

FUNCTIONS OF FILM MUSIC ANALYSIS

(Luís Zanforlin)

Frida

The main title starts over studio logos with a chant sang dramatically by a female voice in Spanish resembling traditional Mexican music. A low drone follows the voice with a long reverb generating a tragic mystical foreboding feeling, perhaps foreshadowing future events; the cue also helps establishing the setting of Mexico on mid 1900's.

As the film fades in the music fades to the sound of a glass harmonica playing a calm heavenly harmony with an almost spiritual quality to it (due to the long attack and decay) accompanied by an accordion and a slow playing nylon guitar. I had the impression that this part of the cue matches the pace of the scene, which is incredibly serene, full of nature, incredibly quiet and slow in pace. The spiritual quality of the cue also helped to underline the character's personality with an almost childlike innocence.

At 01:58 the scene cuts to the beginning of the truck's trip and the music fades into a rhythmic mallet ostinato that sets a faster pace indicating the beginning of a journey. As the truck rolls over a rock a Spanish guitar synchs the action humorously while introducing the accordion and the bass. Frida then looks at the mirror on top of the bed on 02:09 and the camera takes place of her reflection dollying in to her looking at herself on the prospect of death ready

to see her life in front of her eyes. This is musically suggested by the return of the tragedy foreboding low drone. Frida then smiles on 02:19 and match cuts the scene to the beginning of her life story. The music synchs both the smile and the match cut with joyful *guitarra quinta* and a percussive strum on the guitar. I had the impression that the smile underlined by the happy harmony suggested that the character is joyful and the synch point brings us to the fully developed music that carries the fast pace of Frida running through the hallway indicating the beginning of the story. The cue then briefly rests to humorously allow Frida to deliver the line “With a naked woman.”

Overall the main title establishes the setting of the film, the joyful nature of the main character, foreshadows future dramatic events and underlines the pace of each individual scene.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

The film’s closing scene begins with an alteration of the main theme (00:03) played on high flutes and oboe without suggesting any specific emotion, perhaps signaling the viewer the film is about to get to a closure. Hermione is then introduced with another recurrent theme played on the flute not on its fully developed form creating a feeling of comfort and familiarity. As we cut to Harry and Ron being informed of Hermione’s presence the cue starts building up the event of their reunion with faster rhythm, dynamics and raising the pitch of the strings. When they see each other, the theme (played over Hermione’s entrance) is played on a more developed form on high strings underlining the character’s joy (00:28). The music then is interrupted by

Ron's awkward handshake and takes a quieter and more discrete sound played on the celesta matching Ron's anxiety when showing affection. The cue then underlines the emotion and tone of the mentioning of prof. Sprout's noble actions by adding slightly heroic horns (01:22).

Dumbledore's speech is then interrupted by Hagrid's entrance musically backed with a build up that is resolved when both Harry and Dumbledore look at him with the same theme played over Hermione's reunion (02:17). As Hagrid delivers his line about the confused owl the music becomes playful and on 02:22 the music confirms Dumbledore's look to Ron inferring he was responsible for the owl's "confusion" ending the cue.

A new cue begins when Hagrid approaches the three protagonists to thank them (02:39) underlining the character's emotion with a comforting calm harmony played on strings. A solo woodwind introduces another theme when Harry delivers the line "There is no Hogwarts without you." Dumbledore and the other faculty professors begin clapping and tremolo strings hint a small amount of suspense, perhaps questioning what will be the crowd's reaction (03:28). As the crowd starts clapping the music builds up and when it is clear that everyone is clapping the cue resolves the initial tension created by Dumbledore's clapping. The cue only returns to a more developed form of the theme introduced by Harry's line when Hagrid accepts the applause and start greeting students (04:05). The theme then is played once more as Harry gives Hagrid a final look of confirmation and the camera starts distancing itself from the action, the theme undergoes another resolution as the camera passes over the last characters in the scene (04:31). When the camera hovers over the

school the main theme is once more played (04:44) initiating the final cue resolution, which ends on the picture's fade out.

The cue creates a sense of completion to a variety of unfinished questions that perhaps weren't resolved in the climax. This is accomplished with the use of melodic themes and emotionally underlining specific plot points.