native Auli'I Cravalho, signifies defining moments of Moana's important character development, similar to "Let It Go" in *Frozen*. Easy to sing and full of powerful text and vocal range, "I Am Moana " appears throughout the film to show Moana's growth into a confident leader and ocean navigator. Background vocals and subtle percussion connect Moana's indigenous identity to her character growth narrative, similarly to "You're Welcome."

Some of the voice's tonal characteristics that the singer of Te Vaka and Pasifika Voices demonstrated are *himene ruau* and *himene tarava,* polyphonic vocal textures found under various names in many Oceanic music cultures, most commonly attributed to Tahitian singing styles.[117] These textures could essentially be likened to Western classical SATB part singing, as religious missionary influence in the South Pacific was very prominent until the 19th century. However, these ways of singing in assigned vocal registers became so ingrained in various Oceanic cultures like Tahiti that most

117 McLean, *Weavers of Song*, 30-40.

connections to European traditions were all but gone.[118] Distinguishing traits of *himene ruau* and *tarava* part singing are nasal vocal quality, high falsetto, fourth intervals, and low bass vocables. In *Moana*, *himene ruau* and *tarava* styles are not used specifically in their various religious or ceremonial contexts of their respective cultures and act as sonic personification of Oceanic communities that appear onscreen. Some examples of these sonic and melodic features in Moana's film score include various low bass vocables at the end of phrases and vocal parts separated by fourth intervals (see fig. 3).

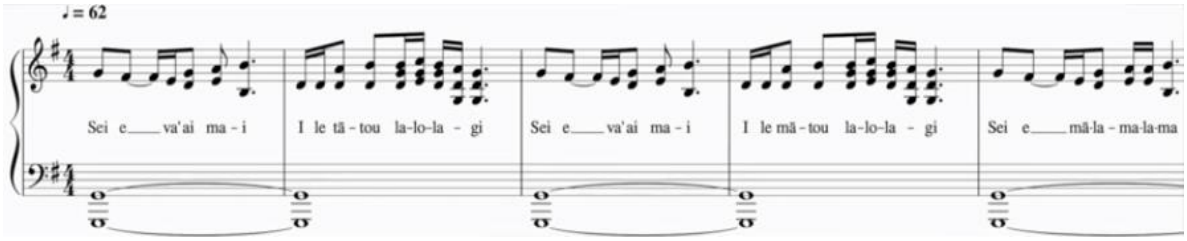

Figure 3. excerpt from "Tulou Tagaloa" which illustrates these techniques Photo credit to Pianist Frias, *[Moana] Olivia Foa'i - Tulou Tagaloa -Synthesia Piano Tutorial w/Lyrics*, YouTube video, 0:34).

As mentioned before, the formula of the Disney musical--especially for the Disney princess archetype--includes tropes like the "I want" song, villain solos, other large musical numbers, and large orchestrated tracks scored to fit the action or flow of a scene.[119] With the collaboration of Disney's music team, *Te Vaka*, Oceanic Trust, and *Pasifika Voices*, *Moana*'s film score grew into a hybrid of these recognizable musical tropes with the uses of *himene ruau* and *tarava* sonic and melodic features.

118 McLean, *Weavers of Song*, 34-35.

119 For more on Disney's formulaic story and character writing, see the following: Sideways, "How Disney Uses Language," YouTube video, 15:49, April 23, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch ?v=btxZGzWlsMw. 15:49.

Native languages are another voice sonic characteristic that further establishes the ethnicity of the singers both real and fictional. “We Know the Way” begins with the characters singing in Samoan as their outriggers sail over the ocean. It isn’t until the vocals are shifted away from on-screen character singing to an offscreen, almost psycho-diegetic, telling of wayfaring traditions performed by Miranda in English.[120] Below is the first verse sung by Foa’i with a simple translation.

SAMOAN	ENGLISH
Tatou o tagata folau e vala’auina	We are voyagers
E le atua o le sami tele e o mai	Summoned by the gods, thus adhering
Ia ava’e le lu’itau e lelei	Of this mighty ocean to come
Tapenapena	Get ready
TOKELAUAN	
(Holoholo vaka)	(Canoes on the move)
Aue aue	Oh! Oh!
Nuku i mua	There is land up ahead
Te manulele e tataki e	A bird in flight to take us there
Aue aue	Oh! Oh!
Te fenua te malie	This beautiful land
Nae ko hakilia mo kaiga e	The place I was looking for, we will make our home

This is the second verse sung by Miranda:

We read the wind and the sky
When the sun is high
We sail the length of sea
On the ocean breeze
At night we name every star
We know where we are
We know who we are, who we are
Aue, aue
We set a course to find
A brand new island everywhere we roam
Aue, aue

120 Psycho-diegetic is a term that, according to Morris Holbrook, combines the narrative functions of diegesis and non-diegesis. This combination functions to combine the audiences’ distant viewpoint with the characters’ own psychosis and in-universe perspectives. For more on ambi-diegesis, see Morris Holbrook, *Music, Movies, Meanings, and Markets: Cinemajazzamatazz* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

We keep our island in our mind
And when it's time to find home
We know the way
Aue, aue
We are explorers reading every sign
We tell the stories of our elders in a never-ending chain
Aue, aue
Te fenua te mālie
Nae ko hakilia
We know the way

While some Samaon phrases do reappear in the English language section of the musical number, the most important aspect of the uses of these two languages is that the specifically Oceanic characters are singing in a Oceanic language, while English is used as a disembodied narrative of Oceanic sailing traditions for English speaking audiences.[121] Even though the film's dialogue and lyrics are primarily in English to remain accessible to a vast majority of Disney's Western viewership, what the language use does here is convey to audiences that the people in this film are from the Pacfic and are singing their own Oceanic language. Other film score tracks like "Tulou Tagaloa" and other background vocals throughout the score also include Oceanic languages like Samoan and Tokelauan, which further solidifies the film's indigenous musical narrative.

Various pan-Oceanic percussion elements were another musical contributor to *Moana*'s indigenous narrative, including techniques like body percussion--hand clapping or thigh slapping--and instruments like slit log drums.[122] What is especially significant about the use of these techniques is that the characters in the film demonstrate them

121 "How Disney Uses Language". YouTube video, 15:49. "Sideways." April 23, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch ?v=btxZGzWlsMw. 15:49.

122 McLean, *Weavers of Song*, 63, 73, and 162.

onscreen in addition to the film score itself. During the song “You’re Welcome,” Maui slaps his legs and chest in time to the music. Background characters during “Where You Are” and the kakamora battle play on slit log drums. Even Moana herself evokes a vision of her seafaring ancestors’ past by drumming on an ancient slit log drum with two beaters. Below are some images from the visual percussion uses throughout the film:

Figures 4-7. Top left is demigod Maui, top right is the dance scene from “Where We Are,” bottom right is the kakamora playing slit log drums, and bottom right is Moana also playing slit log drums. Photos sourced from *Moana*.

The orchestration of the non-diegetic score also incorporates these elements which enhances the onscreen instrument performances. It is important to note that these percussive techniques are present in a wide range of Oceanic cultures, thus adding to the pan-Oceanic musical narrative.

This film demonstrates a fusion of Hollywood and Oceanic music elements that I argue could only have been achieved through the collaborative composing process.

Moana's film score embodies both the tropes of the Disney musical—character development musical numbers, subtle mickey-mousing and motivic tone painting with themes from said musical numbers—and elements of Oceanic music traditions of great importance to Pacific Islander peoples—the old chants, singing textures, and languages—a combination which gives Western audiences familiar points of entry to experience the less familiar languages and music in the film, creating a space for Oceanic voices within the canon of Hollywood film music. In addition to musical techniques, the social aspects of the film score collaboration also factored into the construction of this representative space. Firstly, a fundamental element of many Oceanic music cultures is how they view and revere music making as a part of community identity and bonding.[123] In "We Know the Way," a musical number depicting the wayfarer traditions of many Oceanic communities, and "Where You Are," a song celebrating these communities and traditions, *Te Vaka* and *Pasifika Voices* perform the supporting choruses that background characters sing both on and off screen. In a behind-the-scenes video of *Moana*'s film scoring process, various clips show the Te Vaka singers dancing and drumming as they perform.[124] Foa'i remarked that when he would "make up a vocal piece on the spot, they [Te Vaka] would know their harmonies and nail it."[125] These amicable expressions of personal culture connected to music illustrate the communal experience of all the

123McLean, *Weavers of Song*, 63, 73, and 162.

124"They Know the Way: Making the Music of Moana," YouTube video, 12:37, posted by Sean Dudley, June 29, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jEnpTbXaFI&t=605s.

125Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

musicians involved. These expressions of community bonds and relationships both in the film and in the film score recording sessions illustrate how the people making the music, whether real or fictional, transmit the meaning and purpose behind their musical way of life; not to mention, as Foa'i told me, "in so many ways it was very important to bring the Pacific island community together."[126]

Before *Moana* was released in November of 2016, Disney released the score album for *Moana* on iTunes, Spotify, and other music sharing platforms. Responses to the *Moana* score articulate the positive impact the film had on Pacific Islander communities. Reactions on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook included audiences, especially those of color, excited and pleased with *Moana* and its score.

> @fight4herstory
> .2 secs into the #Moana soundtrack and I'm already [crying emoji] WHY AM I LIKE THIS????[127]
> @jennalarangeira:
> Are we ever going to talk about how good Moana is? The soundtrack, the symbols and the cultural representation!!! There's also no mainstream love story like other Disney Princess films[128]
>
> @lovesickfangirl
> Growing up with the Maori myths about Maui, it wasn't a surprise that I would enjoy Disney's take on Oceanic culture. The talent is amazing. It's also cool to know that they got actual Oceanics to help with the movie. Also major credit to LMM for the soundtrack[129]
>
> @MarkBDonica

126Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

127Kamala4eva, Twitter post, April 3, 2019, https://twitter.com/fight4herstory/status/1113577015888633856.

128 Chaotic Neutral, Twitter post, December 25, 2019, https://twitter.com/jennalarangeira/status/1209913271064633346.

129 Tia The Order S2 June 18th, Twitter post, February 14, 2018, https://twitter.com/lovesickfangirI/status/963709983559892992.

> Yo. I'm SO HERE for the Maori Moana soundtrack. Hearing things in the language of the culture/country they're from is a gift.[130]
>
> @letaua_
> Moana was based off of real Oceanic culture & stories, its more than just a soundtrack, dialogue + plot twist but okay[131]
>
> @RWeThereYetMom
> I really loved hearing how important it was to keep the culture in the #Moana soundtrack.[132]

The common theme in these tweets is the elation over the score's inclusion of pan-Oceanic music. Others also shared on social media platforms how thrilled they were to see their ethnic identities portrayed in such a high caliber film.

> @halli_mariee
> I dont think anyone appreicates Moana's soundtrack as much as people from the islands[133]

Even more people, including the musician collaborators, shared how excited they were to have movies with role models and characters that their family and friends can really identify with and see themselves in, both musically and culturally.[134] In an interview with

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130 Mark B Donica, Twitter post, January 7, 2018, https://twitter.com/MarkBDonica/status/950115845706940416.

131 Sosina, Twitter post, July 27, 2017, https://twitter.com/letaua_/status/890744781986332672.

132 Rebecca Darling, Twitter post, December 28, 2016, https://twitter.com/RWeThereYetMom/status/814144403371683840.

133 Hall$, Twitter post, March 7, 2017, https://twitter.com/halli_mariee/status/839355645207838720.

134 Robert Ito, "How (and Why) Maui Got So Big in *Moana*," *The New York Times*, November 15, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/20/movies/moana-and-how-maui-got-so-big.html?action=click&contentCollection=Movies&module=RelatedCoverage&region=EndOfArticle&pgtype=article&_r=0. There are controversies about the depiction of the demigod character Maui as he is a core part of many Oceanic mythos. Many have expressed disappointment at the design and plot of Maui's character, but as this pertains to the conceptual visual design and story writing rather than the musical score narrative, I will focus on the effectiveness of the musical success in representation and save the Maui controversy for another paper.

Don Wallace at *Honolulu Magazine*, Cravalho mentions her participation in a redubbing of the film into Hawaiian, or ʻōlelo as speakers prefer to call it. She relates a similar theme that Foa'i also mentioned about ones connections to their ancestors through language and song:

> There's so much joy in the lines, with them being in the language of my ancestors . . . While I still flub on the words, because I'm not 100 percent fluent in the language, speaking Hawaiian just feels like coming home . . . I get to be part of a project that means so much to me—and I know will mean a lot to the current generation … and those who watch it years from now, who will be inspired to learn more about their culture and their language.[135]

In a similar interview for the same article, the Hawaiian redub actor for Maui, Kaipu Baker, commented that "it's really nice to see ʻōlelo legitimized as a professional language in a really fabulous feature film."[136] Foa'i himself remarked:

> So as much as I want other cultures to be really interested in what the culture (in Moana) is all about, the biggest buzz for me is for my own people. Because a lot of them were brought up in the cities, so I'm hoping that this will open the key for them to feel pride about their culture.[137]

And in a different interview with *Billboard*:

> I have spent 20 years of my life dedicated to telling the stories of my ancestors onstage by touring the world, 40 countries, and through songs. It's something I'm

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135 Auli'i Cravalho, in interview with Don Wallace, "Disney's *Moana* (and Auliʻi Cravalho) Hit a New High Note—in Hawaiian," *Honolulu Magazine*, January 30, 2018, accessed November 29, https://www.honolulumagazine.com/disneys-moana-and-aulii-cravalho-hit-a-new-high-note-in-hawaiian/.

136 Don Wallace, "Disney's *Moana* (and Auliʻi Cravalho) Hit a New High Note—in Hawaiian," *Honolulu Magazine*, January 30, 2018, https://www.honolulumagazine.com/disneys-moana-and-aulii-cravalho-hit-a-new-high-note-in-hawaiian/.

137 Quote by Opetaia Foa'i from Rebecca Darling, "Who Collaborated with Lin-Manuel Miranda on the Moana Soundtrack? #MoanaEvent," R We There Yet Mom? December 19, 2016, http://rwethereyetmom.com/opetaia-foai-moana-soundtrack.html.

> very passionate about and I'm glad to say that I'm very happy with the way it's represented in this movie.[138]

What we can conclude from these responses is that film viewers were thrilled to "be seen" in Moana. The use of language and song allowed the Pacific Islander collaborators to feel an important cultural connection to their ancestors and languages; the music crew's collaborative efforts created space for these musicians' cultures and values. Many critical reviews of Moana praised Miranda's score as delightful and unique, even expounding on the cultural impacts they anticipated from the score, as Pablo Ruiz writes in Rotoscopers: "It might take some people a while to get used to the new rhythms, since this is not as Broadway-ish as Frozen, but I firmly believe we will all be singing these tunes for years and years to come."[139] However, like the *Kung Fu Panda* franchise, *Moana* is not a full view of an ethnic experience. Language barriers and culturally specific values do not always translate between Western and non-Western ethnicities. In response to accolades for Moana's cultural representation and inclusion of Oceanic ethnicities, many Oceanic cultural gatekeepers point out areas where Disney misrepresented or even capitalized on the novelty of various Oceanic mythos and symbolism. In his article for the Facebook page *Mana Moana: We Are Moana, We Are*

138 Melinda Newman, "Lin-Manuel Miranda, Mark Mancina & Opetaia Foa'i on Creating Disney's *Moana* Music as *Hamilton* Exploded." *Billboard*, November 23, 2016, www.billboard.com/articles/news/7588008/lin-manuel-miranda-mark-mancina-opetaia-foai-disney-moana-music.

139 Pablo Ruiz, "*Moana* Soundtrack Review," *Rotoscopers*, November 29, 2016, https://www.rotoscopers.com/2016/11/29/moana-soundtrack-review/.

Maui, Oceanic Trust scholar Vilsoni Hereniko describes his role in the cultural consultation with Disney's production/design teams.[140] Hereniko says that *Moana* is a

> Noteworthy effort to marry capitalism with indigenous epistemologies, worldviews and aesthetics is definitely a step in the right direction. However, this is a step that is fraught with obstacles and constraints imposed by capitalism's impulses.[141]

He talks about how his objection to Disney's interpretation of the Oceanic deity Maui resulted in Disney stopping their consultations with him. His concluding statement is a compelling perspective on Disney and its history of indigenous representations.

> This marriage of convenience between fantasy and reality, between corporate culture and indigenous peoples, is fertile ground for unpacking the ways in which Disney, in spite of its best intentions, values success at the box office over and above honoring the deep-seated desires of indigenous peoples: which is to have creative control over the production of their own images and stories.[142]

Some reviewers have gone as far as to say that Disney and the music crew put very little effort into the film score and that it's a poor representation of Oceanic culture due to its cliché rhythms and design.[143] For example, consider this IMDb review:

> I'm glad I wasn't the only one who hated the music. The story is fine, the acting is fine, but the music is terrible. Boring, unimaginative basically a European interpretation of Oceanic music. Disappointing.[144]

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140 Vilsoni Hereniko, 2017, "Yes, I was a member of Disney's Oceanic Story Trust," Facebook, January 15, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/manamoanawearemoanawearemaui/posts/yes-i-was-a-member-of-disneys-oceanic-story-trust-and-yes-i-am-very-proud-to-hav/234196977027853/.

141 Hereniko, "Yes, I was a member of Disney's Oceanic Story Trust," Facebook, 2017.

142 Hereniko, "Yes, I was a member of Disney's Oceanic Story Trust," Facebook, 2017.

143 Esherrill2008, "Poor representation of Polonesian culture," December 25, 2016, *IMDb*, https://www.imdb.com/review/rw3605843/?ref_=tt_urv.

144 Rachel-c-willis16, "I'm glad I wasn't the only one who hated the music," January 8, 2020, *IMDb*, https://www.imdb.com/review/rw5391771/?ref_=tt_urv.

One cannot say for certain whether this review comes from a Pacific Islander viewer with knowledge of Oceanic music styles or not, but the fact remains that some audiences see a Hollywood structuring of Moana's film score buried in the exterior Oceanic music references. With these responses illuminating areas of disappointment with the effectiveness of Disney's pursuit for cultural inclusivity, the prospect of creating an "authentic" musical representation of non-Western cultures in a Hollywood film score seems rather impossible. An successful or meaningful ethnic representation is ultimately relative to the individual. Regardless, I keep my focus on the collaboration between Disney and Oceanic musicians specifically because their work together created space for a kind of pan-Oceanic musical narrative, even if it couldn't encapsulate all of the many South Pacific cultures in one film. This intentional inclusion of Oceanic music communities in the film scoring process as well as the casting of Pacific Islander actors as main characters—Samoan Dwayne Johnson (Maui), Hawaii-native Auli'I Cravalho (Moana), etc.—contributed to this space making for Oceanic peoples in Hollywood. Indeed, the majority of the film script is in English, but the use of Oceanic music styles, instruments, and performers strengthens the visual and aural associations of the film as a non-Western Oceanic community with indigenous culture, music, and values. This creates a recognizable pan-Oceanic musical narrative that viewers can easily identify regardless of their place of origin or ethnicity. Collaboration remains the central theme within these various aspects of Moana's film scoring process. By seeking out Oceanic individuals, musicians, or scholars, Disney's proactive inclusion of Oceanic voices was

"more granular and scholarly."[145] The end product was a film score depicting pan-Oceanic music, voices, and cultures that gave all the collaborators a reason to feel pride in their cultural heritage. Various scholars and audiences might interpret *Moana* as a watered-down, Westernized essentialization of their own cultural mythos and musics; considering the tension between Disney navigates between cultural sensitivity and making profits, Pacific Islander individuals have every right to feel that their culture was undervalued or trivialized.[146] However, the vast amount of positive responses from Oceanic audiences and Disney's films' score collaborators demonstrates that Moana's collaborative film and score efforts resulted in an overall proactive inclusion of Oceanic cultural and musical narratives. In Wallace's article for *Honolulu Magazine* on the *Moana* translation project, he mentions how much of a cultural impact *Moana*, especially its ʻōlelo translation, will make.

> With Cravalho's eager participation, the impact of the translation project is guaranteed to be magnified several times over. Children will sing the songs at bedtime and in the bath with their parents and ʻohana. It's only a matter of time before the Hawaiian "How Far I'll Go" will be an anthem at karaoke bars. "It's going to be a living legacy," says Puakea Nogelmeier, leader of the translation project.[147]

Whether if it is from social media platforms, video interviews, or word of mouth, the fact remains that Miranda and Mancina's musical collaboration with Foa'i, *Te Vaka*, and

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145 Joanna Robinson, "How Pacific Islanders Helped Disney's *Moana* Find its Way," 2016.

146 For more on Disney's history of prioritizing business profits over cultural sensitivity, see the following: Hereniko, "Yes, I was a member of Disney's Oceanic Story Trust," Facebook, 2017, and Kelle Neal, *'Part of Your World': Disney's Portrayal of Ethnic Minorities*, Masters thesis (Tennessee State University, Nashville, 2010).

147 Don Wallace, "Disney's "Moana" (and Auliʻi Cravalho) Hit a New High Note—in Hawaiian," *Honolulu Magazine*, January 30, 2018, https://www.honolulumagazine.com/disneys-moana-and-aulii-cravalho-hit-a-new-high-note-in-hawaiian/.

Pasifika Voices allowed conversations to start surrounding Pacific Islander experiences and created a space for Oceanic music cultures to global audiences through Hollywood; we can see the people behind the music. In the words of Foa'i:

> There's no doubt Disney makes a lot of money but that's because many people paid to see the movie. when you look at what Moana has done for our young generation, instilling pride in their culture, promotion of our languages Tahiti, Hawai'i, Aotearoa etc. I think the Pacific island cultures have profited greatly from this movie and I believe our ancestors would be proud of how they were depicted in Moana.[148]

5:3 BLACK PANTHER

The third film I focused on, Marvel Cinematic Universe's *Black Panther*, changed much about the superhero action film genre both during and after its theatrical release in February, 2018. It is the first major feature film in any of the superhero cinematic franchises to feature a Black lead and mostly Black supporting cast members depicting a superhero origin story of the same acclaim as *Batman* and *Captain America*. The film has won numerous awards including three Oscars for production design, costume design, and original film score.[149] Accruing more awards and Academy recognition than any Marvel Studios film before it, *Black Panther* presents a progressive approach to not only perceiving traditional film genres through a non-Western lens, but also creating a musical narrative for the variety film.[150] *Black Panther* chronicles the rise of the Marvel superhero T'Challa as he assumes the role of king in the fictional world of Wakanda

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148 Opetaia Foa'i, in interview with the author, September 2, 2020.

149 Steve Dove, "*Black Panther* Scores 3 Wins at 2019 Oscars", *Oscars*, February 25, 2019, https://oscar.go.com/news/oscar-news/black-panther-scores-3-wins-at-2019-oscars.

150 Angela Watercutter, "*Black Panther*'s Oscar Wins Made History," *Wired*, February 25, 2019, https://www.wired.com/story/black-panthers-oscar-wins-made-history/.

hidden deep in Africa. The themes of the film focus heavily on the histories of oppression that Black people have faced and how that oppression has shaped Black people from both Africa and the Western Hemisphere. Director Ryan Coogler, production designer Hannah Beachler, and costume designer Ruth E. Carter pulled much inspiration and reference from West African cultures to ground these themes in an explicitly Black narrative.[151] In addition, Swedish composer Ludwig Göransson, who has collaborated with Coogler on several other occasions, also reinforces this narrative in his film score for *Black Panther*. Göransson's personal working relationship with Coogler allowed both director and composer to collaborate on their goals for the sound and music design of the film.[152] Through discussions with Coogler about the goals and themes, Göransson understood that writing a score for a film with such obvious African, African-American, and other Black narratives demanded a nuanced, knowledgeable film score than the standard superhero fanfare epics of Hollywood.[153]

The Marvel Cinematic Universe, following in the footsteps of DC Comics' animated and live action series and other franchises in the superhero genre, has helped create a staple sound for superhero films that is easily identified through grand brass

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151 April Baer, "Designer Ruth E. Carter On Creating Oscar-Winning Looks For *Black Panther*", *OPB*, September 6, 2019, https://www.opb.org/radio/article/black-panther-costume-design-ruth-carter-interview/. Sierra Pettengill, "Production Designer Hannah Beachler on Building *Black Panther*," *Filmmaker Magazine*, March 17, 2020, https://filmmakermagazine.com/106493 -hannah-beachler-production-design-black-panther/. Josh Eells, "Ryan Coogler: Why I Needed to Make *Black Panther*," *Rolling Stone Magazine*, February 26, 2018, https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/movie-features/ryan-coogler-why-i-needed -to-make-black-panther-203737/.

152 Rodney Carmichael, "How Ludwig Göransson Helped Orchestrate America's Conversation On Race In 2018," *NPR*, February 23, 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/02/23/697124438/how-ludwig-g-ransson-helped-orchestrate-americas-conversation- on-race-in-2018.

153 Serena McKinney, "*Black Panther* Composer Infuses Score With Trove of African Sounds," *Variety*, February 14, 2018, https://variety.com/2018/artisans/production/black-panther-score-1202697385/.

melodies and sweeping strings. The "superhero sound" originates from John Williams' theme for the film *Superman* which reflects the direct musical influence of Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*. This sound has often been combined with themes of "American-ness" and "the American way" in Hollywood film since the musical roots of the brassy, majestic fanfares come from associations with techniques through which Copland created the sound of Americana.[154] This connection to major Western art classics cements most action superhero film and media in the Western classical arts scene while excluding music traditions that do not "sound" heroic. For *Black Panther*, this presented a unique dilemma as Göransson expressed in his own words:

> [How] do you keep the tone of Africa without it becoming inappropriate? While I spent time in Africa, I learned that music isn't just music there. It is everything. It is a language. It has a written purpose. There is a meaning to every rhythm. So, how do I accomplish putting those meanings together in a way where it fits in with the meanings of the film's themes?…As soon as I put in a big orchestra on top of a traditional African rhythm then it doesn't feel African anymore, so how do I incorporate a big orchestra in a way where you still feel the essence of Africa?[155]

Göransson acknowledges the incongruity of combining Western European classical music and Hollywood film scoring styles with African musical elements like polyrhythms and imitating tonal languages, especially when these sounds are acting as

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154For more on the "superhero" sound, its origins, and its musical construction, see the following:

Janet K. Halfyard, "Cue the Big Theme? The Sound of the Superhero?" *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*, ed. Carol Vernalis et al., (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), and "How a Superhero Theme Works." YouTube video, 23:50. "Sideways." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLweJucEPL0. 23:50.

155Ludwig Göransson and Kevito, "Composer Ludwig Göransson Talks Sounds Of *Black Panther*, Grammys & More [Interview]," *Okayplayer*, January 26, 2019, www.okayplayer.com/originals/ludwig-Göransson-black -panther-grammys-atlanta-robbin-season interview.html.

narrative devices for specific non-Western identities in a Westernized genre. Similar to *Moana*'s film score, if *Black Panther*'s musical narrative remained entirely within the standard superhero sound that Hollywood created, this narrative could only function for the superhero portion of the story; all traces of Blackness would be superseded by a white, Western-based music style. The first, and possibly most effective, step that Göransson took in confronting this dilemma was connecting through mutual friends with Senegalese musician Baaba Maal for consultation; Maal then invited Göransson to travel with him on tour and work with other Senegalese musicians in his group.[156] This learning relationship with local musicians is important "since music remains one of the primary outlets for storytelling across Africa, it's also a crucial element of Wakanda world-building."[157] From the many different styles and functions of West African music he studied there, Göransson picked several elements that would mesh West African sounds with Western film score orchestration. In his article for *Pitchfork*, Brian Josephs confirms that "despite the emphasis on African instrumentation, the score's classical elements don't exist solely as accoutrements: The orchestra delivers its traditional magnificence while the African signatures humanize it."[158] In light of this assertion, I will further

156 "The only way for me to score this movie would be for me to go to Africa, and immerse myself in the culture, and study and learn the music." Ludwig Göransson and Kevito, "Composer Ludwig Göransson Talks Sounds Of *Black Panther*, Grammys & More [Interview]," *Okayplayer*, January 26, 2019, www.okayplayer.com/originals/ludwig-Göransson-black-panther -grammys-atlanta-robbin-season interview.html.

157 Sheldon Pierce, "How *Black Panther* Composer Ludwig Göransson Found the Sound of Wakanda," *Pitchfork*, February 7, 2018, Accessed July 23, 2020, https://pitchfork.com/thepitch/how-black-panther-composer-ludwig-goransson-found-the- sound-of-wakanda-interview/.

158 Brian Josephs, "Ludwig Göransson's spectacular score captures the multiplicity of the fictional nation of Wakanda," *Pitchfork*, February 28, 2018, https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/ludwig-goransson-black-panther-original-score/.

examine in this section how Göransson formed the various ethnic narratives of *Black Panther*'s characters through collaborations with Baaba Maal and Senegalese musicians. As Göransson followed Maal on tour and studied music styles with Maal's musician colleagues and griots (traditional hereditary professional musicians), he saw orchestration potential in many of the native instruments there, especially in percussion.[159] In the score, he portrays T'Challa's character through the talking drum, an instrument that can fluctuate pitch based on the performer's arm pressure on the drum. For the film score, Göransson recorded samples of soloist Massamba Diop pronouncing the name "T'Challa" in the talking drum's natural rhythmic and tonal inflections. He then layered these recordings over other talking drum performers and an 808 synthesizer ostinato pattern, creating a twofold leitmotif for the protagonist T'Challa that would be instantly recognizable both melodically and rhythmically.[160] In addition, a strong horn fanfare is added to this accumulated mass of percussive sounds to provide what Göransson describes as a "more royal" sound.[161] The resulting motif fused the Western horn with West African drum and synthesizer timbres that alluded to multiple aspects of T'Challa's character: his ethnicity, his inherited royal title, and his technologically enhanced superpowers. Juxtaposed against this heroic main theme, Göransson depicts the

159 "The Making of *Wakanda* with Ludwig Göransson--presented by Marvel's *Black Panther*," *Genius*, February 11, 2019, 6:06-6:16, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcO5klPyfX4. A griot is a West African historian who tells oral stories through poems and music.

160 "The Making of *Wakanda,"* 3:00-3:50. Göransson explains how the talking drum works and how he used it in the score.

161 "The Making of *Wakanda,"* 4:39-4:51. Göransson tells how he and Coogler added brass to the recording demo to establish a regal sound to the main character's theme.

antagonist with Fuloe flutist Amadou's *tambing* flute solo for a sharp timbral contrast between the opposing sides, which I will discuss further in this section.[162]

As seen in Göransson's use of instrumental timbres, rhythm and melody are two additional musical identifiers that he layered over timbral colors for *Black Panther's* thematic material. Some of *Black Panther's* characters were from the Western Hemisphere and to them, indigenous African music did not apply. The villain of the story, Erik Killmonger, is T'Challa's cousin and second in line to the Wakandan throne, but he was born and raised in Oakland, California. Killmonger's character is portrayed as a culturally trendy, African-American man with strong Black American heritage, but values his roots in African Wakanda. Göransson portrays Killmonger's multiple cultural and ethnic identities by layering trap beats to evoke his growing up in Oakland, the Fuloe *tambing* flute as a link to his African heritage, and low 808 synthesizer pulse to signify him as a dangerous threat to the main characters.[163] This rhythmic stratification, as Nicole Biamonte writes in her chapter on rhythmic functions in pop-rock music, is a common feature of "various rhythmically complex [African and African-American] vernacular musics--including West African musics, rock, gospel, jazz, disco, and rap."[164] As much of popular contemporary music styles like rap and hip hop stem have ties to African

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162 Josephs, "Ludwig Göransson's spectacular score," 2018, and Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "West Africa An Introduction," *The Garland Handbook of African Music*, ed. Ruth M. Stone (New York: Routledge, 2008), 170.

163 Josephs, "Ludwig Göransson's spectacular score," 2018, Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "West Africa An Introduction," *The Garland Handbook of African Music*, ed. Ruth M. Stone (New York: Routledge, 2008), 170, and Songexploder, "Ludwig Göransson–*Killmonger*," (podcast), March 14, 2018, accessed July 19, 2020, http://songexploder.net/black-panther.

164 Nicole Biamonte, "Rhythmic Functions in Pop-Rock Music," *The Routledge Companion to Popular Music Analysis: Expanding Approaches*, ed. Ciro Scotto, et al. (New York: Routledge Ltd. 2018).

origins, it is possible to interpret this stylistic connection as a hidden implication of Killmonger's various identities. This rhythmic layering feature of hip hop music styles also builds anticipation for the beat drop, signifying an important moment in a scene or action sequence. This is similar to how epic hero film scores often exhibit prolonged suspensions with increasing harmonic intensity when depicting build-up in a climactic scene.[165] In Erik Killmonger's introductory scene, the corresponding track title "Killmonger" accompanies the slowly building tension of the first glimpses of his motivations, morals, and suave power. As his conversation with the museum curator turns from curiosity about the Wakandan artifacts to quiet anger about African cultural pieces being stolen for museums, the 808 synthesizer's trap beat steadily pulses like an anxious heartbeat. Killmonger's *tambing* flute leitmotif and strings cuts in once his criminal motivations are revealed and the curator realizes she's been poisoned. As Killmonger's operatives take out the other museum staff with silencer pistols and the 808 beat keeps pulsing, almost erratically, the camera switches to show a security camera in the corner. After a small hesitation in the beat, it drops into both the *tambing* and the 808 in a faster tempo right at the camera zooms into the a security guard's video screens to show the altered camera footage that conceals Killmonger's heist. This fusion of West African Fuloe, electronic, and Western orchestral timbres both acts a multilayered leitmotif for Killmonger and accentuates the events on screen

165 A beat drop is a musical technique used in popular musics like rap, dubstep, and hip-hop where elements like volume, rhythm, and pitch grow in intensity until a sudden change or break in the rhythm or bass register.

While *Black Panther* is far from the first film to mesh pop music styles with standard film score styles, Göransson does so intentionally to portray the specific Black identity of a Black character that embodies both African and Black American ethnicities.[166] In the words of pop music critic Mikeal Wood regarding *Black Panther's* film score:

> The idea, in contrast with many of today's more obligatory soundtracks, is not merely to assemble a collection of songs to wallpaper a blockbuster or to extend its pop-culture footprint to Top 40 radio (or to Spotify). Rather… to utilize music as a storytelling device — including tunes delivered from characters' points of view — and to reflect the sprawl of an ambitious narrative with a soundtrack that coheres even as it showcases a diversity of styles.[167]

Göransson weaves different styles historically coded as "Black music" together in Killmonger's theme, managing to create a multidimensional musical narrative for a complex character. Drawing upon the narrative properties of film score, Göransson expanded the superhero music genre beyond standard Hollywood orchestra and brass fanfare to include West African instruments and "urban" coded musics like rap and hip hop, grounding the story and characters in a Black narrative not often explored in mainstream Western media.[168] Göransson's collaborative approach is starkly similar to *Moana*'s collaborative film score production: composers learning the musical styles and

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166 Rebecca Coyle, "Pop Goes the Music: Scoring the Popular Song in the Contemporary Film Soundtrack," Metro 140 (January 1, 2004): 94–98. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1745885973/.

167 Mikael Wood, "Kendrick Lamar's Gripping *Black Panther* Soundtrack Joins a Tradition of Black Movie Music," *Los Angeles Times*, February 15, 2018, https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/music/la-et-ms-black-panther-kendrick-lamar-20180215-story.html.

168 *Black Panther*, featuring Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o, and Andy Serkis (Marvel Studios and Walt Disney Pictures, 2018), 2 hrs., 14 min., Andrew Kinney, Jon Kull, Tommy Laurence, Henri Wilkinson, and Geoff Lawson are also accredited as orchestrators on *Black Panther*. Christopher Nightingale is credited as an additional music composer, and John Ashton Thomas is credited as conductor/orchestrator.

values from the musicians of the given demographic—in this case West African—and then engaging their musical community--Baaba Maal, Massamba Diop, and other musicians—in the creation and performance of the score.

Black Panther's premiere sparked an immense mainstream media buzz around Black representation and non-Western cultures of color. The hashtag #BlackPanther appeared across Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms, praising the film's purposeful focus on Blackness. In her article in *The Washington Post* about the trending #WhatBlackPantherMeansToMe tag, Jonita Davis talks about the impact of a film made by and for Black people. She compares tweets, film critiques, and even studies of the lack of representation and distortions of black culture in film to show the positive impact of the films through audiences' responses.[169] Some positive social media responses she discusses include:

> #BlackPanther is a love letter to blackness, to a world that often ghettoizes it without realizing that it is on black backs that this world revolves. This world's livelihood is in our blood… This gif [moving reaction image] perfectly describes how I felt after watching #BlackPanther. It's not just another superhero movie it's a moment for us and directed by someone who looks like us and has a predominantly black cast that looks like us. You can't help but feel proud after seeing it.[170]

Audience approval in addition to recognition from film critics and awards societies confirms the cultural impact of *Black Panther* and its film score as a cinematic milestone, thus substantiating how the collaboration between Göransson and Black/African

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169 Jonita Davis, "Meet the Mom behind #WhatBlackPantherMeansToMe," *The Washington Post*, February 13, 2018, www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2018/02/13/meet-the-mom-behind whatblackpanthermeanstome/?utm_term=.a2034e593ca9.

170 Trevell Anderson (@trevellanderson), "#BlackPanther is a love letter to blackness," Twitter, February 18, 2018, BEANZ (@PhotosByBeanz), "This gif [insert] perfectly describes how I felt," Twitter, February 15, 2018.

musicians produced an unmistakably Black/African musical narrative.[171] In a similar manner, Tim McDonnell's *NPR* article "Ghanaian Fans Have One Nit To Pick But Otherwise Adore *Black Panther*," he also discusses responses from the represented ethnic demographics, in this case, Ghanaians. While audiences did feel the actor's "African" accents were a little forced and fake, they enthusiastically celebrated the film's release as a triumph for Africanness within dominant Western culture. He quotes one interviewee, Amartey Amarteifio, who comments that Ghanaians don't need Hollywood to tell them that. "'I already know how amazing Africa is," he said. "I'm just happy that America will get to see this side.'"[172]

5:4 *THE BREADWINNER*

My fourth and final case study presented some interesting divergences away from the processes and methods I covered for the last three films. The 2017 film is an international co-production between Canada's Aircraft Pictures, Ireland's Cartoon Saloon and Luxembourg's Melusine Productions in association with Angelina Jolie Pitt's Jolie Pas Productions. Based on Deborah Ellis's best-selling novel of the same name and directed by Nora Twomey, *The Breadwinner* is lesser known than the blockbuster hits I

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171 Jamil Smith, "The Revolutionary Power Of *Black Panther*: Marvel's new movie marks a major milestone," *Time Magazine*, February 19, 2018, Accessed July 20, 2020. https://time.com/black-panther/; Carvell Wallace, "Why *Black Panther* Is a Defining Moment for Black America," *The New York Times Magazine*, February 12 2018, Accessed July 20, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/12/magazine/why-black-panther-is-a-defining-moment-for-black-america.html; and Tribune News Service, "*Black Panther* Soundtrack Carries on Tradition of Black Movie Music That Stretches Back Decades," *South China Morning Post*, February 20, 2018, Accessed July 20, 2020, https://www.scmp.com/culture/music/article/2133952/black-panther-soundtrack-carries-tradition-black-movie-music-stretches.

172Tim McDonnell, "Ghanaian Fans Have One Nit To Pick But Otherwise Adore *Black Panther*," *NPR*, February 20, 2018, Accessed July 20, 2020. https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/02/20/587224592/ghanaian-fans-have-one-nit-to- pick-but-otherwise-adore-black-panther.

discussed previously. Although *The Breadwinner* was nominated for both Academy and Golden Globe awards in the Best Animated Feature category, its international attention did not hit such mainstream fame as the previous three films I discussed due to the film's limited theatrical release, lesser known studio, and the sobering realism of the plot's portrayal of life in Taliban-controlled territory.[173] The story follows eleven-year-old Parvana in Kabul, Afghanistan, who disguises herself as a boy so she can get a job to support her mother, sister, and baby brother after her father is wrongfully imprisoned by a hot-headed Taliban soldier. With harsh curfews and regulations in place that prevent women from going outside without a male family member, lest they get arrested, beaten, or even killed, Parvana's family faces starvation. Cartoon Saloon's animators combine their signature hand drawn and 2D-cut paper animation with Afghan art styles that portray Afghan cultural heritage in colorful folk stories, music, and dress all within the bleak landscapes of a hostile political environment. The role of the film score as a cultural narrative is one of the most immersive aspects of this film that runs tandem with the visual design of both the mythic and realistic worlds of the story. For this film score case study, I will examine many of the same musical and social aspects I explored for the other three films—melody, collaborative efforts, composer and musician dynamics, audience reception, etc. However, *The Breadwinner'*s production circumstances were rather unconventional compared to the average film score production process so I had to

173Mercedes Milligan, "International Co-Pro *The Breadwinner* Enters Production," *Animation Magazine*, May 19, 2016, accessed November 7, 2020, https://www.animationmagazine.net/features/international-co-pro-the-breadwinner-enters-production/.

alter my analytical approach somewhat.[174] When I interviewed film composer Mychael Danna about his composing process and collaborative efforts for *The Breadwinner*, I learned that the film production had experienced some setbacks in the film scoring phase as Afghanistan was still unsafe for civilian travel at the time so going there for recording sessions with collaborating musicians was out of the question. Despite this roadblock, Danna and the film score crew managed to collaborate with Afghan musicians, instrument performers, and even the girls choir at the Afghanistan National Institute of Music via Skype recordings. With this context, I reached out to some of the instrumentalists that Danna had collaborated with and Swiss flutist Sandro Friedrich agreed to answer a few questions for me. I used the information he gave me in the analysis of the musical elements of *The Breadwinner*'s score. For this section, I will examine the visual design and musical elements in *The Breadwinner* that establish ethnicity and cultural place from the perspectives and experiences of my interviewees Danna and Friedrich. I will focus on some of the same elements of musical composition and scoring processes that I have for the last three case studies--melodic content, instrumentation, lyrical text, etc.-- but with *The Breadwinner*'s unique production circumstances, I will rely primarily on the conversations I had with Danna and winds player Sandro Friedrich for contextualizing the collaborative aspects. I will then analyse

[174]Most Hollywood film composers have access to in-person orchestral recording sessions and face-to-face interactions with collaborators and staff. For more on the Hollywood film scoring process, see the following: Adolph Deutschk, "On Three Strangers," in *The Hollywood Film Music Reader*, ed. Mervyn Cooke (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 153-164, and Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art*, 268-271, and Sonny Kompanek, *From Score to Screen: Sequencers, Scores, & Second Thoughts the New Film Scoring Process,* (New York: Schirmer, 2011).

their comments and answers to my questions with audience responses to see how the film's reception generated space for Afghan musicians in film.

The Breadwinner's film score features a variety of Middle Eastern/Afghan instruments: rabab, tula, tabla, ney, zurna, kamaan, oud, santur, and dilruba. Danna and director Nora Twomey wanted to steep the sonic landscape of the film with Afghan melodies and rhythmic textures as much as possible to match the story plot. When the story narrative focuses on the hopeful or beautiful aspects of Afghan life and culture with a bright, vibrant visual design, the instrumentation is denser with *tabla* percussion, *rabab* plucked lute tremolo techniques, and the support of Western orchestral strings. Contrastingly, when the story focuses on the themes of starvation, oppression, and the plain earth-tone color palette of Parvana's daily life, the orchestration is thinner with somber bowed *ghichak,* or *kamaan* melodies; the *ghichak* is also accompanied by percussion, Western strings, and sometimes the *rabab*, but the texture is distinctly different because of the prominence of the *ghichak* soloist parts.[175]

Unlike the previously discussed case studies, *The Breadwinner*'s film score production took place in an unconventional setting, primarily through Skype meetings and other online communication. The political situation in Afghanistan at the time of film production was still unsafe for civilian travel which prevented composers Jeff and Mychael Danna from being able to visit with their collaborators and thus making in-

[175] The *tabla* is a set of tunable drums made from wood and metal that are essential in the Kabul art music tradition of Afghanistan. The *rabab*, a wooden double-chambered lute, is the national instrument of Afghanistan and is a prominent part of classical art music. The *ghichak*, or *kamaan*, is a bowed instrument with a unique timbre resulting from its distinctive metal tin resonator. Although Mychael Danna referenced the instrument as the Iranian term *kamaan*, I will refer to this instrument by the Afghan term *ghichak* in context of the film's Afghan narrative. For more Afghanistan instruments and musicality, see the following: "Instruments and Musical History," *Voices of Afghanistan*, accessed September 15, 2020, http://www.voicesofafghanistan.com/instruments-musical-history/.

person recording sessions out of the question. Despite these setbacks, they were able to contact many Middle Eastern instrumentalists and the Afghanistan National Institute of Music's girls choir to participate in the soundtrack recordings. In an interview with composer Mychael Danna, I inquired about this situation's effect on the scoring process. He responded saying:

> The quality of the flute is pretty pretty iffy. We had to do a lot of engineering work to kinda make it good, but all the main flute that you hear in the movie literally is recorded like the way we're speaking right now [online Skype meeting].[176]

Considering that much of the music making for this film score was not in-person, the communal performance environment of typical recording sessions could not be maintained. Regardless, Danna mentioned that he often let the performers of Afghan instruments improvise and elaborate on the compositional framework he constructed, maintaining a semblance of how musicians feed off each other's performances in live recordings.

Danna's first priority for writing the film score was recreating the "humanness" of Afghanistan's musical landscape. He commented that he really wanted the score "to come from that culture and from that tradition" so he sought Afghan instrumental performers, both online and by word of mouth, who were "directly connected to the [music] culture." Included below is the list of performers and their instruments that Danna sent to me:

Salar Nadar Quinn

176 Mychael Danna, interview with author, February 14, 2020.

Mustafa Saeed	Percussion
Sandro Hussel	Rabab
Qais Muhammadi	Esraj
Sandro Friedrich	Tula
Loga	Tula, ney, zurna
Hamid Saeidi	Guitarviol, rabab, kamaan, oud
John Fee	Santur
Afghanistan National Institute of Music	Dilruba
	Nahid Women's Choir
Tabla, drums, percussion	

Although many of these instruments are found throughout surrounding Middle Eastern countries like Pakistan, Iran, and India, often by other names, they are still prominent aspects of Afghan music history and culture. I noticed that Danna is very emphatic about creating connections between audiences and the film score via "authenticity," or more specifically, the humanness in collaborative music making. I focused my questions on this point to see how this idea permeates his musical philosophies and ultimately film score collaboration methods:

> "Why is it important for you to work with musicians of the culture you're referencing?"
> "How do your collaborations make a more 'real' or 'human' film score?"

Danna replied that it is important for a film score to be a functioning part of the story telling, especially when trying to meet the musical expectations of Western audiences with a non-Western musical tradition. "Something that's meaningful to me is that we were able to respect the sound of the music, that cultural fingerprint, enough to make people feel very at home with it." While he says that the reality of the situation is that most Western audiences do not really know the difference between Afghan musics and any other non-Western sounds, he does think that "maybe there was kind of a subliminal sense...that even the most uneducated viewer or listener can always sense the truth, sense

that whether something is real or fake." By the words "real" and "fake," Danna refers not to the arbitrary concept of "authenticity" but rather to the emotional connections human beings have to music-making. Here, the sense of what is "real" is the feeling of the person behind the music, the performer, responding to the other individuals involved whereas "fake" is the sense of disconnect between sounds and the people making them.

For example, Danna specifically incorporated the vocal texture of a girls' choir to the score to embody the young girl character of Parvana. He commented that

> This is a story about a little girl; we wanted to have girls voices, and girls voices that were about the same age as the character of Parvana. That was a really emotionally rich thing that we were able to use in the score. And the girls were in the middle of Ramadan so they were quite hungry and some asked if they could sit down--as you know they can't eat during the day. And so while they were singing some of them would sit down so their voices are definitely human. They're cute and very real so we were able to use that in the story and I think it really adds something important and emotional and real.[177]

Most of the choral singing appears in tracks focusing on Parvana, as per Danna's emphasis on the lived in, "real" aspect that live choir performance lent the score. This vocal texture acts similarly to the common Hollywood scoring technique of the leitmotif in that the choir represents the character of Parvana. One example is the track "Parvana Cuts Her Hair." This score cue is used during the penultimate moment where Parvana decides to disguise herself as a boy and cuts her long hair. As the scene shows a timelapse from night to day, the cue begins with a slow plucked oud underscored by slow orchestral strings playing key notes of the oud's melody. As Parvana takes up the scissors and cuts the first lock of hair, bowed *rabab* melody takes over the solo while the plucked

177 Mychael Danna, interview with author, February 14, 2020.

timbres move to background accompaniment. As the *rabab* begins to ornament the melodic line when Parvana's sister offers to help, the girl's choir softly vocalizes the main notes underneath the bowed solo texture. The soft, sliding microtonal changes in the melody imitate the falling locks of hair and the girl's choir steadily becomes more prominent as Parvana's "new" face is revealed. This scene highlights how Danna's collaboration with the Nahid Women's Choir embeds their musical sound into the character of Parvana and her narrative as an Afghan girl despite her disguise.

Considering my previous discussion of film score's narrative properties and effects on the human psyche, the emotion and realness of the film score that Danna talks about shows just how impactful the score is for both Western and non-Western audiences. He was aware of the "real world" side of this film--the perspectives of people's lives in a real time in history--that would set it apart from other animated, fantastical films so that the score also focused on this "real world" side with the music.[178] In my interview with Danna, he mentioned that

> That's always really something that's meaningful to me; that we were able to respect the sound of the music, the cultural fingerprint, enough to make people feel very at home with it. Unfortunately, the reality of the situation is that most Western audiences don't really know the difference--certainly not on the surface. This is something that I truly believe that audiences can hear even the most uneducated viewer or listener can always sense the truth, sense whether something is real or fake. And so I would maintain that the dumbass composer that uses a tabla for an Arab setting, that even the most ignorant audience can sense that that's not right. And I hope that's true. I know that audiences can really

178 "The biggest difference between this movie and other animated movies we've worked on was the "real world" side of the music. We really approached the "real world" side of music like any dramatic feature. It wasn't cartoony in any sense, there was something very prosaic. We tried to represent the hardships and struggles of Parvana's somewhat bleak existence there." Marine Wong Kwok Chuen, "Scoring The Breadwinner: The Sound of Parvana with Jeff and Mychael Danna," *Score It Magazine*, June 6, 2018, magazine.scoreit.org/scoring-the- breadwinner-the-sound-of-parvana-with-jeff-and-mychael-danna/.

> really respond to true stories and respond to the more plain fact of art that the more truly personal it is, then the more universally it is meaningful.[179]

Interestingly, I could not find the names of the performers anywhere, including the soundtrack and film CD/DVD releases. All credits to the film score were attributed to Jeff and Mychael with no mention of the other collaborators involved in creating the music. It is common in Western media like film, popular music, etc. to give sole credit to the composer via copyright laws. Performers, orchestrators, and other participants in the music making and recording are often credited by studio institutions or not at all. Danna actually commented on this exclusion and said that both he and Jeff Danna fought to include the performers' names in the credits, but were ultimately powerless against the studio not allowing "assistants" to be credited. Unfortunately, this counteracts the collaborative film scoring for *The Breadwinner.* The performers were just as much a part of the music creation as Jeff and Mychael Danna's composition, but the soundtrack credits do not reflect this. Hollywood crediting norms do not make enough space for the people behind the music.

Recognizing these contributors and performers rendered the film score more transparent as a communal, cultural experience rather than one individual composer's--in this case, Mychael Danna's--perspective of what Afghan music culture sounds like. Acknowledging collaboration lifts the curtain to show the people behind the music, the music of the culture and people in the film narrative. In her NPR article "If Afghanistan Ran the Oscars, *The Breadwinner* Would Triumph," Ruchi Kumar interviews Afghan

179 Mychael Danna, interview with author, February 14, 2020.

audience members about their impressions and reactions to their first viewing of the film. Some quotes include:

> "The clothing, the food, the family atmosphere, even the cane that the grandfather carried was carved and looked just like it was from here," she [Mina Sharifi is the founder and director of Sisters 4 Sisters, a mentorship program for Afghan girls] says. "I haven't seen another film on Afghanistan that takes the time to do that." Very often, she says, movies set in Afghanistan are so badly researched that some filmmakers thought the national language was Arabic . . . "When I [Aisha Azimi, an Afghan-American studying at George Washington University] watched the film, I saw the pride in their [the audience] eyes for Afghan girls all around me. Finally we had our own stories told, from our point of view."[180]

Kumar describes the sheer joy the audiences experienced in seeing themselves reflected in the film's narrative both visually and musically. Despite the studio's lack of credit acknowledgment for the instrumentalists and technical roadblocks during the recording stages of production, Jeff and Mychael Danna's intentional collaborations with Afghan musicians still created visibility for the people behind the music.

CHAPTER 6

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

6:1 FILM SCORE IN EVERYDAY SOCIAL MUSIC PRACTICE

At this point in my research, many questions have arisen concerning the purpose of this topic and why it is even important enough to warrant discussion. At the end of the day, composers will write the music they think best fits their film commission and film directors are going to make movies in whatever processes and angles they see fit. I am not in any position to make authoritative claims about artistic film scoring choices or

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180 Ruchi Kumar, "If Afghanistan Ran The Oscars, 'The Breadwinner' Would Triumph," *NPR*, March 3, 2018. www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/03/03/590215035/if-afghanistan-ran-the-oscars-the-breadwinner-would-triumph.

ethnic music representations in the film industry, so why is this discussion important? What impact do these film scores have on film viewership, music transtextuality, or culturally associated sounds? By understanding the impacts these film scores have had on their source demographics and the examples of audience responses I analyzed previously we can see that there are a lot of social implications for different musics' use in film. Anahid Kassabian writes in *Hearing Film* that ''classical Hollywood film music is a semiotic code, and that it can and should be subjected to various semiotic and cultural studies methods, such as discourse analysis and ideology critique."[181] From this angle, there is much cultural meaning behind the music used in film and how they convey place and narrative. Mark Brownrigg's research in film music argues that film music genres are defining factors of film genre as a whole; genres like horror, romance, and thriller have specific musical syntax which characterize the storytelling elements unique to themselves.[182] This syntax dictates the ways audiences internalize abstract concepts like place, identity, ethnicity, and personhood that film score assists in representing, since film scores are "neither written nor received in splendid isolation, but are as conventionalized as any other aspects of genre in film."[183] The very nature of film scores' narrative functions determines the importance of understanding the narratives it conveys and what it means for the audiences that consume them. I have already shown a variety of

181 Anahid Kassabian, *Hearing Film : Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 36.

182 Mark Brownrigg, "Hearing Place: Film Music, Geography and Ethnicity," *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, 3, no. 3, (2007): 307–323.

183 Mark Brownrigg, "Film Music and Film Genre," 246.

audience responses to various film score approaches in my four case studies; the Chinese audiences' negative reception of *Mulan*'s ethnic portrayal versus their general enthusiasm for *Kung Fu Panda*, Black and Afghani audiences pleased by the efforts that went into ethnic representation in *The Breadwinner* and *Black Panther*, and Pacific Islanders acknowledging Disney's successes and shortcomings in *Moana*'s representations of Oceanic cultures.

For the purposes of this thesis, I view my case studies, their receptions, and everyday uses of Hollywood film scores as aspects of social practice. By this, I refer to Thomas A. Regelski's definition of music as "a social construction serving endless social functions, and it is 'appreciated' when it is used in connection with these functions."[184] Elizabeth Shove, Mika Pantzar, and Matt Watson state that "the reproduction and transformation of social practices has implications for patterns of consumption and for institutions and infrastructures associated with them.[185] This means that music social practices--radio channels, movie theaters, music education, concerts, etc.--indicate how different corporations, businesses, and marketing within societies adapt to consumer bases and how consumers change their musical preferences based on what is available. François Delalande takes social practice even further in his article "The Technological Era of 'Sound': A Challenge for Musicology and a New Range of Social Practices," saying that

184 Thomas A. Regelski, "Curriculum Reform: Reclaiming 'Music' as Social Praxis," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 8, no. 1 (2009), 66-84.

185 Elizabeth Shove, Mika Pantzar, and Matt Watson, *The Dynamics of Social Practice: Everyday Life and how it Changes.* (London: SAGE, 2012).

> A practice, as a block or pattern, consists of interdependencies between diverse elements including 'forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, "things" and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.

Here, Delalande examines the more cognitive aspects of music social practice as activities and mental processes that go into assigning roles and meanings to music. The combination of these activities and processes within musical interactions between people, musicians, and music consumption generates a "horizontal system . . . a social system based on exchange, poles apart from the commercial system."[186] Delalande argues that while there is often a disconnect between performer and consumer, a vertical social system, recent technologies and social shifts have made way for a horizontal system of social engagement with music, meaning that individuals are making connections with musicians and other listeners through music consumption via technological accessibility.

The various ways music is generated, distributed, participated in, and consumed are all practices of this social construction. For this reason, looking at how film music permeates everyday life is essential in understanding how it acts as a vehicle for visibility. Moving beyond social interactions to social structures, areas like education, politics, publication, and many others provide ideas for movie plots and other visual medias to explore, which then puts those ideas back out into cultural spheres as a representation of how societies think and function.[187] Films like *Fight Club* and *The Dark*

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186 François Delalande, "The Technological Era of 'Sound': A Challenge for Musicology and a New Range of Social Practices," *Organised Sound : An International Journal of Music Technology* 12, no. 3, (2007), 251–258.

187 Karina Aveyard and Albert Moran, *Watching Films: New Perspectives on Movie-Going, Exhibition and Reception*, (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2013), 372. "What is beyond doubt is that our engagement with the modern media is inherently a social practice, one that links us practically and symbolically – if not always physically – with others." See this source for more on film as social practice.

Knight, while fictional, pose social commentary on themes of justice, toxic masculinity, sacrifice, and morality--themes very relevant to politics, cultural hierarchies, philosophy, and other concepts that we encounter in our societies.[188] These are a handful of examples, but film has long been viewed as a form of social practice and representation of culture and history.[189] Thus, considering the narrative and representative roles that music plays in cinematic media, film scores also contribute to the representations of societal issues and cultural phenomena in film.

To review, in chapter 2 I examined the narrative properties in film score and the psychological connections between visual and musical art. Sui-Lam Tan's music psychology research and Mark Slobin's idea of transtextuality explain how various musical sounds become embedded in collective cultural unconscious through visual association. In her article "Understanding Musical Soundtracks," Annabel J. Cohen looks further at the connections between film music and psychological reaction. She writes that film score is very popular, in part due to the chances for listeners to re-experience their enjoyment and memory of a film.[190] She affirms the theory of associationism, meaning that "associations generated by music influence the interpretations of the subject." In this chapter, I examine three aspects of commonplace musical social practice--audio

188 Brian Gallagher, "10 Great Social Commentary Movies That Reflect Contemporary Society," *Taste of Cinema – Movie Reviews and Classic Movie Lists*, August 21, 2017, accessed August 26, 2020, http://www.tasteofcinema.com/2017/10-great-social- commentary-movies-that-reflect-contemporary-society/2/.

189 For more on film as a social practice within cultures, see Aveyard and Moran, *Watching Films*, 2013, and Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

190 Annabel J. Cohen, "Understanding Musical Soundtracks," *Empirical Studies of the Arts* 8, no. 2 (1990), 111–24.

streaming platforms, consumable merchandise, and music education curriculum--to see the possibilities of film music associations transferring into everyday experiences.

Audio streaming platforms like Spotify, iTunes, and YouTube provide a significant portion of the music that people consume every day. According to Statistica.com, the highest user count for a U.S. music streaming service between 2018 and 2019 was Apple Music's 49.5 million subscriber base. Consider the figure below:

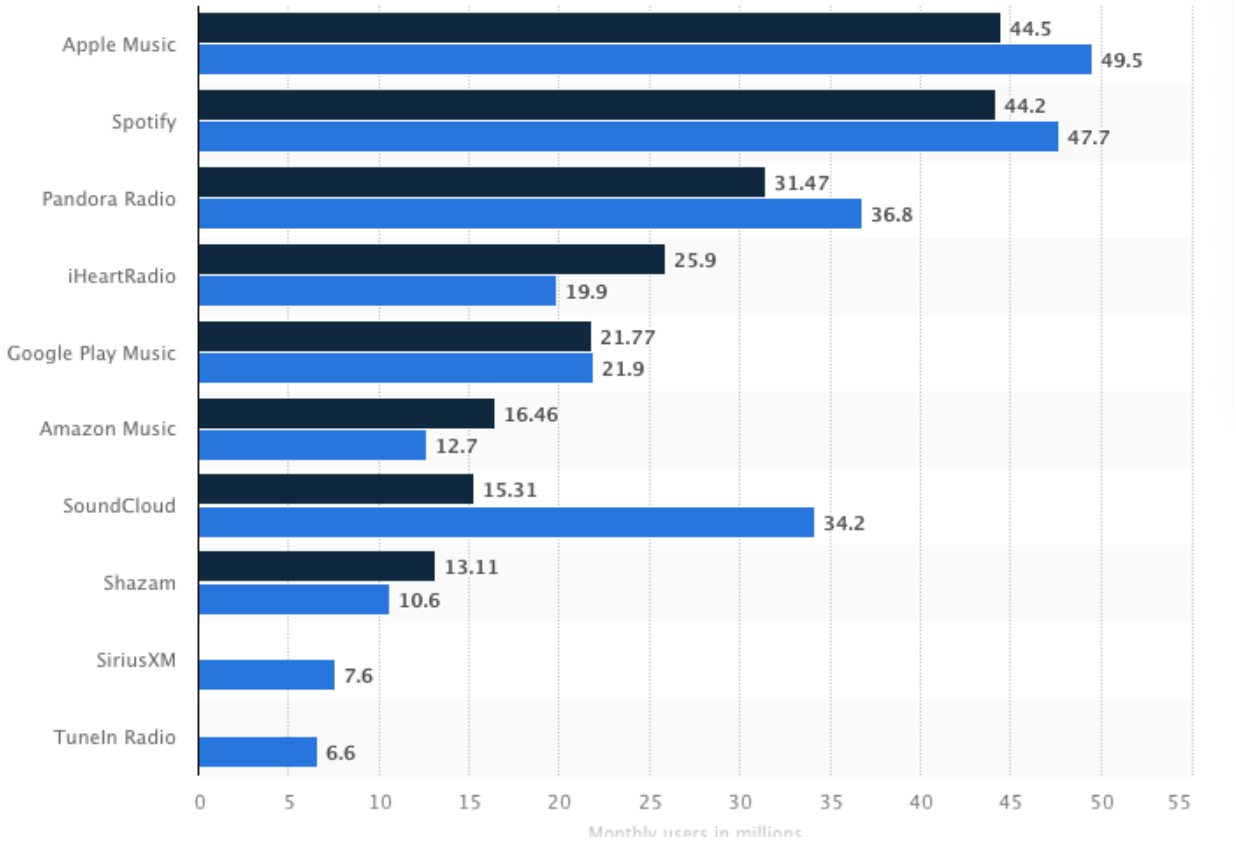
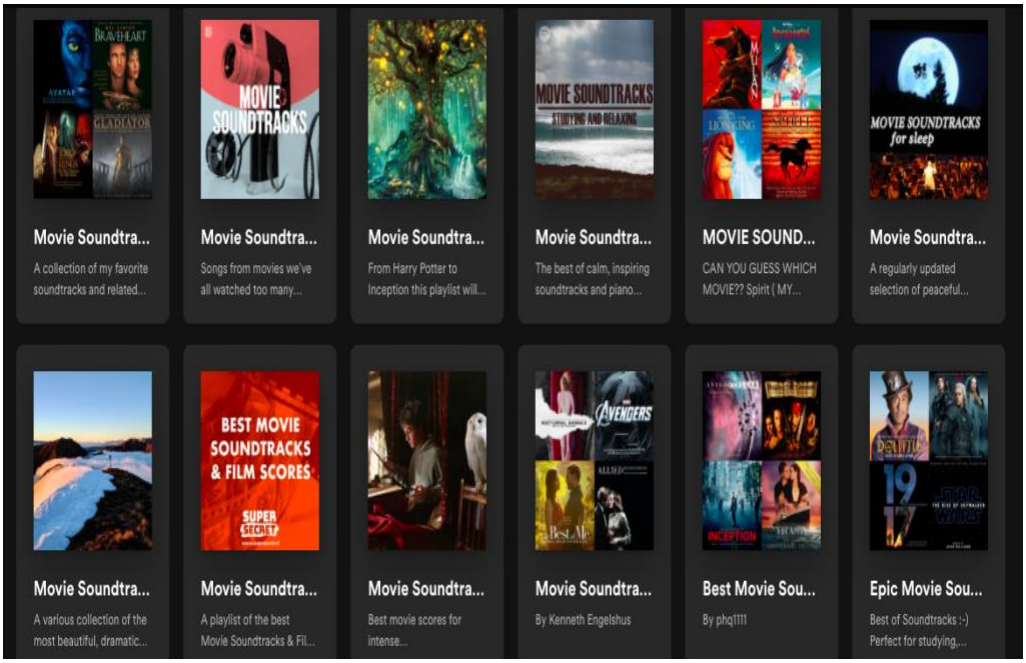
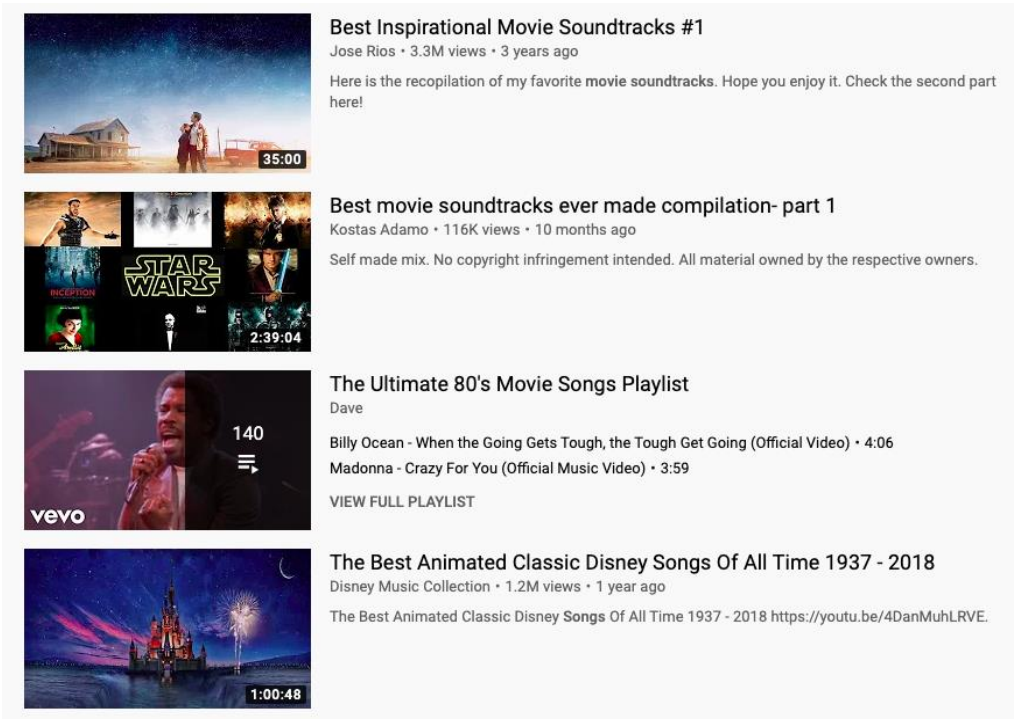


Figure 8. Graph detailing the "Most popular music streaming services in the United States in March 2018 (light blue bars) and September 2019 (dark blue bars), by monthly users," accessed from *Statistica.com*.[191]

[191] Graph accessed from *Statistica.com*, August 25, 2020, https://www.statista.com/statistics/798125/most-popular-us-music- streaming-services-ranked-by-audience/.

This chart illustrates the massive demand for music streaming services in the U.S. by a consistent consumer base. These platforms curate film music playlists based on categories like instrumentation, genre, mood, etc. that cater to different users' listening preferences.





Figures 9-10. Screenshots taken off Spotify and YouTube, accessed May 23, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=movie+soundtrack+playlists, and https://open.spotify.com/search/movie%20soundtracks/playlists.

While these examples demonstrate a widely consumed commodity, they also establish that music is more easily accessible, used, and curated than ever before, allowing for film music to have a relevant, everyday place in many consumers' lives. Spotify even has avenues for users to monetize their playlists and see a return profit for their assembling efforts. According to Steve Kim on *Playlist Push*, "Playlist owners review tracks sent to them by talented indie artists all over the world. Playlist curators make anywhere from $1-$6 USD for each track review."[192] Online music accessibility allows for everyday use of music streaming services as well as a lucrative moneymaker for both internet corporations and individual consumers. Thus, the easy accessibility and mass consumption of film scores via these platforms and playlists means that the music audiences experience in the movie theater has extended into commonplace functions and activities like Cohen discussed.

Similar to the commodity of music streaming, physical merchandise, especially children's toys, also has a marketable role in infusing film scores into everyday use. Film franchises like the Marvel Cinematic Universe, *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Harry Potter* continue to sell a variety of merchandise from apparel to toys, creating new content years after their films' releases. Children's toys from these kinds of franchises often include recorded sound clips of characters' lines or main theme music to further immerse children in the fictional world of the toys' cinematic source as seen in the figures below.

192 Steve Kim, "How to make Money from your Spotify Playlist," *Playlist Push*, July 13, 2017, Accessed August 26, 2020, https://playlistpush.com/blog/make-money-spotify-playlist/.

Figures 11-13. From left to right: Spiderman action figure, Star Wars stormtrooper action figure, and Harry Potter interactive Sorting Hat toy. Images taken from eBay, May 23, 2020.[193]

These three images are just a few examples of children's toys with included sound technology. The Spider-man action figure and Star Wars clone trooper, shown left and center, feature sound clips of their musical themes and iconic lines accessible through the push of a button, as shown on their packaging. The Harry Potter sorting hat collectible shown on the right also features embedded sound technology for iconic lines and musical themes, but functions as enhanced apparel rather than an action figure. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg in relation to the large numbers of toys and other merchandise produced with embedded sounds, but comparable to music streaming

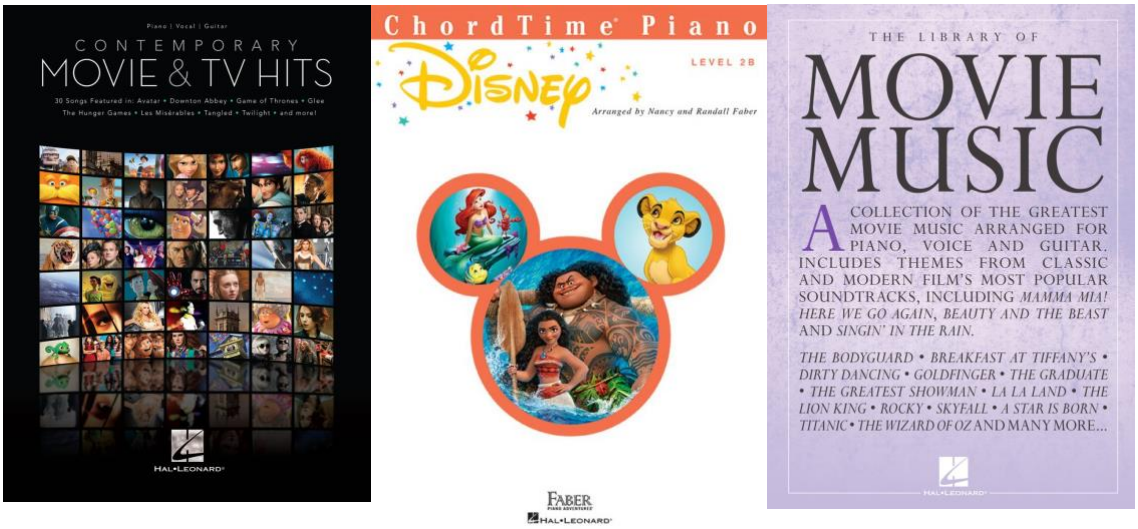
193 Images taken from eBay, accessed May 23, 2020,
https://www.google.com/aclk?sa=L&ai=DChcSEwil5eW6pMvpAhURHH0KHVEtAS8YABBEGgJwdg&sig=AOD64_2TcTEjm5zZa2C824sf3cbL3S66xA&ctype=5&q=&ved=0ahUKEwjdqOG6pMvpAhWKrJ4KHXY2DskQwzwICw&adurl=,
https://www.google.com/aclk?sa=L&ai=DChcSEwiK7NPUpcvpAhV3H60GHeimB4gYABBCGgJwdg&sig=AOD64_2aNcGOJToD8w4dLslwgkDAFPI-gQ&ctype=46&q=&ved=0ahUKEwjTwM_UpcvpAhW0PH0KHZzwAF0QwzwIWQ&adurl=
https://www.google.com/aclk?sa=L&ai=DChcSEwiyl9yFpcvpAhVvH60GHWODAHIYABAzGgJwdg&sig=AOD64_0LDJe6qnzfoZkxAfRawAvr5DikKQ&ctype=5&q=&ved=0ahUKEwiRiNiFpcvpAhXBpJ4KHWOdDUUQpysIaw&adurl=.

services, toys and other physical merchandise are another means by which film music is inserted into everyday living and use, specifically for young children. Consistent with this notion is the prediction that music which has been previously aligned with a particular experience can evoke a representation of this experience when used during the film.[194]

My third and final example combines elements of the first two: music accessibility and merchandise. Music curriculum for individual and group music classes has a significant impact on K-12 education. Researchers have long studied the impact of music education on young students and the vast amount of music curriculum and song books available surely contributes much to the research findings.[195] Cohen remarked that "it's very common for film music, especially from animated movies, to become lesson standards in children's music education books." Considering her discussion of associationism mentioned previously, these lesson standards will further embed film music into young students' growing perceptions of music in their everyday life. See images below.

194 Cohen, "Understanding Musical Soundtracks," 111–24.

195 David J. Teachout,"The impact of music education on a child's growth and development," *Sounds of Learning.* (Carlsbad, CA: International Foundation for Music Research, 2005); MENC - The National Association for Music Education, "Sounds of Learning: The Impact of Music Education," *Teaching Music*, Vol.14, 2, (2006), 62; "National Association for Music Education Names March 2020 the 35th Music in our Schools Month®: This March, Music Educators and Music Students Will be Celebrating Music Education in their Schools and Communities with Concerts and Classroom Activities that show how 'Music Changes Lives,' the Theme of the 2020 NAfME Observance of Music in our Schools Month®. the Impact of Music Education on the Lives of Students is Evident in its Social-Emotional Effect on Young People and how they Interact with the World Around them." *PR Newswire*, February 26, 2020, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/2363730608?accountid=4485.



Figures 14-17. From left to right: *Contemporary Movie & TV Hits* published by Hal Leonard, *ChordTime Piano Disney* by Faber, and *The Library of Movie Music* published by Hal Leonard.[196]

Publishing companies like Hal Leonard Corp, Faber Piano Series, Alfred Publishing and others capitalize on the easy accessibility of and demand for film score and popular music. These companies among others have been creating entire music curriculum series for young students that include Disney songs, pop music, and famous films franchises like *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter* as a way to motivate enthusiasm in young students for learning music. According to Music Trades, a data and statistics website for the music industry, Hal Leonard Corp made over two million dollars in music book sales just in 2019.[197]

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196 Images accessed from Hal Leonard Publishing and Faber Piano Adventures, May 23, 2020, https://www.halleonard.com/product/121672/contemporary-movie--tv-hits, https://pianoadventures.com/publications/chordtime-piano-disney/, https://www.halleonard.com/product/287154/the-library-of-movie-music. To see sources for movies and film score in mainstream music curriculum, see the links below:
https://www.halleonard.com/search/search.action?keywords=movies&dt=item#products
https://pianoadventures.com/browse/genres/genres-popular/
https://www.alfred.com/search/products/?query=movie.

197 "The Top 100 North American Music Companies," *Music Trades*, accessed November 15, 2020, https://www.musictrades.com/top100.html.

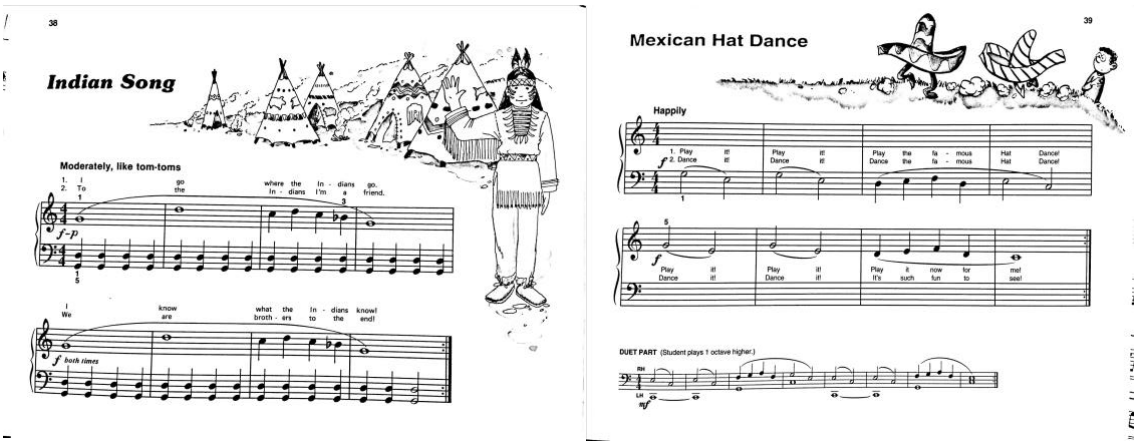
Using material that young students easily recognize from the media they experience at home and outside the classroom allows music teachers to engage students on a more personalized level. This ever-growing market for movies and popular media is directly impacting the music that children recreate in schools and at home. Thus, we can assume that the ways that film composers are creating non-Western musical narratives in film score then become the music in song books that young students enjoy and learn.

The presence of film score in music education is a significant factor of social practice because, as music education scholar Porta writes in their article "The Music That Children Listen to in Movies, Series and TV Documentaries: An Empirical Study on Its Meaning":

> The responsibility that education has in developing musical literacy as a constructor of meaning in childhood, enabling children to understand their music, ways of representation, codes, simulacra, and intentionality.[198]

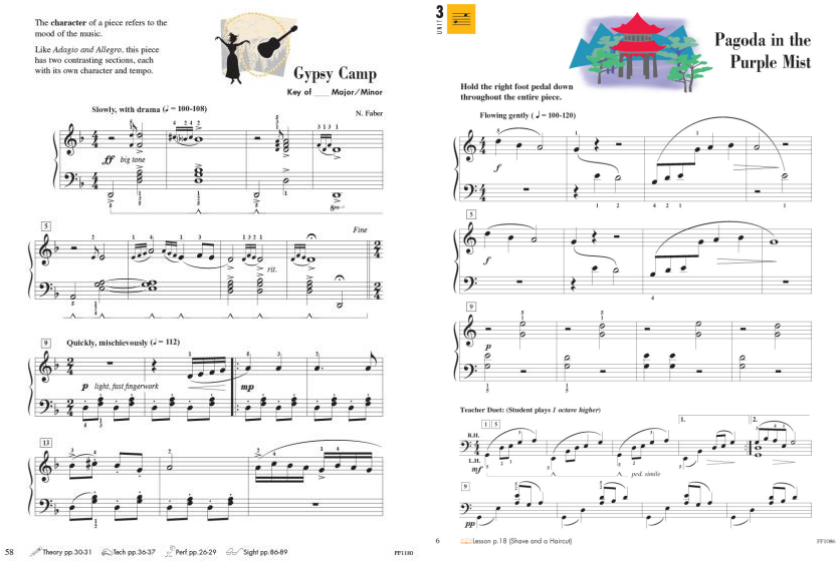
Porta is one of many scholars that acknowledge the long-lasting cultural and educational benefits that music education provides for younger generations. While a vast majority of music curriculum in the United States stems from WEAM, the addition of popular musics from film and Broadway to jazz and folk songs has made room for more "non-Western" songs into common curriculum vernacular. Consider these excerpts from Alfred's Basic and Prep Courses for piano:

198 Amparo Porta, "The Music That Children Listen to in Movies, Series and TV Documentaries: An Empirical Study on Its Meaning," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 49, no. 2, (2018), 328.



Figures 18-19. Two songs, “Indian Song” and “Mexican Hat Dance,” from Alfred Basic and Prep piano courses depicting indigenous and Mexican caricatures. [199]

Here also are some examples from Faber’s Piano Adventures:



Figures 20-21. Two songs from Faber Piano adventures series, “G*psy Camp” and “Pagoda in the Purple Mist.”[200]

199 *Alfred’s Basic Piano Prep Course for the Young Beginner*, Lesson Book Level B, (Van Nyus, CA: Alfred Publishing, 1988), 38; and *Alfred’s Basic Piano Course*, Lesson Book Level 1A, 3rd ed. (Van Nyus, CA: Alfred Publishing, 1999), 39.

200 *Faber Piano Adventures*, Lesson Book 3B, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: Dovetree, 1998), 58; and *Faber Piano Adventures*, Lesson Book 2B, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: Dovetree, 1997), 6.

While the issue of ethical music inclusion in music curriculum extends beyond the scope of my research, there are still significant ramifications of music education's role in reifying harmful stereotypes and cultural hegemony. The excerpts shown above are meant to instruct beginner and intermediate piano students in musical concepts like rhythm, ostinato, etc.

However, it is Western classical music educators who are publishing the songs meant to suggest non-Western music cultures, which means that Western classical musicality is determining what musical elements make a song "non-Western" sounding. This essentializing results in titles like "Mexican Hat Dance" and "G*psy Camp'" that conveys to students that are not familiar with these music cultures that this is what their music sounds like. Thus, in a similar manner, the film scores that become included in music curricula also define how the students perceive the narratives and identities that a film score suggests. As discussed in Chapter 4, early film music contributed to harmful racial stereotypes of marginalized peoples. With this context of film score's influences in music education curriculum, we can conclude that stereotypes in a film score would trickle down into the songbooks using that film's music; this suggests that music as a social practice in music education has a direct link to socio-political issues of race and ethnic representation. This fact alone substantiates the importance of my case studies and other such research. The influence of film scores in music curriculum shows that inclusivity and ethnic representation are serious elements to consider when writing curriculum for young students. In "Exploring the Effects of Film Music in Childhood,"

Porta mentions the benefits and values of understanding the links between film score and music education.

> ["Exploring the Effects of Film Music in Childhood"] can help to reflect on some social and educational functions of music in childhood as a form of representation of the world, provide some reasons about the value of artistic and musical expression in the curriculum, and also contribute to the awareness of film productions and their repercussions.[201]

Film music helps generate representations of the real world both through firsthand film viewing and secondhand consumption like music education. Thus, if film composers' soundtracks are inadvertently excluding or essentializing non-Western musical sounds--whether as a byproduct of simple ignorance or inexperience with non-Western musics--so will the soundtracks' representation of the real world, further distancing students and young people from those depicted cultures. Likewise, popular film scores like the ones in my case studies—scores that prioritize collaboration with source musicians and cultural gatekeepers which results in positive audience reception regarding ethnic representation--will trickle down into the music curriculum of younger generations of musicians.

Many music education scholars have also argued that teachers have a responsibility to be inclusive and aware of past harms when it comes to music curriculum. In her thesis "Latino/Hispanic Participation in Music Programs: Determinants and Recruitment," Patricia Estrada affirms this responsibility, especially since:

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201 Amparo Porta, "Explorando Los Efectos de La Música Del Cine En La Infancia." *Arte, Individuo y Sociedad,* 26, no. 1 (January 14, 2014).

> The inability of some music educators to discuss the power structures of race playing a part in the education system could perpetuate whatever conditions restrict the access/desire for minority participation in music."[202]

According to Estrada, being indifferent towards or dismissive of the responsibility of inclusivity only further perpetuates the cycle of harmful cultural influences: ethnic musical stereotypes affect Western perceptions of non-Western music which then filter into music education methods and materials which ultimately re-establishes these stereotypes of non-Western music cultures in mainstream media and cultural vernacular. Similarly, Jacqueline Kelly-McHale says in her article "Equity in Music Education: Exclusionary Practices in Music Education" that "We [teachers] need to recognize that teaching songs that ignore or sanitize a difficult part of our collective past creates a false narrative. We need to hold each other to a higher standard."[203] One can argue that Hollywood film composers also have a similar responsibility when it comes to how their music ends up representing ethnicity and various racial demographics. However, rather than focus on the many limitations preventing film composers from straying outside the scoring production norms, I focus on ways that proactive inclusivity in film scores creates space for marginalized cultures, allowing them to have visibility in the predominantly white and Western oriented art culture of Hollywood and eventually in the areas of music social practice. I now turn to my interview with music educator and archivist Jay Sand for his insights on how musical visibility influences music education, specifically the families involved.

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202 Estrada, "Latino/Hispanic Participation in Music," 21.

203 Kelly-McHale, "Equity in Music Education."

6:2 JAY SAND INTERVIEW

Based in Philadelphia, Sand has curated the online music archive *All Around This World* (AATW) for over two decades, seeking out musicians and composers from various cultures to contribute their work to the archive. I steered my questions similarly to my interview with Danna, focusing on why and how he collaborated with different people. Sand's methods of adding world musics into his educational archive share remarkable similarities to my findings in four film case studies of Chapter 5. According to the AATW website "About" page, Sand has traveled and performed music throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, and sometimes in the Middle East and South America. From 1999 to 2003, Sand learned music from African-Jewish communities on the African continent and then went on a multimedia tour in the U.S. about his experiences. He has taught African-Jewish songs to children of all ages and continued to collaborate with African Jews. Currently, he teaches world music classes for children in Philadelphia with AATW and continues to build the archive as he goes. I heard about AATW from a colleague of mine and as I looked into it more, I was particularly intrigued with Sand's ethical sourcing methodologies that allowed for an inclusive education philosophy. In the "Appropriation?" section of the "About" website page, this small excerpt describes to AATW users how and where the music they enjoy comes from:

> Though [Sand] thoughtfully adapts each song in the curriculum specifically so it will most effectively reach young children, at no point does he claim that the original songs are his own. When the original song has a known author or publisher, [Sand] has gone to great lengths to locate, credit and compensate the composer/ publisher. And, as a note on the respectful sharing of funds the music generates, [Sand] is embarrassingly far away from recouping his investment in paying licensing fees and recording *All Around This World*'s studio CDs. When

> the original song is traditional, [Sand] endeavors to provide as much context for the music so his students will be able to appreciate the importance of the work.[204]

This short description shares so many similarities to the collaborations I researched for the four case studies that I reached out to Sand for an interview to learn about his perspectives as an educator striving for proactive inclusivity.

Firstly, Sand stated that bringing the world's musics into the music classroom is an ethical responsibility of teachers. Although he does not focus on film score specifically, his philosophies about inclusivity and music as everyday vernacular informs music educators about the importance of music as a form of social practice. When finding new music, Sand focuses on simple folk tunes or children's songs from various places since *All Around This World* is meant to aid music teachers of young students. When he finds a new tune, he first assesses if the tune can fit the musical capacities of the age groups he teaches, usually young toddlers to 8-10 year olds. If it is a tune that children can easily interact with and fits into the lesson plan's goals, Sand then takes the next steps of locating the tune's source; this step usually includes researching and contacting composers, music culture gatekeepers, indigenous nations, record labels, publishing companies, and more. These methods of music sourcing are collaborative in a manner similar to the film score productions in Chapter 5's case studies with foci ranging from transcription and notation to lyrical pronunciations and instrumental effects. One of Sand's main philosophies about the AATW archive is creating appreciation through

204 Jay Sand, *All Around This World*, accessed February 20, 2020, https://www.allaroundthisworld.com/appopriation/.

inclusion for the many rich music traditions the world contains, a feeling akin to the film composers previously discussed in Chapter 5.

This next step was the second similarity I found between Sand's work and my case studies was in the approaches to incorporating non-Western music. I discussed previously how Danna talked about his belief that every music culture deserves equal respect when it comes to compensation and understanding cultural meanings for musical sounds. Ludwig Göransson often mentions in interviews how he knew he must study African musics with African musicians for *Black Panther*. Disney delegated the *Moana* production crew to extensive research in the preliminary stages of *Moana*'s film development. The prioritizing of indigenous and non-Western voices in the process of including their musics is a defining factor of how these films are viewed as cultural representation.

Sand also tries to find the original composers or music communities of the songs he finds for his archive. While not every folk song he finds can always be traced back to the original composer--oftentimes, a song is culturally ingrained over centuries of use or multiple variations of the same tune may exist--he still looks for the people behind the music, the communities the songs came from, to ask permission/compensate for using a song or tune. Many times, this means that Sand contacts a specific community, composer, ensemble, or band within a given music tradition; other times, he cannot get any further than a record label or museum source, which he views as more troublesome since he cannot see past these gatekeepers to know if his accreditation and compensation are going to the people behind the music. Despite these logistical limitations, Sand

demonstrates that his archival methodology of detailed research plus ethical compensation is a powerful way to give visibility to many music traditions that are often excluded from Western music education.

Branching out further, I also asked how Sand sees other music educators and music curriculum producers handling musical inclusivity. He affirms that while there has been progress--easier technological accessibility allows people to interact with other music cultures--there are still limitations that often hinder proactive inclusiveness. Time, resources, complex ethics, and fear of appropriation are common hindrances when creating and using music curricula that include non-Western musics. However, despite these limitations, Jay argues that "we as music educators have no excuse to not be inclusive, there's so much more music out there."[205] Accessibility to internet databases, streaming services like Netflix and YouTube, and the ability to post reviews are exposing more and more people to other cultures and cross-cultural interactions since "getting to acknowledge art in popular culture is a functional way to interact with many cultures."[206] These advancements are creating more opportunities for non-Western music to be added to the vernacular of music education and media. Sand's music educator perspective helps establish that music education carries great potential for creating inclusive music making environments and visibility for overlooked or marginalized peoples' musics.

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205 Jay Sand (music archivist and educator) in discussion with the author, February 10, 2020.

206 Jay Sand (music archivist and educator) in discussion with the author, February 10, 2020. Reviews and testimonials on the AATW website convey that parents and students enjoy the classes that Sand offers with the archive. For more, see https://www.allaroundthisworld.com/.

My previous contextualizing of film scores in various areas of music social practice implies that proactive inclusivity in film scoring and music education will have positive impacts on music consumers and students in the same way that AATW has.[207] Thus, examining musical transtextuality in how my four case studies' film scores factor into these areas of cultural consumption is an important step in assessing how the inclusive intentions of the film scoring collaborations create space and visibility in a variety of contexts beyond just film. In each case study, I examined a mix of positive and negative audience responses to the film scores, showing how the worldwide impact of these film scores has started discussions around the collaborative work of both composers and source musicians. The visibility that these music cultures--pan-Polynesia, Afghan, Chinese, and Senegalese/pan-African--and their respective performers experienced from being included in high-profile film projects resulted in increased recognition of these musics through audience reception, internet discourse, and the above-mentioned examples of film score's influences on everyday life.

Furthermore, as these film scores circulate through the various areas of music consumption mentioned above, the sounds are being further embedded into cultural associations of music. Children hearing T'Challa's talking drum theme from a *Black Panther* action figure, watching a YouTube piano tutorial for Oogway's Legacy from *Kung Fu Panda*, or seeing *Moana*'s How Far I'll Go in a music book are extents of the collaborative efforts of the music's creators. As mentioned in Chapter 2 about how music has culturally established associations through film, the visibility these film scores have

[207] For more on the marketing and consumption of film score, see Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, 24-44.

received will contribute their versions as representations of pan-Oceanic, Chinese, Afghan, and West-African sounds becoming recognizable cinematic music styles. Ultimately, the collaborative scoring process of these films made spaces for non-Western musics within Western film and music media, allowing them to be seen.

6:3 THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SEEN

Understanding the relationships between film music, collaboration, and social constructs now points to another major part of the "why" question: representation and inclusivity. Technological advancements and globalization have added even more layers to understanding societies and cultures as we now live in a world where different communities, religions, and traditions are encountering each other more than ever. It is only natural that essentialization between global cultural interactions occurs; much ethnomusicological theory argues that the insider/outsider effect impacts how different ethnicities perceive each other.[208] Stereotypes and essentializations--like assigning inappropriate drum rhythms to indigenous characters or exaggerated accents for black characters in film scores--shows how the insider/outsider effect can shape a person's or culture's perception of themselves and others; these stereotypes can either harm or benefit the identities placed on individuals or cultures and the ones they place on themselves. However, considering the ease of communication through technology and many social movements augmented by global news coverage, individuals often have the choice between purposeful ignorance of the world around them or intentional self-

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208 For more on insider-outsider, or emic-etic, theory in ethnomusicology, see the following:
Frank Alvarez-Pereyre, and Simha Arom, "Ethnomusicology and the Emic/Etic Issue," *The World of Music* 35, no. 1 (1993): 7-33.

education. Simple Google searches or YouTube videos are gateways for individuals to perceive the rest of the world and learn about experiences outside their own. At this point, my arguments here transcend just film composers and even music educators, but all individuals engaging with music. In his chapter for *Shadows in the Field*, William Noll describes the positionality of people engaging with a tradition, even those of that tradition.

> Rather than there being insider and outsider ways of knowing, all who place themselves "in front of" a tradition use the hermeneutic arc to move from pre-understandings to explanation to new understandings. Even an insider faced with a particular cultural work or performance may not interpret it in the same way as the insider who produced it and was "behind" it. In other words, not just scholars follow this hermeneutical arc. All individuals operating within tradition continually reappropriate their cultural practices, give them new meanings, and in that process create a continually evolving sense of self, of identity, of community, and of "being in the world."[209]

As Noll pointed out, any person engaging with a musical tradition will have both their own experience as well as seeing or hearing the perceptions of others informing their own perceptions of what music is or is not. That being said, rather than debating "insider versus outsider" perspectives, I agree with Noll's assertion that

> Such binary models are limiting in nature and tied to specific parameters. They are also negative in that they force a narrow interpretation prescribed by the very terms used in the analysis. Although one can discuss such limits as part of the normal function of language; as a necessary result of an interpretation, semiotic codes, or theory; or as a kind of shorthand that provides a broad comparative basis for discussion, neither this "normality" nor this need for discussion changes the fact that binary oppositions cannot reflect the complexities of the social and musical world of most people.[210]

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209 Noll, "Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience," 117.

210 Noll, "Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience," 174.

So then, when examining the different methods film scores use to include non-Western music, sticking to a binary of "authentic" versus "inauthentic," insider versus outsider, limits discussion to generalizations, the very problem that Estrada and Kelly-McHale point out. This is the reason I examined multiple social aspects of music engagement in my case studies: collaborative processes, positive and negative audience reception, and critical reviews.

For additional academic expertise and reinforcement for this focus on cultural representation and inclusivity in film scores, I sought Dr. Nilanjana Bhattacharjya, a film music scholar and lecturer at the Barrett's Honors College of Arizona State University. Her research in film music added some academic support for the importance of representation and inclusion in media. While Bhattacharjya's research area is primarily in Indian and Hindi film, there are similarities between that film industry and Hollywood: how music in film provides narrative and identity for the characters or viewers and also how dominant cultural and political climates directly shape how media reflects said climates and vice versa.

In her article, "Popular Hindi Film Song Sequences Set in the Indian Diaspora and the Negotiating of Indian Identity," Bhattacharjya discusses the effect of song sequences in Indian film on diasporic cultural identity.[211] She writes:

> While the song sequence may in fact delay the "action" or not even take place in reality, the song sequence's insertion into the film invariably affects the viewer's sense of space and time. The song sequence directly affects Hindi films' ability to bridge the spatial gap between locations in India and diasporic locations. As the

[211] Song sequences are intermittent song and dance numbers throughout an Indian film that are often not attached to the film's overarching plot. These are such a common feature of Indian film that these sequences are a stereotype of the Indian film industry.

> song sequence blurs the distinctions between Indian and diasporic space, it inevitably blurs the cultural identity of the characters featured within them. Thus the film sequence plays an integral role in establishing that characters based in the diaspora hold authentic Indian cultural identities. Establishing that diasporic citizens hold an authentic Indian cultural identity in turn facilitates the diasporic citizen's adoption into the Indian nation.[212]

Here, Bhattacharjya acknowledges film music's narrative properties which define the cultural and ethnic identities present in the film's characters and story. As I discussed in previous chapters, Hollywood film music also establishes cultural and ethnic identity through music. One example is the "superhero" sound I discussed previously when looking at culturally and psychologically embedded music associations. Also, as seen in the case studies I previously examined, films like *Moana*, *Kung Fu Panda 3*, *The Breadwinner*, and *Black Panther* have film scores that establish cultural and ethnic identities, though these are sometimes ambiguous as to which specific cultures and ethnicities. Western film scoring styles are by no means the same as Indian film song sequences, but the end result of "being seen" is very similar.

The second similarity between Bhattacharjya's research in Hindi film and Hollywood is how dominant cultural and political climates directly shape how media reflects these climates and vice versa. In my interview with Bhattacharjya, she mentions how the presence of minorities in media waxes and wanes depending on current political climates and, as she describes, "who is behind the helm" of the commercial film industry. She gave a few examples of cultural stereotypes and political influence in film, such as Muslim characters associated with poetry or patriotic songs symbolizing Hindu

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212 Nilanjana Bhattacharjya, "Popular Hindi Film Song Sequences Set in the Indian Diaspora and the Negotiating of Indian Identity," *Asian Music* 40, no. 1 (2009), 53-82.

nationalism, which then in turn influenced audiences and later films. This creates a cyclical interchange between society and media that often excludes minorities and less-dominant societal voices. Bhattacharjya remarked that

> There is a reason why film music is really bad [for representation] right now is because a lot of it has been so homogenized and a lot of it is due to the erasure of these different kinds of traditions [minority musics] that used to make things more interesting.[213]

Western cultures and Hollywood definitely have different cultural and political environments than Bollywood and Hindi film, but the interchange, the music transtextuality, between these environments and media music works in the same way.[214] Some examples within Hollywood are musical portrayals of indigenous and communities of color in 20th century film: Disney's *Dumbo*, *Peter Pan*, and *Pocahontas*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Gone with the Wind*, classic Shirley Temple period films, and others. Their musical narratives, as I discussed previously in chapter three, are built on decades of music transtextualities from Western, often uninformed, assumptions of what non-Western music cultures sound like, indirectly presenting to societies what those societies look and sound like. Therefore, representations of the various communities, cultures, and musics in media can show either an essentialized or inclusive portrayal of communities and cultures, just as Bhattacharjya pointed out about Indian film. One of her closing statements in the interview was very poignant in that she is

> Just trying to get people to think more about the possibilities of media being something that is able to actually represent people and include people as opposed

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213 Bhattacharjya, in interview with author, March 24, 2020.

214 Slobin, *Global Soundtracks*, 28.

> to marginalize and further erase. It's basic, but it is something that a lot of people need to be reminded of.[215]

Bhattacharjya is referring here to the soft power that media music has in establishing musical stereotypes that often marginalizes minority demographics to a handful of traits. She affirms that this soft power can and should be used to create visibility of these demographics in mainstream media culture.

Through collaboration between composers, performers, music culture sharers, etc., film scores have the potential to show the people behind the music to the people of that music. As seen in my section on *Black Panther*, Ludwig Göransson's collaboration with Baaba Maal and Senegalese musicians created space for African and Black American audiences to see themselves and their Black identities in the film both visually and aurally. While Göransson is not Black American or African, and a large portion of the composing and recording process involved white musicians and technicians, the purposeful involvement of Senegalese musicians and their knowledge draws direct attention to the film's ethnic narrative. Likewise, Moana's music crew, Jeff and Mychael Danna, and Zimmer all contributed to creating space for underrepresented music cultures in their film scores by prioritizing the people of those cultures.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Wrapping up this thesis without any loose ends is not really possible given the vast differences between cultures, ethnicities, and film industries that generate music and

215 Bhattacharjya, in interview with author, March 24, 2020.

media content. There are still unanswered questions and areas of discussion that exceed the scope of this thesis and will have to be continued in further research and publications.

I experienced my own limitations in presenting common issues prevalent in ethnomusicology as a field, specifically the postcolonial theory as well as widespread assumptions of white supremacy that Western academic research methods stem from.[216] As a white identifying person, I acknowledge that the privileges that go with whiteness prevent me from making executive claims about what is or is not inclusive, what is or is not a better way of scoring non-Western music for film over another, or what is or is not cultural appropriation. The film scores, composers, and musicians I researched are also part of the Western Hollywood industry, further limiting the perspectives on musical influence and audience responses to Western interpretations.

While the limitations in research I have mentioned can often hinder the authors' ability to remain unbiased or neutral, I see them as quite necessary for my arguments. Since I have noted that most inclusivity in Hollywood film scores is determined by Western, often white composers, then it is fitting that I examine white Western film composers and how they work around established industry norms to prioritize musical inclusivity, whether if it is through relying on culturally associated sound from previous films or if it is by seeking outside sources and collaboration. Limitations provide context for how and why a tradition or process has been the norm, but progressing the research forward requires self-awareness on the part of the researcher. Thus, I actively included

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216 Philip Ewell, "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame," *Music Theory Online* 26.2 (September 2020); and Danielle Brown, "An Open Letter on Racism in Music Studies Especially Ethnomusicology and Music Education," *My People Tell Stories*, June 12, 2020, https://www.mypeopletellstories.com/blog/open-letter.

discussion and questioning of various limitations throughout my research: how do non-Western audiences respond to a film score compared to Western ones? How do non-Western musicians and collaborators view a film score as representative of their culture? Are these musicians and collaborators being compensated and credited comparable to Western musicians and collaborators? This focus allowed me to maintain a reflexive ethnography in which I remain self-aware of limitations and my own experience as an informant for this project.

7:1 RE-EXAMINING ETHICS AND THEORY

As I discussed in chapter 3, many leftover colonialist-based social structures have directly shaped how social practices like music making and cinema soundscapes created essentializations and culturally embedded musical associations. The concept of authenticity in music culture studies can be quite difficult to navigate considering how, due to what musicologists and other scholars call "globalizing cultures," music traditions are constantly influencing each other and evolving with community needs. I addressed this in each of my film score case studies and stated that pressing for "authenticity" limits not only our evaluation of these film scores' cultural impact but also our perspectives of non-Western music styles in Western formats as a whole. Searching for "authenticity" can prevent us from seeing "what is," and in the case of my research here, "what is" is the music hybridity that comes from collaborative film composition across cultural divides.

The concept of musical hybridity shares similarities with Mantle Hood's term *bimusicality*, which explains the phenomenon of being able to understand and even

perform two separate musical languages.[217] Film scores that showcase other music traditions within the Western Hollywood musical system give visibility to these traditions within mainstream media audiences; however, this is not enough to engrain these other traditions as a dominant musical language along Western classical styles. Considering my analysis of how each of my case studies resulted in a hybridity of musical concepts across cultural divides--timbral pairings between Western orchestral instruments and the Chinese and Afghan instruments in *Kung Fu Panda 3* and *The Breadwinner*, ancestral songs and the Disney musical formula in *Moana*, *Black Panther*'s fusion of Black-coded musics from multiple cultures--the term intermusicality better encapsulates that hybrid relationship between cultures within media music. O'Flynn defines intermusicality as "an understanding of multiple practices and conceptions of music within an integrated experiential plane, and suggests a way forward for the development of music [cultures] that are at once pluralistic and dialogic."[218] In a film score with two or more music traditions at work with histories of cross-cultural influencing, audiences experience first and foremost the hybridity of these musics: the timbral or melodic similarities they share that make them aurally accessible, the contrasts that distinguish each tradition from the other as pre-existing musical system, and combinations of these that generates a new look at both traditions. In the same way that 3D viewing glasses have a separate colored lens

217 Mantle Hood, "The Challenge of 'Bi-Musicality'," *Ethnomusicology* 4, no. 2 (May 1, 1960), 55–59.

218 John O'Flynn, "Re-Appraising Ideas of Musicality in Intercultural Contexts of Music Education," *International Journal of Music Education* 23, no. 3 (December 2005), 199; and Ingrid T. Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

on each side that, when worn, produces an almost tangible view of the subject, so does hybridity in film scores give audiences an intersectional view of the musics used.

The result of these hybrid relationships and intermusicality is what I think of as dialogic social musicality: the continual evolution of societies' music cultures from transnational influences and globalization is present in media musics and these musics contain the soft power to generate dialogic consumption from film audiences and media consumers. The audience responses I analyzed show that discourse involving social movements, ethnic and racial representation, and inclusivity discourse responds to the proactive inclusion of non-White, non-Western musicians in film score production. Dialogic social musicality is important for multiple reasons, namely that "the development of our musical selves is conditioned by our social and cultural experiences."[219] Having visibility of one's culture in media musics goes on to condition and shape one's musical self in relation to mainstream and localized musicality. And while, as media scholar Elfriede Fürsich writes, "the representation of Others has been tied up in long-established signifying practices that are slow to change because of systemic media constraints" (such as film production deadlines, slim production budgets, global communication complications, or marketing strategies), these four recent film scores show that composers are eager and musicians willing to collaborate on artistic projects which are then shifting cultural perceptions of Otherness in film scores.[220]

219 O'Flynn, "Re-Appraising Ideas of Musicality," 191.

220 Elfriede Fürsich, "Media and the Representation of Others," *International Social Science Journal* 61, 199 (2010), 127.

Dialogic social musicality also brings about new forms of creativity in music composition and communal music making. In their master's thesis, Hyunju Park writes that "the process of hybridity is not one of absolute free choice but one of constant compromise between what might be desired creatively and what will be accepted commercially."[221] The various demands of the film industry regarding time constraints, finances, and accessibility have a large sway in what film composers can create, but that also means that time-saving alternatives like virtual streaming and recording give film composers ways to source other music styles within industry constraints. While research on hybridity in music traditions has only recently shifted from general implications of "lacking authenticity" or being "influenced only by the 'lowest' forms of Western music, recent observations note that by "moving beyond traditional moving beyond simple understandings of hybridity as musical cultures in contact that result in 'new' musical expressions we move towards politically articulated readings of social relations and creative processes."[222] If I were to focus my analyses in this thesis to evaluate "authentic" or "real" representation in each film score, any new avenues of creative music-making relevant to today's media culture would have been pushed to the wayside in a similar manner to social structures that push marginalized voices to the periphery of social

221 Hyunju Park, "Globalization, Local Identity and World Music: The Case of Korean Popular Music," Master's thesis (Strathclyde University, 1998).

222 David G. Hebert, "Cultural Translation and Musical Innovation: A Theoretical Model with Examples from Japan," from *International Perspectives on Translation, Education and Innovation in Japanese and Korean Societies*, (Springer International Publishing AG; 2018); David G. Hebert & Mikolaj Rykowski (Eds.), *Music Glocalization: Heritage and Innovation in a Digital Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2018); and Tina K. Ramnarine, "Musical Performance in the Diaspora: Introduction," *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 16, no. 1, (2007), 7.

dialogue. Fortunately, ethnomusicological and popular music studies of recent years have determined that

> Hybridity [in music] has been reinflected by popular music scholars as a new form of authenticity…These writers suggest that music in an era of globalization powerfully affirms the syncretic nature of contemporary cultural identity… In contrast with ethnomusicology's former object of study—"traditional musics"—it is diasporic music that has moved to the center of attention."[223]

In addition to different ethnic demographics engaging with these case study films as representations of themselves, this "new authenticity"--hybridity and dialogic social musicality-- are both similar concepts that we can see at work in these four films of the 2010's decade.

This current focus on diasporic musics, as I discussed in chapter 4, is connected to recent socio-political movements about cultural and racial identity within dominant culture structures. The visibility that world musics have through their involvement in film scores as seen in my case studies also contributes to what media scholar Shani Orgad calls the "global imagination." They write that media facilitates this "global imagination" as the force that crosses the boundaries of culture and distance, allowing social relations to exist across time and space, allowing world societies to become a "global village" and view each other as part of an "imagined community."[224] What Orgad is describing is the power that media has in conveying the everydayness, the lived-in-ness, of the world's societies in order to build connections based on relatability. For musics used in film

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[223]Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, eds., *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 22 and 30.

[224] Shani Orgad, *Media Representation and the Global Imagination* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), 50-51.

scores, this "global imagination" allows for audiences to indirectly experience those musics almost on the same familiar level as their own. The "global imagination" that enables societies to view each other on equal footing is similar to what social scientist Clive Barnett defines as a "democratic space" between media, everyday cultural practices, and forms of political action.[225] In summary, the music that film composers and their collaborators produce is both informed by and contributes to this interlocking web of socio-political and cultural phenomena.

7:2 SUMMARIZING THIS DISCUSSION'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Many ethnomusicologists' work addresses issues of social responsibilities and efforts to move past colonialism within the field.[226] Because of the many cyclical ties between mainstream media musics and social music practices, it is vital to understand more parts of the creative machine that puts new musical narratives out into popular culture. Collaborative methods between film composers and source musicians demonstrate how inclusivity and hybridity bring world musics into focus in mainstream media culture as well as everyday musical practices. Collaborative methods are a constructive way to build relationships between musicians across cultures that can both

225 Clive Barnett and Murray Low, *Spaces of Democracy Geographical Perspectives on Citizenship, Participation and Representation* (London: SAGE, 2004), 196.

226 For more on collaborative ethnomusicology, see the following:

Katelyn Barney, "Sending a Message: How Indigenous Australian Women Use Contemporary Music Recording Technologies to Provide a Space for Agency, Viewpoints and Agendas," *World of Music* 49, no. 1 (2007), 105-24; Trevor Reed, "Itaataatawi: Hopi Song, Intellectual Property, and Sonic Sovereignty in an Era of Settler-Colonialism," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2018); Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020); Jared Mackley-Crump. "Collaborative Ethnomusicology: New Approaches to Music Research Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians." *Perfect Beat* 17, no. 1 (2016): 91; and Rebekah E. Moore, "Work in the Field: Public Ethnomusicology and Collaborative Professionalism." *Collaborative Anthropologies* 6, no. 1 (2013): 103–129.

help sidestep the pitfalls from leftover colonial practices and also open up new ways of approaching trans-cultural musicality.

Through my analysis of audiences' responses to these four films, we can see that while there will always be both negative and positive responses for any media production, many viewers have recognized and appreciated the proactive inclusivity of the film scores. In a decade that is well-known for social movements advocating for racial and cultural equity, audiences, critics, and culture scholars have scrutinized these film scores to see if they contribute to long-standing musical stereotypes that Hollywood film culture established for over a century, or if they create new forms of inclusive musical identities in media.

7:3 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION/RESEARCH

My research in this thesis is only just the tip of the iceberg in the study of social music practices in mainstream media, education, and socio-politics. There are many more areas for future exploration in greater detail in future studies than I had time or space to cover in this project. The next few decades will illuminate what aspects of these four film scores make a lasting impression on popular cultures and their manifestations in areas like music education, social justice movements, embedded sounds in consumer goods, and even other film scores. These case studies show that there is much more to learn about the relationships between glocalization, cultural and racial visibility, and virtual platforms. A similar research approach applied to media industries outside Hollywood cinema would reveal even more valuable perspectives on these concepts; I personally will

be revisiting many of these ideas in my future doctoral and post-doctoral research projects.

In the end, the importance of being seen, whether it is in mainstream media music, education, social movements, or other areas of visibility, remains as a major motivation for individuals to engage with these areas of dialogic social musicality. As O'Flynn writes,

> The value of music in and for a particular society comes not to be expressed solely in terms of cultural heritage and/or the promotion of particular genres and established educational practices; there is also a need to consider the diversity and everyday reality of music-making and music transmission.[227]

Using collaborative methods in film score is one of many ways to show the people behind the music and their everyday realities of music-making and their musical selves.

[227]O'Flynn, "Re-Appraising Ideas of Musicality," 199.

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APPENDIX A

IRB EXEMPTION FORM

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Sabine Feisst
HIDA: Music, School of
480/965-3114
Sabine.Feisst@asu.edu

Dear Sabine Feisst:

On 1/29/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Creative Contemporary Collaborations: Selected Modern Approaches to Ethnic Narrative and Representation in Film Score
Investigator:	Sabine Feisst
IRB ID:	STUDY00011394
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Consent form.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Social Behavioral 2019 (1).docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Recruitment script.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 on 1/29/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Madison Archer
Sabine Feisst
Madison Archer