The Music of Fantasy Film:
On the Creation, Evolution and
Inhabitation of Musical Worlds

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Daniel White

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
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Abstract

Central to the rise in popularity of fantasy film franchises since 2001 is the cinematic depiction of fantasy worlds, in which music’s role is often both narrative and constructive. Music and sound build bridges between filmic episodes and between films and audiences using recognisable musical worlds or languages. These bridges are particularly apparent in Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies (2001-2003 and 2012-2014) and the *Harry Potter* film series (2001-2011), which represent some of the most widely recognised and consumed musical worlds of contemporary cinema.

Thematic, harmonic and stylistic analyses of the opening and closing sequences of these films reveal the ways in which music draws viewers into film worlds and returns them to the real world, acting peritextually or as a form of suture. Musical worlds can also be understood by examining the musical accompaniments of filmic homes and home-spaces. Primary home-spaces such as Hogwarts and the Shire can be mapped alongside secondary homes and houses as part of a wider imagined homeland of interrelated musical geographies.

Franchise film music can also be understood from the point of view of the consumer. A questionnaire-based survey of soundtrack consumption reveals the varied listening practices of fans and non-fans alike, establishing the various ways in which consumers inhabit fantasy worlds for entertainment, sonic cocooning or increased productivity. Music acts transmedially to follow franchises into video games, orchestral symphonies, musical memorabilia, cinematic concerts, studio tours, theme parks and plays, as well as numerous fan practices, all of which reveal the power of music to build worlds that can be extended and evolved into different forms with different uses. Fantasy acts as a socially committed mirror; an arena in which to play out socio-political anxieties or narratives, and music here provides a way to understand the worlds that people are building their homes in (and building into their homes), and their motivations for doing so.
Declaration

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Introduction: Sounding Out the Places Called Home

‘Chewie, we’re home!’ – Han Solo, Star Wars: The Force Awakens (2015).

On the 16th of April 2015 Walt Disney Studios released the second teaser trailer for The Force Awakens, the first film of their Star Wars reboot series which was directed by J.J. Abrams and released worldwide in December of that year. Fans at the Star Wars Celebration in Anaheim were treated to a first look at the teaser before it was released on YouTube the same day, and the trailer caused a significant stir among Star Wars fans by confirming the return of several characters, most notably Chewbacca and Han Solo, the latter role being reprised by Harrison Ford 32 years after his appearance in Star Wars: Return of the Jedi (1983). Although the previous teaser revealed shots of the iconic Millennium Falcon in flight, this particular trailer put into words what many fans would have been thinking at the sight of Han and Chewbacca once again aboard their trusty ship, as Han turns to his friend and co-pilot and utters the words ‘Chewie, we’re home.’ The importance of this moment in securing the loyalty of Star Wars fans did not go unnoticed. Writer Graham Milne (2015) described Han’s three-word statement as a clarion call to uncounted legions of dreamers, young and old alike, waiting in what often seemed merely vain hope for thirty-two long years. We’d seen the Falcon fly in the first teaser, but this was different. This was an affirmation of something that we’d long been told was never going to happen. This was a gift. This was faith rewarded. It is remarkable that the return of two familiar faces aboard a familiar space ship can garner such emotive responses. On seeing this particular scene in the film itself, critic Peter Bradshaw (2015) wrote ‘when Han Solo and Chewie came on, I had a feeling in the cinema I haven’t had since I was 16: not knowing whether to burst into tears or into applause.’ Ford himself recognised that this scene was pivotal in ensuring the popularity of the film, stating ‘that “Chewie, we’re home” [line] was kind of the key in the door. And that familiarity was unlocked at that moment’ (Dickey, 2015). It was the familiarity of being ‘home’ that put fans at ease and welcomed them back with open arms into another adventure.

The ‘Chewie, we’re home’ line may be so powerful not because Han is speaking to Chewbacca at that moment, but because he is speaking to us. It is made even more powerful by the fact that it echoes and confirms a sentiment we have already felt through what we have seen and heard; that is, the teaser trailer has already begun to welcome us
home both visually and musically before Han’s iconic line at the end.\textsuperscript{1} Visually, the sight of stormtroopers, star destroyers, lightsabers, desert landscapes, TIE and X-wing fighters, R2D2 and other droids is enough to reassure the viewer that they are back in the world of the \textit{Star Wars} saga. Many of these recognisable tropes are also sonically authenticated, with the iconic and even nostalgic sounds of the lightsabers and blast guns reinforcing this sense of being home. Kevin J. Donnelly notes the power of what he refers to as sound ‘starring’, highlighting that ‘[t]he relaunched 2005 series of \textit{Doctor Who} has demonstrated great awareness and respect for these ‘sonic stars’ with returning effects including the TARDIS materialisation/dematerialisation, the Autons’ handgun and the throbbing ambience created for the Dalek control room’ (2007: 197). It is the use of music, however, that most strongly convinces the viewer that this is the home they know and love, as the world of \textit{Star Wars} is so directly bound to, or perhaps built from, the music of composer John Williams: James Buhler refers to Williams’ music for the films as ‘world-defining and timeless’ (2000: 35). It is only after a full statement of Williams’ ‘force’ theme – one of the most rousing, pervasive and recognisable themes that is heard in every \textit{Star Wars} film – that a full-scale orchestral crescendo gives way to Han and Chewie’s climactic reveal. Fan responses abound with praise for the use of William’s music here, typical comments being ‘the music gives me goosebumps’, ‘I cried when I heard the force theme’ and ‘John Williams IS Star Wars!’ (‘Star Wars: The Force Awakens Official Teaser #2’, 2015). Even here, as Han’s first word is uttered in darkness before the two heroes emerge, it is the instantly recognisable voice of Harrison Ford that we hear speaking to us and confirming what we have already begun to realise before he finishes his sentence: we really \textit{are} home.\textsuperscript{2}

\textit{Home} is a central theme not only in the \textit{Star Wars} films (whose main impetus is the fight to protect it from either the Empire or the First Order) but also in contemporary fantasy cinema more generally. Considering the social and political anxieties that pervade

\textsuperscript{1} The line was so well received by its audience that it became a widespread motif in popular culture, with gifs and memes created based on this scene as well as a range of merchandising that includes T-shirts and apparel, jewellery, mugs and numerous doormats bearing the slogan.

\textsuperscript{2} Fans were also treated to a free surprise concert of music from \textit{Star Wars} after the presentation by director J.J. Abrams at the San Diego Comic Con in 2015. This collective experience of Williams’ iconic music was used by the production to ‘seal the deal’ by winning fans over and giving them a collective sense of family with Abrams and the cast and crew – a sense inferred by Abrams’ use of the collective first person as he announces that ‘we are literally all going to walk to a location together, and we are going to experience a Star Wars concert tonight’ (see ‘Star Wars The Force Awakens Comic Con Panel - Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill’, 2015).
contemporary Western experience it is perhaps not surprising that so many of today’s fantasy films might take as their central motivating impulse the fight to protect a home of some sort. Even within the United Kingdom over the past few years, events such as the Grenfell Tower fire in West London have highlighted the precarious and terminable nature of the home, a precarity amplified by issues of inequality and social immobility, and both the vote to leave the European Union and the wrongful removal of immigrants from the ‘Windrush’ generation have called into question the openness, acceptance and hospitality of our own nation. More globally and perhaps more overtly, market crashes and the ensuing housing crisis over the last few decades have caused significant losses in value and inflated prices, leading to decreased levels of home ownership, soaring rent and increased homelessness (see Meek, 2014). In these contexts, it is perhaps not surprising that fantasy worlds offering a reassuring and vibrant alternative to what we might call ‘home’ should be so appealing to so many people, be that a galaxy far, far away, a mythical world of elves and hobbits, or an imagined, magical counterpart to Great Britain.

The above example from *The Force Awakens* serves to highlight two important points: firstly, that audiences and fans are finding a sense of home within the films they are consuming (and inversely that film studios are looking to create or even exploit this homeliness for commercial gain), and secondly, that music and sound are vital in the creation and portrayal of these film worlds and in the communication of their homeliness. It also begs several more questions: if people are escaping into films and film worlds in search of suitable homes, how are they doing this, and why? What role does music play in narrative film to bring us into its created or depicted world? What about music outside of the film-watching context, or in other manifestations of these worlds – how else can music enable the imaginative inhabitation of our favourite fantasy homes? This thesis answers these questions by examining films and their fans to find out exactly what is going on in the consumption of fantasy cinema that produces such heartfelt responses and emotional connections. It is important that we understand how fantasy worlds are created by filmmakers and inhabited by viewers and fans, and in a wider sense, why people are looking for surrogate homes to move into. The analysis of music’s role in each of these processes will show us both the lengths to which composers and listeners can go to build and inhabit these worlds, and the depths of the emotional connections created between worlds and their inhabitants. *The Force Awakens* has conjured up these questions in relation to the recent revival of one of the biggest film franchises in history but they were
already being addressed, as this thesis will explore, in the years prior to the cinematic return of Star Wars through two other major film franchises set in fantasy worlds.

The year 2001 played host to several historically significant events. In this year Apple released their first portable music device (the iPod), Wikipedia took its first content online, Dennis Tito became the first ever ‘space tourist’, and the attacks of September 11th led to the United States of America declaring war on ‘terror’ and consequently invading Afghanistan. 2001 also saw the release of the first instalments of two of the most successful fantasy film franchises of all time: Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone (Chris Columbus) and The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (Peter Jackson). These series, both originating as literary works, went on to dominate box office records over the following decade (with the release of eight Harry Potter films and three LOTR ones), and this success led to film studios producing two spin-off film series: The Hobbit trilogy (Jackson, 2012-2014) and the Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them films (David Yates, 2016, 2018 and three more forthcoming). Furthermore, these franchises went on to become vast transmedial universes, consisting not only of films and novels but also promotional books and materials, soundtracks, videogames, plays, concerts, studio tours, even crossing into the fashion and tourism industries with theme park attractions and vast ranges of merchandise. Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings (LOTR) have both gained significant currency within popular culture, and the music of these franchises is no exception.

This thesis takes the Harry Potter and LOTR films as case studies and investigates the many roles and properties of the music of these franchises both within and without the film-watching experience – that is, as part of the films and elsewhere. To date, there exists little comparative study on the music of film franchises, and particularly on the ways in which the recognisable or repetitive use of music helps to draw several films together in a series. Indeed, LOTR and Harry Potter are also notable in this regard, as John Williams’ music for the original Star Wars films (1977-83) is their only real precedent in terms of musical consistency, and even these contain some leitmotivic discrepancies (the ‘Imperial March’ being famously introduced in The Empire Strikes Back [1980] and thus absent from A New Hope [1977] and every depiction of Darth Vader therein). The two case study franchises each include musical worlds that extend beyond the simple use of a shared theme tune or a few common motifs. Thus, I aim to compare and contrast the ways in which these worlds are built and how they evolve from film to film, as well as the ways music draws viewers into these created worlds. There is one major difference between the
two case studies, which is that the LOTR and Hobbit films have all been scored by one composer (Howard Shore), whereas the eight Harry Potter films have been scored by four different composers (John Williams [1-3], Patrick Doyle [4], Nicholas Hooper [5-6] and Alexandre Desplat [7-8]). Thus, an interesting point of comparison emerges regarding the effect of one composer creating one world as opposed to four composers inheriting a world from their predecessors and evolving it to suit their vision.

Within the realm of film music studies, the main subject of analysis has generally been music’s role as a narrative agent, and although the storytelling power of music represents one of its most important cinematic roles, I am instead interested in some of film music’s less frequently discussed capabilities. As we are dealing with specifically fantasy worlds, the reasons for which are explicated in greater detail below, I am primarily interested in music’s role in building the world in which the film takes place, and the ways that music draws us into this world as film viewers. Not only are the film worlds of both case studies physically, visually, narratively and musically constructed with the utmost rigour, but the music of these worlds is exported into many of the media formats listed above, thus allowing us to follow the strains of this music into the far-flung lands of theme parks, plays, studio tours and videogames as well as into fan-made films and musics at the furthest corners of the imagination. There are of course several other fantasy film franchises that I have excluded from this study, primarily for reasons of space, but also because they have not yet reached the same degree of transmediality or cultural prominence that LOTR and Harry Potter have reached. The Chronicles of Narnia, Star Wars, The Hunger Games, Pirates of the Caribbean, The Dark Knight trilogy and the Marvel Cinematic Universe are all multi-film franchises in the fantasy genre with varying degrees of musical continuity, but that continuity lacks the depth and complexity that can be found in the music of LOTR and Harry Potter, as will be argued herein.

Methodologically, I approach film music by looking at it from several angles, and these angles can be divided into two sides – listening to music from ‘inside’ the film and from ‘outside’ the film. Following this bifurcation, the main analytical body of the thesis is divided into two parts, the first of which grapples with audible film-worlds in the cinematic framework, and the second of which follows these musical worlds into all their extra-filmic...
contexts. Consequently, the methodological approaches for each part are varied. The first part includes a high degree of musical analysis, which ranges from melodic, harmonic and motivic to formal and structural. However, the musical language of these worlds draws the investigation towards two particular forms of analysis, the first being thematic and the second harmonic, or more specifically, transformational. The significance of a semiotic system of themes in the appropriation and transmission of meaning within these scores is explored in greater detail in the below section on ‘Film Music’, but it quickly becomes clear that themes and leitmotifs are the primary weapons in these film composers’ arsenals, and these two franchises are thus prime examples of the extent to which motivic systems can operate in both narrative and worldbuilding functions. Lastly, much of the harmonic analysis draws on transformational theories to analyse progressions between chords as both musical worlds feature heavy use of chromatic mediant progressions and other harmonic shifts outside of the realm of classical functional harmony. However, rather than adopting the language of neo-Riemannian theory, I instead take the approach put forward by Scott Murphy (2014) in his system of ‘tonal-triadic progression classes’ (TTPCs), which is explicated in Chapter Two.

The second part of the thesis considers the music of fantasy worlds in non-filmic contexts and hence is methodologically different to Part One. Analysis here draws on fieldwork carried out at various tourist experiences, as well as on interviews with numerous composers, sound designers and publicists who worked on the attractions and games under analysis. Part Two also includes a significant amount of online ethnography, partly through engagement with online fan communities via YouTube and other websites, but most particularly through an online questionnaire on soundtrack consumption and listening practices. Martin Barker and Ernest Mathijs’ international audience research project on The Lord of the Rings (2008) provided a significant amount of useful data and a helpful model for the questionnaire, the responses to which form the basis of Chapter Five. Even though their online questionnaire was not specifically oriented towards music, many of the 24,747 respondents mentioned music in response to questions about their reasons for seeing The Return of the King (2003) – in fact, the word ‘music’ is mentioned 1,339 times among these responses in fourteen languages. The majority of these responses cite the music as one of the primary reasons filmgoers wanted to see the films, or as one of the film’s most memorable elements. One British male respondent said ‘Howard Shore did a phenomenal job’; an older female participant stated ‘the score brings me to tears’; and many others stated their enjoyment of the music’s ‘epic’ qualities. Furthermore, one of the
questions on Barker and Mathijs’ questionnaire was ‘Where, and when, is Middle-Earth for you? Is there a place or a time that it particularly makes you think of?’ Responses to this included several countries and national parks as well as specific locations and memories, but among these responses ‘home’ is mentioned more than 200 times in different languages. Some typical responses are: ‘Middle-earth feels like home even though it is not real’, ‘Middle-earth is my home country’ and ‘it’s my home away from home.’ Although little of what arose through the project relates to music and its role in the inhabitation of imaginary worlds, the kind of language used and the love that many fans have for the music of Jackson’s Middle-earth not only helped shape the direction of my own questionnaire, but also reinforces my argument that the music of these films is so loved by fans because of its ability to bring them back into the worlds of the films, the worlds that they call home, thereby making the act of listening into a form of homecoming.

In order to gain insight into the ways in which music brings people into the imagined worlds of fantasy films, we need to have a clear understanding of the social and cultural contexts surrounding these films and their associated franchises. Not only have *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* both played a prominent and influential role within early 21st-century pop culture and entertainment, their rise in popularity coincided with significant shifts in the Western film industries and the socio-cultural trends into which they were born. These contexts surrounding the production and reception of *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* can be defined as: the rise in popularity of the fantasy genre, particularly within contemporary Western cinema; the dominance of franchise films among contemporary Hollywood output; the changing expressions of fandom facilitated in large part by the Internet; and the trends within film music of the time. These shifts are linked (agreeable alliteration aside) by commonalities in cause and effect, be they technological, sociological, economical or industrial, and this web of contexts and relations will be laid out and explored for the remainder of the Introduction.

**Fantasy**

It is widely held that the fantasy genre has recently experienced a considerable boom in popularity, particularly in the context of Western cinema, with many scholars such as David Butler identifying 2001 as a pivotal year (see Napier 2005: xi, Butler 2009: 5-6, Friedman 2009, Pheasant-Kelly 2013). Since the release of the first instalments of *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* in this year fantasy films have seen huge success at the box office, and as
it stands eight of the ten highest-grossing films of all time can be defined as fantasy in genre (‘All Time Box Office’, 2017). Besides box office figures, fantasy’s rise in prominence emerges elsewhere, including the surge in popularity of fan conventions such as the San Diego Comic-Con, which started out as a comic book convention but has become one of the largest conventions dedicated to fantasy media in the world. Attendance figures show a similar boost after 2001, which saw them grow from the steadily increasing tens of thousands in the 1990s to over 100,000 in the space of a few years (see Figure 1).

![Annual San Diego Comic-Con attendance since 1970](image)

**Figure 1 – Annual San Diego Comic-Con attendance since 1970**

David Butler identifies the inconsistency with which the term ‘fantasy film’ has been applied by academics, critics and the industry alike, and points out that although 2001 saw a dramatic shift towards fantasy film production, the preceding decades were anything but devoid of ‘fantastic’ cinema (2009:16). Numerous reasons and events have been suggested as causes of this industrial shift in consumption, the catastrophic events of September 11th of that year notwithstanding, and this section aims to situate the thesis and its focus on fantasy blockbusters among these contexts.

For writer and critic Lev Grossman, fantasy’s rise in popularity has coincided with a collective loss of faith in technology; in the abundance and joy it promised but failed to produce. According to Grossman, writing in 2002 after the release of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and just before *LOTR: The Two Towers*, ‘[a] darker, more pessimistic attitude toward technology and the future has taken hold, and the evidence is our new preoccupation with fantasy, a nostalgic, sentimental, magical vision of a medieval age’

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4 Figures taken from the Wikipedia article (‘San Diego Comic-Con’, 2018). N.B. All figures from 2010-2014 are listed as ‘130,000+’ and so were likely in excess of the figure depicted.
The irony of this pessimism should not be overlooked, given that it was an increased dependence on computer technology that facilitated the shift towards more ‘realistic’ cinematic fantasy, and that allowed imaginary worlds and their inhabitants to be more convincingly (and spectacularly) brought into being. Cultural theorist Ted Friedman holds a similar view to Grossman, positing that fantasy (and its central distinguishing trope of magic) allows us an arena in which to grapple with and indeed re-think our complex links with both technology and nature: ‘at a time of both great technological advances and looming ecological catastrophe, the fantasy genre provides writers, directors, game designers, and audiences an opportunity to re-imagine their relationships with both their machines and their environment’ (2009: 1). The views of the two writers do differ slightly, however, when it comes to notions of temporality. Where Grossman portrays fantasy as a longing for a seemingly simpler (medieval) past, Friedman sees in it the agency and opportunity to shape the days to come: ‘[l]earning the lessons of fantasy, then, does not need to mean clinging to a lost, mythical past. But it will require us to re-imagine the future’ (13). Where the former tends towards a more negative and reductive vision of escapism, the latter places a stronger focus on fantasy’s ability to help us reconcile our (dis)connections to technology and nature, to learn and to move forward.

Although the term ‘escapism’ has historically been applied with some disdain to fairy-stories and other fantasy texts by the Academy, J.R.R. Tolkien (and several other writers since – see Zipes, 1983; Worley, 2005; and Butler, 2009) argued for a more positive understanding, urging critics not to confuse the ‘Escape of the Prisoner with the Flight of the Deserter’ (2014: 69). Grossman’s description of fantasy as ‘nostalgic’ and ‘sentimental’ suggests a somewhat archaic view that strips the genre of its contemporary relevance, confining it instead to the realms of leisure and entertainment. Conversely, Friedman’s more positive view depicts fantasy as an active force, a benefit to society and a step closer to the heroism that Tolkien attributed to the true notion of Escape. Writer China Miéville takes a strong disliking to Tolkien and counters his argument that ‘jailers hate escapism’ by paraphrasing Michael Moorcock to retort: ‘jailers love escapism, what they hate is escape’ (2002). Even though Miéville shuns Tolkien’s defence of escapism (and indeed the writer’s entire oeuvre), instead arguing that fantasy is not inherently escapist (Newsinger, 2000), they both agree on the social and political relevance of fantasy, or at least the possibility of its relevance. T.S. Miller provides a more progressive approach to escapism through his analysis of two films that put the notion of escapism on centre stage: Labyrinth (Henson, 1986) and El laberinto del fauno (Pan’s Labyrinth, del Toro, 2006),
arguing that they ‘offer a simultaneous acknowledgment of and defense against the charge of escapism’ (2011: 41). Miller also concludes along similar lines to Tolkien and Miéville, noting fantasy’s commitment to socio-cultural significance in that ‘the fantastic furnishes the reader/viewer with fresh narratives by which to understand reality’ (42). This notion of fresh understanding or new revelation brings us back to the work of J.R.R. Tolkien and his concept of recovery.

In his famous lecture ‘On Fairy-stories’ Tolkien posits two further benefits to fantasy alongside escape: those of ‘recovery’ and ‘consolation’. Considering consumer motivations behind the increased desire for fantasy film, these two facets have likely contributed to the fantasy genre’s newfound attraction. For Tolkien, recovery is a ‘regaining of a clear view’ – seeing things anew or indeed returning to ‘seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them’ – and this includes the renewal of health (2014: 67). Consolation is defined as the pleasure or satisfaction found in the ‘eucatastrophe’ – the sudden joyous turn and miraculous grace of a happy ending (75). De Witt Douglas Kilgore (2017) adopts Tolkien’s notion of consolation, aligning the eucatastrophe with the defeat of invaders and humanity’s (read ‘America’s’) victory over evil in what he describes as the ‘super-invasion’ genre (the merging of the alien invasion film and the superhero movie, resulting in heroic fantasies such as Captain America: The First Avenger [2011] and The Avengers [2012]). Consolation is found in the ‘thrill and relief experienced when the threatening Other is defeated, destroyed, or exiled’ (163). Kilgore identifies the super-invasion sub-genre as a specifically post-9/11 phenomenon: a way for Hollywood to re-frame the destruction of iconic (American) buildings in a way that deals with the trauma of the quasi-cinematic memories of real events by depicting the total defeat of the invaders and the triumphant victory of the (American) people. As he states, ‘this cinematic resolution helps conceal the upheaval caused by 9/11 and seeks to heal the cultural wounds it inflicted’ (160). Recovery and consolation are found in all fairy-stories, and it is certainly conceivable that they have added to the increasing popularity of fantasy cinema, at least in America as in Kilgore’s study. However, this explanation is not necessarily applicable to other countries beyond the US. In a similar way to Matthew Jones (2011, 2017), who recontextualises the reception of 1950s science fiction cinema in Britain away from the American narratives of anti-communist sentiment and Cold War nuclear anxieties, I would argue that 9/11 alone does not go far enough in accounting for fantasy’s global success, and that there is something more fundamental going on that applies more readily to global socio-political contexts.
Fantasy cinema bears another fruit that motivates its consumers, a fruit similar to recovery and consolation, and that is the fruit of *healing*: a healing often found through the comforting sense of home. Alec Worley uses the notion of healing to differentiate between horror and fantasy genres, in an attempt to distinguish and define different types of fantasy film. In his words, ‘fantasy films attempt some form of healing, whether the psychic wound of a hero or an entire land crippled by dark sorcery […] fantasy clings to life, even when its films conclude in death’ (2005: 12). Kath Filmer-Davies argues similarly that fantasy texts concern themselves fundamentally with finding hope in the midst of angst and scepticism: ‘fantasy is sceptical only superficially: if one looks more deeply at the texts of fantasy, one finds unmistakeably the articulation of hope’ (1992: 2). She later concludes that ‘fantasy is both confrontational and restorative, it is both disconcerting and healing’ (142). Though there are exceptions that buck the necessity of the happy ending, and indeed films such as Damien Chazelle’s *La La Land* (2016) which uses fantastic devices to tell a very realist story, or Terry Gilliam’s *Brazil* (1985) which depicts the eucatastrophe as a delusional fantasy in and of itself, the contemporary Hollywood blockbuster riding the fantasy wave tends to be more uniform in its adherence to a tried-and-tested narrative structure, complete with eucatastrophic (happy) ending. Frances Pheasant-Kelly (2013: 17) also identifies the healing trope found in contemporary fantasy cinema, looking specifically at post-9/11 contexts and the ways in which fantasy film enables a ‘working through’ of negative emotions or memories (a concept borrowed from Carl Plantinga). For her, fantasy films enable a process of ‘renarrativization’ where emotions and memories linked to the events of September 11th may be reframed via visual spectacle. Thus, the type of healing identified by Pheasant-Kelly is a very literal one related to post-traumatic stress disorder and other such problems of predominantly mental health.

9/11 is often cited somewhat simplistically as the turning point and main motivator for the boom in popular fantasy cinema that followed. Although the genre has undeniably taken a significant step up in prominence since the start of both *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* franchises in 2001, to create a direct causal link between this shift and the events of 9/11 is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, although both *Fellowship of the Ring* and *Philosopher’s Stone* were released after 9/11 they were in production well before this point, and although their popularity and reception may be linked to events of the months prior to their release, their production styles and narratives may not. Whereas Frances Pheasant-Kelly places a high emphasis on 9/11 as a contributing factor in the current
popularity of fantasy, I would argue that it remains just one of several factors that have combined to create an interrelated web of motivators and cultural impulses. Pheasant-Kelly draws on Susan Napier’s now oft-quoted statement that ‘the events of September 11 have cast a long shadow over the national psyche’ but dislocates this sentiment from her previous paragraph, which situates 9/11 as just one of many diffuse reasons for the global hunger for fantasy, alongside ‘disaffection with technology […] environmental degradation, economic downturns, and war’ (2005: xi). Although 9/11 no doubt added to the increasingly anxious social and political mood in the West, this mood may be seen as having been equally affected by millennial anxiety, the death of Princess Diana, American foreign policy, the global financial crisis and ensuing economic instability, and even more recent political events such as the Brexit referendum and the US election of President Trump.

Cinema has always been a form of fantasy, and fantasy has always been a part of cinema. The Lord of the Rings and Harry Potter franchises are unique in that their constituent texts were written prior to 9/11 and yet their films catered to an audience dealing with the aftermath and emergence of global terrorism. Audiences were consuming these films in an age in which global mood had soured, technology was proving unfaithful or disappointing (though not necessarily at the movies) and nature and her temper were becoming more destructive, and the film studios caught onto the fact that the global appetite for fantasy was growing. Thus, the major film conglomerates are equally responsible for the increase in output of the fantasy genre, having caught the wave of the positive response to Fellowship and Philosopher’s Stone and consequently chosen to flood the market with more fantasy films (evidence of which can be found in the following section). They also caught onto the fact that in an era of economic instability, franchise films were the most low-risk sources of significant income, and so box office figures came to be dominated not only by fantasy films, but film franchises most notably. The following section looks at this franchising phenomenon in more detail.

Franchises

The landscape of Western cinema has been drastically changed by the move towards the production of sequels. To understand the full effect that franchising has had on the film
industry, and to see the extent of its contemporary dominance, here are some illuminating statistics on the most economically successful films of the past seventeen years.\(^5\)

- Of the 100 highest-grossing films worldwide since 2001, 85 are part of a cinematic franchise. Of this 85, eleven were the first instalments of their respective franchises, meaning 74% of the most economically successful films since 2001 have been sequels, follow-ups or new instalments to existing series.
- The number of franchises represented among these 85 films is 30, and thus each franchise has an average of 2.83 episodes to its name within the top 100. The Marvel Cinematic Universe boasts ten films within the top 100 since 2001, where *Harry Potter* has nine (including *Fantastic Beasts*), *Middle-earth* six (*LOTR* and *The Hobbit*) and *Pirates of the Caribbean* five.
- Of the 30 franchises identified, 27 of them are owned by the ‘Big Six’ film conglomerates, with two owned by ‘mini-major’ Lionsgate and one being Chinese-funded: seven are owned by Buena Vista (Disney), six by Paramount and five by Warner Bros, with Sony, Fox and Universal taking three each.
- Of the fifteen non-franchise films within the top 100, four of these films have sequels in production or planning (*Avatar* [2009], *Frozen* [2013], *The Secret Life of Pets* [2016] and *Maleficent* [2014]), while two further films have had sequels rumoured (*Zootopia* [2016] and *Big Hero 6* [2014]). Three more of this fifteen are remakes or live-action versions of existing films (*Beauty and the Beast* [2017], *Alice in Wonderland* [2010], *The Jungle Book* [2016]).
- This leaves just six of the 100 most successful films since 2001 that are entirely original and not being franchised, extended or added to (*Inception* [2010], *Interstellar* [2014], *Gravity* [2013], *2012* [2009], *Inside Out* [2015] and *Up* [2009]).

The production of franchise films has gradually increased since 2001, as seen in Figure 2. Plotting the number of franchise films among the 20 highest-grossing films worldwide for each year, the red line tracks additions to existing franchises, whereas the blue line takes into account the release of first instalments or films that are subsequently given sequels. Although franchises such as *Star Wars* were already being re-invigorated prior to 2001 with *Phantom Menace* hitting the big screen in 1999, the large gap between the two lines at 2001 displays the high number of franchises introduced in this year (eight). The increasing trend in the blue line in particular shows the gradual saturation of the market with franchise films, peaking in 2011 when eighteen of the twenty most successful films worldwide were part of a franchise.

\(^5\) All data is taken from www.boxofficemojo.com and is correct at time of writing.
It is clear to see that the worldwide film industry, catered for predominantly by a closed group of powerful media conglomerates, has become dominated by the presence of tried-and-tested franchises, and, looking at Figure 2, that significant growths in this dominance took place in 2001 and 2011. Hollywood theorist Thomas Schatz notes this shift and suggests that the processes of digitisation and globalisation are partially responsible:

The franchise mentality has intensified during the conglomerate era, and in the new millennium it has gone into another register altogether due to the combined effects of digitization and media convergence, which have significantly impacted both production and formal-aesthetic protocols, and due also to the effects of globalization as Hollywood fashions its top films for a worldwide marketplace (2009: 30).

Thus, advances in technology, emerging new media and increasingly global audiences have changed the landscape of contemporary films and the ways in which they are produced. The economic motivations behind the increase in franchise film production are fairly clear – the risks involved in creating, marketing and releasing another story within a familiar world, with well-loved characters and reliable narrative structures, are significantly smaller than those in the creation of new and unknown film stories. Producer Lynda Obst also places some of the onus on the 2007-2008 strike of the Writers Guild of America, recognising that ‘the new projects, the big action franchises that could sell worldwide, were studio-generated, not writer-generated’ (Suzanne-Mayer, 2016). It is within this context of an increasingly franchise-led market that *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* emerged – and indeed they paved the way for several other film franchises to follow in
their footsteps, playing a significant role in the constitution of a new system of Hollywood franchising norms.

In his chapter ‘New Hollywood, New Millennium’ Thomas Schatz identifies a non-exhaustive list of twenty conceptual ‘rules’ that Hollywood’s major motion pictures must now follow in order to become successful blockbusters (2009: 32-33). The *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* films follow many of these ‘rules’; indeed the films arguably helped to define the rules themselves. For example, Schatz states that ‘the film should exploit or expand an established entertainment franchise, which might exist initially in any number of forms—a classic children's story, a traditional fairy tale, a comic book or graphic novel, a TV series, even a theme park ride or a toy line’ (32) – and both *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* existed first as novels. Both narratives also tick all of the following boxes meticulously:

The long-term story line should focus on an individual central protagonist. The protagonist should be male. The male protagonist should be an adolescent or an utterly naïve man-child. The protagonist should be a loner, either by choice or by circumstances, but one who is also forced by circumstances to perform some (preferably heroic) social function (ibid.).

The list goes on, covering the need for dazzling computer graphics, and for scenes of destruction or violence that are gripping but sufficiently stylised to retain a ‘PG’ certification. One further requirement is that ‘the film should build to a climactic confrontation and a “happy ending” in which the hero prevails – but not to a degree that eliminates the prospect for sequels’, which harks back to the concept of consolation identified above as a requisite for fantasy. It is noteworthy that the fantasy of a happy ending has become a necessary trope in contemporary Hollywood, and indeed that the vast majority of these franchises may be thought of as fantastic in some sense, be it *Star Wars* (1977-), the *Marvel Cinematic Universe* (2008-) or the *Fast and Furious* series (2001-).

Two further requirements identified by Thomas Schatz point to wider theoretical issues regarding the success of Hollywood franchises, and these relate to notions of worldbuilding and media convergence. Firstly, ‘[t]he story should take place in a world that is internally coherent but highly complex, and that is by design too expansive to be contained within a single film – and thus solicits further elaboration in subsequent films and in other media forms as well’ (33). Here, Schatz highlights the importance of a complex yet coherent film-world that can be explored and expanded with the addition of further instalments, sequels or spin-offs – something that both the *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* series have featured, and which has also enabled the addition of further narratives in the same film-spaces but different temporalities; that is, *The Hobbit* trilogy and the *Fantastic
Beasts series, both of which temporally precede their predecessors. The next rule continues: ‘[t]his principle of further elaboration pertains to story materials as well, including software and effects, which should be designed for use in other media iterations.’ As suggested in the previous rule, Schatz is highlighting the importance of being able to expand a film franchise into numerous other media, most notably the arena of videogames, but also into web-based texts and games, television programmes, theme parks, plays, merchandise, and so on. Thus, the economic success of a film today lies not only with its own merits or popularity, but also in its intertextual and transmedial capabilities.

Focusing on the ‘digital convergence character’ and the transference of cinematic characters into videogame, Jessica Aldred confirms that ‘transmediation allows media conglomerates to maximize revenues across a range of separate but related products, while holding out the promise of a satisfactory experience for the consumer who ideally consumes all strands of the franchise’ (2013: 383). Warner Bros and New Line have tapped into the revenue released by providing multiple points of access to the worlds of the Harry Potter and LOTR franchises, some of which were provided alongside the film releases, such as the videogames, and others which have followed since the main film series came to an end, like Universal’s Wizarding World of Harry Potter theme parks and the Hobbiton set tour in New Zealand. This in turn has led to significant developments in (or indeed the true establishment of) film tourism, whereby locations and even nations market themselves as franchise-related experiences, and visiting fans are fuelled by the desires to inhabit the fantasy space and to experience every aspect of the world available to them (see Beeton, 2005 and Lee, 2012 for further case studies).

Transmedial storytelling such as this has a big effect on worldbuilding – the fantasy world is no longer simply read in a book and seen on a screen, it is inhabited through games, depicted in theatres, experienced on rides, even walked in, touched and tasted, thus existing in a plurality of formats and, most importantly, made increasingly accessible and even portable. This poses questions of authorship and ownership. Licensing rights are a tricky business, painstakingly negotiated and divided between the film studios and authors (or their estates in Tolkien’s case), and these often become the dividing line between those who are ordained to add to the canonic, ‘authorised’ world of the franchise, and those who are not. For some franchises, such as Star Wars (under the ownership of Lucasfilm), this line is only lightly demarcated to the point where fanfilms have been encouraged, facilitated and even celebrated (Mullin 2012), whereas in the case of Harry Potter Warner Bros actively shut down a Kickstarter campaign for a fan-made origin film for Voldemort,
although they have now reached an agreement for the film to go ahead – provided it makes no money (Shepherd, 2017).

Since 2001, a wider cultural turn has surrounded my case study films, which affected their reception and stimulated the transmedial growth of the franchises, and which has in turn proved highly influential in my selection and interpretation of texts. The ‘experience economy’, a term dubbed by B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore (1998, 2011), represents the shift in company sales and customer spending away from goods and services and towards marketed experiences. Today, consumers may be just as interested in how a product can make them feel as what it can do for them, or indeed how pleasurable the shopping experience is – as futurist James Ogilvy puts it, ‘the experience industry is all about trading in what makes the heart beat faster’ (1990: 20). From theme parks to immersive theatre, dark dining, mobile banking and shops like the Apple Store, companies are increasingly focussed on tailoring the experience of the consumer. For Jeremy Rifkin (2000:145-6), the experience industry represents the next step in the evolution of the capitalist system from the commodification of land and production to that of cultural experience, and indeed it is our time that is now being commodified: as Pine and Gilmore point out, ‘time is the currency of experiences’ (2011: xv). Lastly, recent studies such as that by Stephanie Tully and Eesha Sharma (2017) indicate that consumers are now more willing to go into debt to pay for experiential purchases than for material ones. This shows the value of the consumer experience and the true extent of its commodification within the global market.

It is within this climate of experience consumption that the *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* franchises have flourished. The franchising turn in contemporary Hollywood is itself a symptom of hypercapitalism, the experience economy and the commodification of wonder and enchantment. Not only is a trip to the cinema becoming more and more experiential (with VIP seating, Dolby Atmos surround sound and 3D or 4D screenings all aiming to enhance the cinematic experience), the film worlds themselves (and with them the reach of the media conglomerates) have spread throughout the realms of leisure and entertainment, spilling into tourism and education and generating colossal amounts of revenue for the studios. On the other side of the shop counter, however, are those purchasing wonder and enchantment from the conglomerates: the fans in search of newer and more immersive experiences of the worlds they love and call home. The experience industry and its consumers are inseparable, and the following section focuses on contemporary expressions of fandom and their intersections with contemporary cinema.
Fandom

Fandom and its expressions have naturally evolved alongside the texts and media that feed them, and the Internet has caused seismic shifts in the manifestations of fandom both through the connection of fan communities and the stimulation of fan practices (see Kirby-Diaz 2009, Booth 2010 and 2018, Pearson 2010). However, as noted by Matt Hills and Catherine Driscoll (in Jenkins, 2007) among others, the notion of a singular fan community is something of a fallacy, more realistically replaced by the notion of interrelated and overlapping sub-communities. As Driscoll identifies,

> there's not a Harry Potter fandom - there is a web of Harry Potter fan communities, and it's a very distorted web as well - frayed at the edges and tangled up with different “fandoms” entirely. I don't mean there's no common ground at all - there's JKR's [J.K. Rowling’s] “canon” - but it's not consistently important or utilised (ibid.).

The notion that multiple fan sub-communities or networks could emerge around any object of fandom is amplified (or even multiplied) when applied to transmedial franchises such as *Harry Potter* and *LOTR.*

An understanding of the highly nuanced and individualised nature of contemporary (predominantly digital) fan practices allows us to map some of these networks out in greater detail and to ascertain the various ways in which fandom fuels the production and consumption of franchise texts, and vice versa. As documented by Elana Shefrin (2004), *LOTR* director Peter Jackson actively engaged with fans of Tolkien’s writings through a series of online interviews during the production phase of his first filmic trilogy. Taking place on Harry Knowles’s website ‘Aint-It-Cool-News’, Jackson responded to twenty questions (out of 14,000 submissions) from fans, as a way of keeping in touch with the

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6 To further exemplify this differentiation of fandoms within one franchise, it is possible for someone to identify *primarily* as a fan of a character, such as Severus Snape; of an actor, such as Daniel Radcliffe; of a specific director or composer, such as Alfonso Cuarón or John Williams; of a specific novel or film or even of the *Fantastic Beasts* spinoff series; of a specific theme-park ride such as the ‘Dragon Challenge’, or a specific game such as the *LEGO Harry Potter* series; of the *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* play, or a specific character or actor therein; of fan-fiction works in and of themselves, or of a specific genre of fan fiction such as HP/DM (Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy) ‘slash’ (generally homoerotic fantasy); or even of other fans whose outward expressions of fandom have gained them prominence (generally known as BNFs or ‘Big Name Fans’). Furthermore, it is possible for a fan to express their specific fandom in any number of ways, such as participation in online fora, attendance at conventions, text consumption, fantext production, cosplay, or even social activism via the ‘Harry Potter Alliance’ (a non-profit organisation that campaigns for human rights and other issues), and also to identify as members of any combination of these distinct fandoms. In summation, the notion of a neat and tidy group of *Harry Potter* fans united around a system of common practices and values is very much a fantasy in itself.
desires and worries of the existing Tolkien fanbase, while also revealing enough information to quell their fears and heighten their excitement. As Shefrin argues, from a critical viewpoint, Jackson’s online interviews with Tolkien fans can be seen as a strategic move to co-opt the overall import of fan opinion [...] From a more utopian viewpoint, Jackson’s discourse with online fans can be seen as a technologically-inspired antidote to traditional demarcations between the production and consumption of cultural artefacts (2004: 268).

Thus, and as also noted by Kirsten Pullen (2006) and Kristin Thompson (2007: 149-155), Peter Jackson and his involvement with Tolkien fans throughout the filmmaking process set a new precedent for the relationship between producer and consumer in the world of media franchising.

My own understanding of fandom within this thesis draws on the more nuanced networks, communities, expressions and exchanges identified here. Matt Hills rightfully differentiates between the ‘emergent’ nature of the cult status of films such as Star Wars and Titanic, and the ‘residual’ cult status of film franchises such as Harry Potter and LOTR whose novels, characters, narratives and worlds had already garnered cult followings and significant fanbases (2006: 165). Thus, the fandoms attached to each of my case study franchises must be interpreted not only as inherently pluralistic, but also as continuations or evolutions of other fan expressions already in existence – for over 50 years in the case of LOTR. Part Two of this thesis focuses on fandom and its intersections with music, looking in turn at listening practices and the consumption of film soundtracks, the use of music at sites of fan tourism, music in videogames, and at other music-making practices within fan communities. However, as music represents the central analytical and methodological thread, this chapter concludes with a survey of modern film music trends, and particularly those within the context of contemporary Hollywood blockbusters.

**Film Music**

The aural soundscape of Hollywood movies has a diverse history, from ‘classical’ orchestral scores to compiled pop scores, electronic scores and hybrids. Within the context of the more prominent film franchises, many have opted for the classical Hollywood style, though often with electronic elements and non-classical instruments mixed in. Many of them use music as a marker of identity, establishing recognisable theme tunes, but rather than attempting to create distinctive musical worlds they often rely on established film music tropes to create fairly nondescript, unmemorable soundtracks – though of course there are exceptions. Many of the more contemporary franchises have operated in this way,
with a recognisable theme tune or two, and fairly functional orchestral scores that draw on these themes or on pre-existing material to some extent. The Pirates of the Caribbean series, the Hunger Games films and even the Chronicles of Narnia series all fit this category. The Batman franchise has undergone at least three musical overhauls, from Danny Elfman's rousing score for the 1989 Batman to James Newton Howard and Hans Zimmer's heavier and more serious scores for the Dark Knight trilogy, with each consisting of new musical material. Orchestration, timbre and rhythmic effect have become more prominent, and although these film scores make use of melody, none are perhaps as highly melodic as those by John Williams for Harry Potter and Howard Shore for LOTR.

Although three different composers took over from John Williams in the scoring of Harry Potter films (and this too will be expounded in Chapters Two and Three), Williams’ scores for the first three films place a particularly high value on the role of melody. Indeed, every theme Williams creates, including the widely recognised ‘Hedwig’s Theme’, is decidedly melodic and full of character. As all three LOTR films were written, filmed and produced as a whole, Howard Shore was able to write his scores for the films with the consistency and coherence of a filmic trilogy in mind. Thus, he developed and employed a leitmotivic system of over 100 themes, all of which are interrelated by harmony or instrumentation, and the majority of which consist of highly melodic material. The highly logical and rigorous way in which Shore’s melodic material is employed and adapted is unparalleled among other film franchises. The precedent that his work sets regarding musical worldbuilding in film franchises is noteworthy, and it is the richness and depth of this musical language that inspired this study. This richness is perhaps most evident when viewed in contrast with the music of another of the highest-grossing franchises of the past two decades – indeed the highest-grossing franchise of all time – the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Tony Zhou, co-creator and editor of the YouTube channel ‘Every Frame a Painting’, poses an illuminating question to passers-by in Vancouver in his video essay ‘The Marvel Symphonic Universe’ (2016). First he asks them to sing the theme tunes from film franchises such as James Bond, Star Wars and Harry Potter – and the interviewees all oblige accordingly. When asked to sing ‘anything from a Marvel movie’, all interviewees are stumped, with responses including ‘I’m like the biggest Marvel fan that I know of I just can’t think of any of the songs’ and ‘I should know this, but I don’t!’ Zhou continues to suggest several reasons for the Marvel themes’ unmemorable nature. He highlights the non-emotive character of the majority of the scores, linking this to a perceived
predictability and even referring to the music as ‘bland and inoffensive’, with the music often being buried in the soundtrack mix under more prominent sound effects or dialogue. Zhou also blames temp tracking – the directorial use of temporary music that may consequently restrict a composer’s artistic licence – for a narrowing in the musical style of the contemporary (action) blockbuster, due to the fact that these films are often temped with each others’ scores. For Zhou, the root of Marvel music’s lack of presence in the public consciousness is a lack of risk taken on the part of the composers and directors.

Several responses have been made to this video essay, positing other reasons for the music’s lack of memorability. YouTube user JulienCFDurand (2016) argues that it is a lack of repetition that hinders the establishment of the themes, as well as the franchise’s lack of transmediality when compared to other franchises that use the same musical themes across games, television programmes, theme parks and other platforms. Liliana Pereira (HelloLillyTV, 2016) makes a similar point by analysing the film trailers, and highlights the fact that none of the Marvel trailers ever use music from the films, whereas most other franchise films draw on their most recognisable themes. In his video response, Dan Golding also focuses on the role of temp tracking, pointing to the ever-decreasing pool of influences used as temp music as partly to blame. However, for Golding the main culprit is the use of technology and the advent of computerised composing, and he argues that as computers were employed by composers such as Hans Zimmer to create scores, shorter and sharper sounds and stabs sounded better in computer simulation than, for example, lyrical solo wind melodies. This resulted, he argues, in ‘twenty years of percussion and heavy brass in film music, led by Hans Zimmer. The Zimmer sound is one of rhythm […] you end up creating a landscape of sound rather than harmonies and melodies’ (Golding, 2016). This leads to what I believe is one of the main differences between the memorable musical motifs of the LOTR and Harry Potter films and the less memorable music of the Marvel films, and that is quite simply the foregrounded use of melody.

To avoid any gross generalisations, the scores for the Marvel films (21 films with thirteen composers) are not devoid of melody: many of the themes do have clear melodies and use functional, triadic harmonies, often with chromatic mediant progressions. However, the problem is that the melodies of these themes are simple and indistinctive, and are often much shorter than the more recognisable motifs of the musical worlds of LOTR and Harry Potter. Take, for example, the main Avengers theme, composed by Alan Silvestri for The Avengers (2012), adapted by Brian Tyler and Danny Elfman in The Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) and reprised by Silvestri in The Avengers: Infinity War.
Liliana Pereira argues that this theme bucks the trend of unmemorable Marvel music, claiming that it is clearly stated, engenders emotional responses and is sonically foregrounded (2016). These claims are well backed up by filmic examples, but the problem still lies in the theme’s lack of melodic material. Pereira divides the theme into two parts (see Example 1). The first part constitutes more of a backing figure in the lower strings, with the moving chromatic line in the upper voice being the only thing close to a melody. The second part is a more rousing brass melody – but here the horns and later trumpets sit on top of moving block chords, and indeed the second bar (and fifth bar as repeated material) is the only instance of the melody moving independently of the harmonic accompaniment. The move to A major is perhaps notable as an example of chromatic mediant harmony (which will be expounded in Chapter Two with the help of Murphy’s tonal triadic progression classes), but harmonic shifts such as this have become commonplace in modern Hollywood film music. All this is to say, if the most recognisable and repeated musical motif in the Marvel Cinematic Universe is the Avengers theme, which itself bears very little melodic content, the Marvel scores clearly prioritise rhythmic ostinati and brassy instrumentation over strong melodic material, and this arguably contributes to our inability to recall them.

Example 1 – ‘The Avengers’ Theme from Marvel’s The Avengers (2012)

In defence of the Marvel film scores, the question should be asked: is it a bad thing that the music is not as memorable as that of other franchises? Many fans may consider it a shame that Marvel Studios have not taken the opportunity to create a more coherent and expansive musical universe in their attempt to draw their films together into one superfranchise, and indeed the intersecting storylines and characters do create opportunities for some interesting motivic development and interplay. However, James Buhler (2017) highlights this shift in compositional trends – the movement away from thematic
recurrence towards more affective gestures – as a result of Marvel’s establishing of its own brand and the experience it wishes to create for its viewers. In a close analysis of Brian Tyler’s Marvel Studios Fanfare, which accompanied the opening titles of all Marvel films (six in total) between *Thor: The Dark World* (2013) and *Doctor Strange* (2016) (at which point a new fanfare by Michael Giacchino was instated), Buhler concludes that ‘these Marvel films, like so many action films today, seem to promise and deliver a particular kind of affective experience. That experience, it would seem, is what the brand serves to sell with its music’ (2017: 34). He argues that a film studio’s efforts to create a particular affective experience for its consumers have seeped into its musical modus operandi, and this links back to the above discussion of the experience economy, and to Dan Golding’s observations regarding the homogenisation of musical style in contemporary Hollywood blockbusters as well as in Marvel films. Following Buhler, it is arguable that the Marvel composers have chosen to (or been encouraged by directors to) prioritise creating or recreating a highly Marvel-esque sound world, rather than developing a rigorous leitmotivic system for characters and settings.

Returning, then, to the musical worlds of *LOTR* and *Harry Potter*, it is precisely a high value for melodic material and motivic systems that sets them apart from those of the Marvel films, and indeed from many of their fantasy rivals. Listening to these scores, the melodies written by Shore and Williams have longer and more traditional or classical phrase structures (using antecedent and consequent phrases), and are often made distinctive through unusual harmonic changes or the use of chromaticism. Furthermore, I argue here and throughout this thesis that these two musical worlds are significant in their ability to establish and develop consistent motivic systems and to create highly affective, marketable, experiential sound-worlds – and indeed that these functions need not be mutually exclusive. In the chapters that follow I analyse and deconstruct thematic and affective elements of both musical worlds to show the detail with which they were constructed and the ways in which the worlds are established and consequently evolved, but also the ways in which the worlds may be inhabited in some sense: in other words, the experience that these worlds provide as parts of meticulously constructed multimedia franchises.

James Buhler recognises music as a vital part of the product branding of a film franchise, ‘binding the world of the franchise together across not just various films but an increasingly diverse media landscape, including especially video games, websites, and amusement park rides’ (2017: 18). He goes on to discuss music and franchise films in
terms of ‘world building’, and identifies that in order to give these films a unique affective identity – for example, to make them feel ‘epic’ – they must take place in a world that is ‘bigger than the film, bigger even than the franchise’ (Jenkins, 2006: 114). Before we can take a look at how these worlds are musically constructed and how we move into them, we must first understand what worldbuilding is and how music operates as one of a team of worldbuilding agents. The following chapter gives a full analysis of the concept of worldbuilding, as well as an investigation into how and why we might choose to call these fantasy worlds ‘home’.
Chapter One: Creating, Expanding and Inhabiting Worlds

Introduction

We all yearn to travel to far distant places, to escape for a while the boredom of the sameness of our lives, and live in a newer and more glorious existence. And we ask ourselves, how can we do that and still remain here, as we must? Then the answer comes – through the imagination. For the half hour or hour that one is immersed in a gripping story of new worlds and new ages, he is really living in that new world and new age. Science fiction then, we believe is a new method of transportation. Only the passage is made instantaneously both ways. (Wonder Stories 2/2, 1930, as quoted in Saler, 2012: 49).

Writing in 1930, the editor of American science-fiction magazine Wonder Stories Hugo Gernsback put into words mankind's modern desire to escape into new worlds and ages by means of the imagination. The sci-fi worlds mentioned here are entirely literary, but today many imaginary worlds that began in just one medium have evolved into vast transmedial universes, empires of the imagination that span literature, cinema, gaming, music, television, leisure and tourism. Similarly, one author, screenwriter or game designer's creation can grow to be added to by countless other directors, creators and worldbuilders, each expanding the fantasy worlds to make room for more inhabitants. This chapter focuses on the processes involved in building and expanding fantasy worlds, as well as ways in which people imaginatively inhabit them, laying out the theoretical framework for much of the analysis that follows in Parts One and Two.

The first section of this chapter defines terms such as worldbuilding and sub-creation, before applying the notions of worldbuilding to film and more specifically to film music, outlining further theoretical frameworks such as Daniel Yacavone's world-in/world-of distinction and the philosophical concept of 'suture'. The following section looks at how we inhabit these worlds through what Michael Saler refers to as the 'ironic imagination' and theorises the notion of dual inhabitation as exemplified by the above editor’s desire to 'escape [...] and still remain here, as we must.' The final section answers the question of why we choose to escape into these worlds, drawing on concepts of cultural homelessness put forward by literary theorists and sociologists as motivation for the pursuit of fantasy homes, and pointing to notions of homeliness that may be seen and heard in the LOTR and Harry Potter films.
Building and Expanding Worlds

Before a world can be inhabited, or even expanded, it must be created or built. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines worldbuilding simply as ‘the art of creating a new fictional world’, and has designated it as one of the ‘Words We’re Watching’. This is due to the fact that its definition and spelling (with or without a hyphen) remain ‘in a state of flux’, and because it has seen ‘an enormous increase in usage in the past decade, driven by the popularity of writers like Ursula K. Le Guin and George R.R. Martin’ (‘What is “World-Building”?’, n.d.). The term has become quite the buzzword throughout the arts, even inheriting its own organisation: the Worldbuilding Institute (WBI), a branch of the Cinematic Arts faculty of USC ‘dedicated to the dissemination, education, and appreciation of the future of narrative media through World Building’ (McDowell, n.d.). In terms of music and sound, related terms such as ‘worldizing’ and the notion of the ‘soundscape’ were coined in the 1970s, the former being attributed to acclaimed sound designer Walter Murch’s practice of playing and recording sounds in specific locations in order to record a space’s acoustic reverberance, and the latter to R. Murray Shafer and his work on sonic environments (Shafer, 1993). Although Merriam-Webster traces ‘worldbuilding’ as far back as 1805, our modern understanding of the term has emerged much more recently.

One of the most comprehensive studies on worldbuilding to date is Mark J.P. Wolf’s Building Imaginary Worlds (2012). Wolf looks at the creation of fictional worlds across all media including literature, film, television, radio and game, outlining its history and relevance to society before examining and theorising in-depth examples of different worlds and the narratives they contain. For him, worldbuilding is an innate human activity present from the very early stages of childhood, and one that, as a natural part of the imagination, never really leaves us; indeed, the very human activity of daydreaming is one of the simplest forms of worldbuilding (1-4). In Wolf’s words, ‘[t]o give oneself over to a painting, novel, movie, television show, or video game is to step vicariously into a new experience, into an imaginary world […] whether through verbal description, visual design, sound design, or virtual spaces revealed through interaction’ (16). Here, Wolf identifies sound (and thereby music) as one of several potential worldbuilders.

J.R.R. Tolkien was also well aware of the worldbuilding power of sound and music; the cosmogonical myth of his entire created universe (‘Eä’, of which Middle-earth is a part) depicts the world being born of an angelic music (2002b). In his famous lecture
and consequent essay ‘On Fairy Stories’ Tolkien introduces his own terminology, proffering ‘subcreation’ as a more accurate replacement for the misuse of the term ‘imagination’.

The mental power of image-making is one thing, or aspect; and it should appropriately be called Imagination. […] The achievement of the expression, which gives (or seems to give) ‘the inner consistency of reality’, is indeed another thing, or aspect, needing another name: Art, the operative link between Imagination and the final result, Sub-creation (Tolkien, 2014: 59).

It is clear from much of Tolkien’s writings (such as the poem *Mythopoeia* and the short story *Leaf By Niggle*) that his notion of *subcreation*, in essence an alternative term for worldbuilding, bears religious connotations and is derived in part from his strong Christian beliefs. For him the act of subcreation is a reverent and even worshipful one as the sub-creator mimics and reflects the ultimate Creator in whose image he himself was created; as he states, ‘[w]e make still by the law in which we’re made’ (Tolkien, 1931). Wolf defines subcreation as ‘the building of imaginary worlds through the using and recombining of existing concepts and ideas, as opposed to *ex nihilo* (“from nothing”) creation that only God is able to do’ (2012: 381, original emphasis). Hence there is a more nuanced distinction to be drawn here between worldbuilding, a natural and potentially limitless extension of the imagination, and subcreation, the applied combination of imagination and art wherein the raw materials are pre-existent. Understanding the origins of such a term provides another angle from which to view worldbuilding as a human activity in which we all engage. Although the act of building a new world suggests the creation of new geographies, technologies, peoples, flora and fauna, ‘sub-creating’ alludes not only to physical elements but also to histories, narratives, cultures, spiritualities and mythologies that help construct a greater ‘inner consistency of reality’ (a quality Tolkien valued highly in his works [2014: 59]). Furthermore, worldbuilding involves, to some extent, the active participation of the inhabitant, which will be expounded in greater detail below.

As outlined by Michael Saler in his book *As If*, Tolkien’s Middle-earth and the narratives set therein constituted an effort to create a re-enchanted, legitimating mythology for England (2012). Tolkien may have been one of the greatest examples of a subcreator – his painstakingly constructed legendarium is unrivalled in its scope, with several invented languages, numerous expansive topographical maps, highly detailed histories, genealogies and so on – and yet it draws on pre-existing concepts and ideas, both of dwarves, elves and goblins, and of nationalistic notions of Englishness. As Saler puts it, ‘Tolkien’s mythology would have the best of all English worlds, embodying pagan courage and Christian
compassion, reason and imagination, stoicism and salvation’ (171). It is partly the thorough and expansive nature of Tolkien’s (sub)created world (particularly Middle-earth, the setting for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord Of The Rings*), coupled with the epic, heroic narratives, which rendered his works so popular. This sense of epicness gave rise to another phenomenon – the celebration, continuation and inhabitation of imaginary worlds by their fans.

Saler’s *As If* (2012) is an important source on the theory of worldbuilding, examining the 20th-century rise in popularity of literary fantasy, and outlining the history of imaginary worlds and their evolution into virtual worlds inhabited by those who immerse themselves in them. In Saler’s case studies readers of imaginary worlds constructed in the mind of an author began to correspond, formed clubs, invented roleplay games, wrote their own additional stories and radio programs, and soon after television programs, films, plays, computer games, symphonies and musicals were created, transforming the original worlds into vast, populous, transmedial universes that transcend texts, authors and any singular medium. This communal inhabitation poses several questions regarding the authorship and ownership of virtual worlds, and Saler uses the worldbuilding term in quite a different way to Wolf here; ‘[i]ndividuals began to spend a great deal of time residing in imaginary worlds, heightening their emotional investment in them by participating in collective exercises of world building’ (25). For Saler worldbuilding can be a group exercise, carried out not only by subcreators but also by consumers, co-labourers in building a world and making it more coherent, reconciling contradictions and filling in gaps. To borrow from Anthony Boucher’s terminology, the author is demoted from the God-like status of creator to a mere ‘transcriber of the Myth’ (Boucher, 1944: 29). To return to Tolkien’s created world, the author writes: ‘I would draw some of the great tales in fullness, and leave many only placed in the scheme, and sketched. The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama’ (Tolkien, 2002a: xv). It would seem that Tolkien intentionally created a world large enough not only for his own mythologizing narratives but also for contributions from other fellow citizens of Middle-earth.⁷

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⁷ It is clear that Tolkien may have identified not only as a subcreator but also a citizen of Middle-earth; the Tolkien grave for him and his wife bears their names alongside those of Lúthien and Beren, a man from the First Age of Middle-earth and the elf maiden he loved, both featured in *The Silmarillion* (for more on the autobiographical nature of Tolkien’s work, see Carpenter, 1977: 56).
To apply much of this worldbuilding theory to the world(s) of film, a film-world is built and presented to the viewer at the outset of a film but continues to grow throughout. Every scene, line, image, sound and melody adds detail to the film-world by divulging information about it, adding to its audiovisual aesthetic or taking the action to new and unexplored regions. Filmic worldbuilding thus relies on several worldbuilding agents. One of these agents is unique in that it may exist very clearly inside the depicted film-world, outside of it, or in a liminal space somewhere between the two; that agent is music. Music helps to establish the diegesis of a film either by situating itself within the film-world as ‘diegetic’ (music with a visible or explainable source and heard by characters, such as a car radio or an enchanted harp) or by remaining outside of the world as ‘non-diegetic’ (music with an unseen source that is heard only by the audience, such as an orchestral score). Max Steiner’s score for King Kong (1933) is widely regarded as central to the establishment of the non-diegetic score (see Cooke, 2008: 88-89, Wierzbicki, 2009: 130-135), and it is notable that in the advent of synchronous sound and amidst anxieties about the potential cognitive dissonance caused by additional music, a fantasy film was perhaps most suited to establishing the musical score as a key component to the new sound film; indeed, as a worldbuilding agent. Even here, among the earliest sound films, the division between diegetic and non-diegetic music is blurred as Steiner’s score emerges from the tribal drumming heard on the first approach to Skull Island (see Franklin, 2001: 94). This is accentuated by the fact that the preceding boat journey and the initial scenes in New York City are without underscoring. In a sense, Steiner’s score and world are birthed by, or indeed built from, the diegetic sounds of the island (though the ideological and exoticist nature of the ‘tribal’ music for the island’s natives should not be understated).

The distinction of diegetic and non-diegetic music was complicated about as soon as it was instated by film music scholars, and such complications or inconsistencies have led to other definitions being suggested, including ‘source and score’ (Prendergast, 2005), ‘source scoring’ (Hagen, 1971), ‘metadiegetic’ (Stilwell, 2007) and so on. Many of these categorisations land in what Robynn Stilwell refers to as the ‘fantastical gap’ between diegetic and non-diegetic music and sound (2007). Music is extremely powerful as a worldbuilding agent precisely because of this fantastical gap and the hesitance it can create. The concept of hesitancy is an important one: literary theorist Tzvetan Todorov places fantasy at the point of hesitation between the ‘uncanny’ (the supernatural explained mechanically) and the ‘marvellous’ (the supernatural accepted as supernatural) (1975: 31). For Todorov, hesitancy is a key element in how the reader engages with and accepts the
fantasy world of a text, and the hesitance caused by blurring the line between diegetic and nondiegetic sound acts in a similarly ‘fantastic’ way. Anahid Kassabian argues that ‘the distinction between diegetic and nondiegetic music […] obscures music’s role in producing the diegesis itself’ (2001: 42) – in other words, focussing too much on whether music is inside or outside the film-world can prevent us from appreciating its role in building the world we hear it to be within or without. As music is able to exist simultaneously in the film-world and in ours, it draws them closer together and makes the leap between worlds into more of a step. The ways that music does this are further laid out in Chapter Two, but to fully understand how music acts within this gap, we first require a more nuanced understanding of the worlds it flits between.

In his book *Film Worlds: A Philosophical Aesthetics of Cinema* (2014), Daniel Yacavone puts forward a distinction between the ‘world-of’ the film and the ‘world-in’ the film. The ‘world-in’ is the denoted world, built and represented as existing within the film – a notion that is not too far from the traditional concept of the diegesis. This is the world as it is known by the characters, including settings and geographies, creatures and cultures – the ‘subcreated’ world. Yacavone’s ‘world-of’ is the world of the film as experienced by the viewer, which crucially includes meaning, as well as other aesthetic qualities and qualifiers such as ‘colour, rhythm, editing, soundtrack etc.’ (2014: 40). Yacavone clearly demarcates ‘soundtrack’ as an element of the *world-of* a film, external to the world depicted within the film and yet still a vital part of the filmic experience. Music is unique, however, in that it is the only element of the world-of a film that can be easily separated from the film and made portable and accessible through the marketing and consumption of soundtracks. This (ex)portability also makes music a highly powerful agent in applying the aesthetic of the film-world to other non-filmic iterations and experiences, a notion that is explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

Returning to the aforementioned ‘fantastical gap’, music complicates its own designation by Yacavone as part of his ‘world-of’ by coming close to, mingling with or even being heard within the ‘world-in’. Both *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* franchises include instances of diegetic/source music – that is, music made, performed and heard in the *world-in* the films. However, they each include further instances of the musical mingling of the two worlds, such as when the orchestral underscoring swells in harmonic support of Éowyn’s funeral song for her cousin in *The Two Towers*, or when Hagrid plays Hedwig’s Theme on a recorder in *Philosopher’s Stone*: a melody that strictly speaking he should never have heard. Such instances (and they are plentiful) help to link the world-of with the
world-in that it contains. By moving into the fantastical gap between the two worlds, music (and more specifically orchestral scores) need not stand at a distance from the world-in the film (the characters and plot), but can draw near to it, commenting on it and even at times seeming to effect change within it. Furthermore, it is often by existing in this liminal space between the world-in and world-of the film that music pulls the audience into them both, immersing them in a world that can be heard in different ways and on different levels. We can better understand music’s agency within mechanisms of worldbuilding by drawing on a piece of philosophical apparatus known as *suture*.

**Suture**

Originating in Lacanian psychoanalysis, suture theory was adopted and extended into film theory by Jean-Pierre Oudart (1969) and Daniel Dayan (1974), and more recently drawn on by film music scholars such as Claudia Gorbman (1987). In her influential monograph *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*, Gorbman argues that narrative film music aims primarily to render the listener an ‘untroublesome viewing subject’, stating that ‘music may act as a “suturing” device, aiding the process of turning enunciation into fiction, lessening awareness of the technological nature of film discourse’ (1987: 5). This is something of an elaboration on the more classical definition of suture whose primary example is that of a two-shot figure – when an audience is shown one shot followed by the reverse-field shot (or point-of-view shot), thus tying (or ‘suturing’) the two together to create a more cohesive subjective space for the viewer to fill. To quote William Rothman’s interpretation of Dayan, ‘the first shot as it were opens a hole in the spectator’s imaginary relationship with the filmic field. This hole is “sutured” by the shot of the character presented as the absent-one of the preceding shot.’ (1975:45). Although there is no direct musical equivalent to the visual suturing power of a reverse-view shot, film music scholars have often recognised music’s ability to draw audiences into filmic spaces and to engender subjective identifications with specific characters or spatiotemporalities, and thus the leap to identify music as one manifestation of cinematic suture is no great one.

Jeff Smith provides a critique of some of Claudia Gorbman’s main theses, most notably the trope of ‘inaudibility’ that she claims film music must adhere to in order to maximise its own affective power; the notion that for film music to be most effective it should not be consciously ‘heard’ or attended to (Smith, 1996). For Smith, psychoanalytical theories place too much emphasis on the so-called (theoretically
impossible) ‘unheard’ nature of music, leaving little room for theorising the cognitive processes involved and thus reducing a psychoanalyst’s understanding of the wide variety of listening modes and competencies to ‘subjectively-engaged and musically-unaware,’ or vice versa. These cognitive processes represent a major dimension of film music’s worldbuilding agency, as hearers (re)cognise specific worlds and orientate themselves spatiotemporally within them. The cognition of sound in film is further complicated by Michel Chion, who argues provocatively that ‘there is no soundtrack’ (1999: 3) – that is, the notion that dialogue, sound effect and underscore are presented to the viewer as a whole and understood as such is a fiction. Rather, he argues, sound is subjected to an ‘instantaneous perceptual triage’ wherein certain audio elements are relegated below others which may be elevated or foregrounded in our attention, a process entirely dependent on the image. This is similar to Smith’s conclusion, that film-watching processes include varying modes of listening and differing levels of musical cognition (1996: 239).

To be clear, Jeff Smith’s main point of criticism is the over-reliance of psychoanalytical theory on the inaudibility trope, and not the use of suture theory in and of itself as a means of explicating film music’s narratological, semiotic and psychological agencies. Suture theory has naturally stretched and unwound slightly in its adaptation and application to music, but it still lends itself well to theorising how music aids the building of film worlds, how it draws audiences into the worlds, and the ways in which it helps to smooth over these liminal transitions. Claudia Gorbman identifies music as suture that covers or disguises the film’s enunciation – the technological apparatus ‘speaking’ the film and the restrictions of this apparatus – but fails to identify music’s role as a discursive voice and an integral part of the enunciation itself. Music can be both enunciator and enounced; suture and suturer; disguise and disguised. Just as music is able to simultaneously represent the present one and the absent one, character and viewer, seen and unseen, so indeed can it be both present and absent, heard and unheard, inhabiting the meta-diegetic space that exists simultaneously in the world-of the film and the real world and helping to tie the two together.

Although filmic suture can be found at any point in a film, it is arguable that the greatest amount of suture may be required at a film’s beginning, both to draw viewers into the film world and to give the world a sense of coherence or completeness as a subjective

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8 The ‘absent one’ is a concept taken from Jean-Pierre Oudart’s definition of suture, signifying that which is unseen in a cinematic shot – an off-screen presence created by the limited scope of the cinema screen (Oudart, 1969).
space for the viewer to inhabit. There is arguably an even greater need for suture in the openings of fantasy films due to the imaginary distance often required in the leap from primary to secondary worlds; as Alec Worley puts it, ‘the greater the imaginative distance, the harder some audiences find it to make the jump’ (2005: 10) – further evidence that musical suture is required, as identified above, to bring the film world closer to our world and make this leap into more of a step. Although Smith identifies several shortcomings within Gorbman’s work, James Buhler alludes to a duality in her interpretation of suture which is convincing and will prove useful in my analyses:

“Gaps, cuts, the frame itself, silences in the soundtrack – any reminders of cinema’s materiality […] are smoothed over, or ‘spirited away’ … by the carefully regulated operations of film music”. In this way, film music facilitates absorption and identification with the narrative by “draw[ing] the spectator further into the diegetic illusion.” (Buhler, 2014: 402, quoting Gorbman, 1987: 58-59).

Thus, suture (and film music acting as such) can be understood to be smoothing over the cinematic welds and joins of the constructed film world, and simultaneously drawing a viewer into the world being constructed; in other words musical suture can be seen to act both on the subject and the subjective space, pulling the viewer into the world and sewing up the holes around them, and I employ the term to describe both of these functions.

Music’s ability to effectively glue a world together and to bring an audience into it was recognised by composer Bernard Herrmann:

music on the screen can seek out and intensify the inner thoughts of the characters. It can invest a scene with terror, grandeur, gaiety or misery. It can propel narrative swiftly forward, or slow it down. It often lifts mere dialogue into the realm of poetry. Finally, it is the communicating link between the screen and the audience, reaching out and enveloping all into one single experience. (Herrmann, quoted in Thomas, 1977: 143, emphasis my own).

Suture is employed as a methodological apparatus throughout Chapter Two, where the notion of desuture is also theorised to explain the ways in which we are safely brought out of imaginary worlds and returned to our own. Music has a dual role in building a world and enabling its inhabitation, and the notion of inhabiting a filmic or musical world is expounded in the following section.

Inhabitation

Worlds are built to be inhabited, be that by fictional characters and narratives or by readers, viewers and listeners. Michael Saler refers to fans or consumers of fantasy worlds as ‘inhabitants’; ’by the turn of the twenty-first century, imaginary worlds had gone from being the tiny purview of dedicated fantasy fans to attracting millions of inhabitants all
over the world’ (2012: 50). This language of inhabitation suggests a more immersive, more permanent state of residence than a mere sojourn into an unknown land, and a more familiar knowledge of it. Mark J.P. Wolf uses a series of liquid metaphors to explain how we go about entering imaginary worlds through whatever medium: immersion (which he divides into physical, sensory, and conceptual, the latter relying predominantly on the imagination), absorption and saturation (2012: 48-51). His notion of absorption differs from immersion in that it is a two-way process: the user is absorbed or ‘pulled into’ the world, but also absorbs the world into their mind, constructing it in their imagination (49), which is similar in a sense to the dual abilities of suture. Saturation, then, is the culmination of immersion and absorption: ‘the occupying of the audience’s full attention and imagination, often with more detail than can be held in mind all at once’ (ibid.). Although these ideas are useful in describing the processes in play, we need to go deeper to understand what it means to inhabit an imaginary or virtual world, both in filmic contexts and otherwise, and how music can help us to do that.

Saler provides a more workable explanation as to how we inhabit imaginary spaces, through the engagement of what he refers to as ‘double consciousness’. For him, this form of self-reflexive thinking is a product of modernity: ‘[t]o be modern is, in part, to exercise a “double consciousness” and to embrace complementarities, to be capable of living simultaneously in multiple worlds without experiencing cognitive dissonance […] the modern period is one in which the self-aware exercise of this double consciousness became widespread’ (2012: 13-14). More specifically, Saler points to one particular manifestation of double consciousness, the ironic imagination, as a culturally learned ability to inhabit imaginary worlds and be enchanted by them while remaining in a state of modern disenchantment; that is, to be ‘delighted but not deluded’. The ironic imagination is what enables us to be in two places at once, and to move effortlessly and instantaneously between the imaginary and the real as identified by the editor of Wonder Stories above.

A comparable alternative to the ironic imagination is Peter Stromberg’s notion of ‘enthrallment’ (1999). Stromberg defines enthrallment variously as ‘immersion in culturally available fictions’, ‘the blending of fantasy and reality’ and ‘an intense involvement in fictional narratives that is a source both of pleasure and of moral guidance’ (490, 491 and 501). Both enthrallment and Saler’s ironic imagination enable a kind of dual inhabitation of fantasy and reality, allowing us to imaginatively inhabit whatever fantasy space we may choose while physically inhabiting whatever space we find ourselves in. This applies directly to the cinematic experience: film viewers engage the ironic
imagination, giving themselves to enthrallment or the momentary impression of existing within the world(-in) of the film, while never fully believing they have left the cinema at all. Michael Saler also challenges the usefulness of Samuel Coleridge Taylor’s nineteenth-century concept of the ‘willing suspension of disbelief’ in this context, proposing the ‘willing activation of pretense’ as a replacement that is more accommodating of the ironic imagination and its double-minded state of awareness (2012: 30-32). Again, this applies readily to film-watching: we choose to believe in, accept and be delighted by what we see and hear, rather than choosing not to believe it has all been faked, which would amount to a state of delusion. David Kolb (2010) identifies a similar ‘double inhabitation’ required in the enjoyment of theme parks. He argues that total immersion is not the goal of themed attractions, because visitors need to maintain a concomitant awareness that the park is ‘fun’ and ‘different’ – in his words, ‘would we really want to fully believe that Darth Vader was pursuing us?’ (2010: 123, original emphasis). Thus, dual inhabitation and the engagement of the ironic imagination are vital not only for the consumption of films, but of theme park rides, video games, plays, and so on.

The two fantasy worlds explored within this thesis are both examples of a world that has become ‘transmedial’ – that is, they are represented and exist in multiple media with several points of access. Transmediality, according to Mark Wolf, suggests that we are vicariously experiencing something which lies beyond the media windows through which we see and hear it, since it posits an object that can be seen and heard through different windows, and one that is independent of the windows through which it is seen and heard, even though it exists only in mediated fashion. Transmediality implies a kind of independence for its object; the more windows we experience a world through, the less reliant that world is on the peculiarities of any one medium for its existence. Thus, transmediality also suggests the potential for the continuance of a world, in multiple instances and registers; and the more we see and hear of a transmedial world, the greater is the illusion of ontological weight that it has, and experiencing the world becomes more like a mediated experience of the Primary World (2012: 247).

Wolf’s explanation of transmediality is useful for several reasons. By thinking of different access points to a world as windows into them, each window can offer different angles and viewpoints, perhaps even depicting different locations within the world or temporalities within its timeline. This also gives the world a greater sense of existing autonomously and independently of the windows through which it is experienced, and even a sense of continuing to exist between our visits, waiting for us to return. This notion plays a strong part in our understanding of how opening and closing sequences of film franchises take us into and out of the same film-worlds year after year, drawing on familiar sights and sounds to give the impression they never stopped existing, and this forms the basis of the.
investigation in Chapter Two. Lastly, the more we see a world from every angle and become familiar with it, the more the windows may become like mirrors – that is, the more the imaginary world feels as familiar as our own.

Through whichever window we access an imaginary world, the ironic imagination and the dual inhabitation it enables are what allow us to experience the world without losing sight of our own. Video games require a more specialised kind of dual inhabitation because of the multisensory and interactive nature of gameplay: a player must imagine they exist within the game world in order to make choices informed by the contents and narratives of that world. Theme park visitors must willingly activate pretence, choosing to accept elements of the created world while simultaneously being free to marvel at the ingenuity of its creation. Double consciousness is even present within the consumption of soundtracks, allowing listeners to imaginatively (and aurally) inhabit fantasy film worlds while carrying out other tasks, perhaps even serving to make them more productive, or simply furnishing their world with elements of the imaginary one (a notion fully investigated in Chapter Five). If the use of the ironic imagination has answered the question of how we inhabit fantasy worlds (though the ins and outs of these processes continue to be investigated throughout the thesis), the question now stands as to why we choose to inhabit them. What makes these worlds so appealing? Why do we return to the cinema, the game store, the bookshop, the theme park or the Internet time and time again for a chance to revisit the worlds we have grown to love? Why do these virtual worlds seem to make such good homes?

Home

Towards the end of the Introduction I suggested that fantasy’s main attraction, and the partial cause of its increased popularity, was its focus on the notion of healing. Applying this notion to the construction of fantasy film franchises and the worlds within them, the question becomes more nuanced: if people look to fantasy for healing (or indeed escape, consolation or recovery), how is this brought about in the context of transmedial film-worlds? There are several possible motivators behind the consumption and fandom of fantasy texts – Mark Wolf points to the pursuit of wonder, and Michael Saler the desire for the re-enchantment of the world – but I would argue that the main reason people habitually return to the worlds of LOTR and Harry Potter is their provision of a sense of home. Home has already been identified above as a fragile entity in contemporary society, and films
provide an arena in which to imagine or prophesy the protection or restoration of the home. Richard Selcer points out that ‘none of these [American cinematic] myths is stronger or more presistent [sic] than the myth of home as the best possible place in the world’ (1990: 54). Katherine Fowkes identifies the importance of the theme of home within fantasy cinema, pointing out that ‘if films must construct their own notion of home […] fantasy may be in a privileged position because home is already an elusive, fantasy-like idea’ (2010:11-12). The ‘home’ theme is very much at the heart of Tolkien’s writings, and similarly the surrogate home and adoptive family that Harry finds in Hogwarts and the wizarding world are central to the narrative (see Saler, 2012: 194 and Bidisha, 2010). Why, then, are people in search of imaginary homes?

In *The Theory of the Novel* (1971) literary theorist Georg Lukács outlines the notion of ‘transcendental homelessness’ as a way of understanding the apparent formlessness of the modern novel, no longer limited to the paradigmatic literary forms of epic, tragedy or comedy. For him, this homelessness is symptomatic of a loss of intrinsic meaning, which must now be grappled with and fought for. In a similar vein, sociologists Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner state that ‘modern man has suffered from a deepening condition of “homelessness”’ later pointing to the religious crisis in modern society as one cause of this loss of meaning (1973: 82, 185). Berger et al. continue to identify the active role that consumers play in the processes of both building and inhabiting homes, here describing the precarious nature of these structures: ‘in their private lives individuals keep on constructing and reconstructing refuges that they experience as “home”. But, over and over again, the cold winds of “homelessness” threaten these fragile constructions’ (188). If (modern) man is experiencing a kind of cultural homelessness, it follows that he would be in pursuit of a place (or places) he could call home, and the virtual worlds described above may in fact prove ideal in this pursuit.

Philosopher Michael Allen Fox states that ‘it is an innate human impulse to seek to dwell where self-affirmation, attachment, and belonging come alive’ (2016: 112). A person may wish to inhabit an imaginary space if the space can provide a sense of affirmation; if it can allow a person to become attached or to feel as if they belong there; in other words, if the space is *homely*. Elisabeth Bronfen confirms the prominence of belonging as a central impulse in fantasy cinema, arguing that ‘cinematic narratives, particularly when they are concerned with concepts of home, are inscribed by *a nostalgia for an untainted sense of belonging*, and the impossibility of achieving that is also the catalyst for fantasies about recuperation and healing’ (Bronfen, 2004: 21, emphasis added). Empowerment, agency,
efficacy and self-responsibility are other elements that, for Fox, contribute to a sense of being ‘at home’, and thus the more interactive manifestations (or ‘windows’, to continue the above imagery) a fantasy world can incorporate, the more homely and inviting it may become by empowering and autonomising the inhabitant. Fox also points to the attractive nature of constancy and reliability among homes in today’s sociopolitical climate. ‘For many reasons, stability has become an elusive quality of life in the present era. The quest for stability may help illuminate some home-making and home-occupying tendencies […] the stresses of modern life do make men and women feel that their home is a kind of sanctuary’ (116). Though he is mainly discussing physical homemaking this is still applicable to film worlds and the imaginative home-making processes involved, particularly in franchises where the ability to return to the same world year after year or film after film provides a comforting regularity, amplifying the existing comfort of a world’s aesthetic homeliness.9

One of the clearest ways in which a film-world (the world-in a film) can portray itself as homely is through the positive depiction of narrative homespaces. The protection of home (be it a childhood home or a surrogate one) is one of the most common thematic impulses among fantasy narratives, and LOTR, The Hobbit and Harry Potter narratives all contain primary homes that the protagonists must fight to defend (the Shire, Erebor and Hogwarts, respectively). However, the protagonists often pass through other houses and homes on their journeys, and may also identify as part of a wider community or as citizens of a conceptual ‘homeland’. Thus, the concept of a home-space can be further dissected into subtly different understandings of the terms. Hamid Naficy (1999) frames his exposition on exile in film and media with a trifurcation that moves from the literal to the abstract, all closely intertwined: house, home, homeland. Naficy elaborates,

*House* is the literal object, the material place in which one lives […] *Home* is any place; it is temporary and it is moveable; it can be built, rebuilt, and carried in memory and by acts of imagination […] *Homeland* has been the most absolute, abstract, mythical, and fought for of the three notions (1999: 5-6, original emphasis). Naficy’s identification of the home as transient, buildable, and linked to acts of the imagination strengthens my argument that fans of the franchises may build imagined

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9 It is noteworthy that many fantasy texts, be they novels, films or videogames, are often consumed within the home itself. This creates, in a sense, a home within a home, and here the ironic imagination enables a dual inhabitation (the inhabitation of the physical homespace, but also of the mental/imagined home) creating a concentrated home-effect and perhaps strengthening the homeliness of the more internal, imaginary home. Consumption within the home may also strengthen the links between real home-spaces and virtual ones, or even allow the two to become more alike as in the final example of this chapter.
homes within fantasy worlds. Furthermore, the separation of the physical house from the concept of home and the additional notion of homeland enables a deeper understanding of these distinct elements and their interplay within the *Harry Potter* and Middle-earth narratives, each of which includes examples of all three elements.

To clarify, each narrative contains a clear primary home (Hogwarts and the Shire), several secondary homes or houses (such as the Weasley’s house or Rivendell), and a conceptual homeland that the protagonist also fights to protect to an extent (the wizarding world, and Middle-earth – or indeed, those citizens who fight for good rather than for evil). *The Hobbit* takes the notion of home one step further: not only must Bilbo leave the comfort of his own home at Bag End, but he and the company fight for the rescue and restoration of the Dwarvish homeland, Erebor. These distinctions will be helpful in Chapter Three, where I analyse the musical languages used to identify the distinct houses, homes and homelands of each world, and the ways in which they are made to appear or sound hospitable and inviting – or not, as the case may be.

**Conclusion**

Fantasy worlds, though they often start as a seed in one author’s imagination, can grow into vast transmedial universes that take on a life of their own and provide homes to millions of inhabitants. Some of these inhabitants go so far as to create their own manifestations of the worlds in acts of extreme fandom. One particular example serves to combine many of the above ideas about worldbuilding, inhabitation and the home. Charlotte Kyriakou, a particularly ardent fan of the *Harry Potter* franchise and mother of three, spent £13,000 in 2016 to transform their family dining room into a *Harry Potter*-themed Great Hall, complete with Hogwarts house flags, wooden table and benches, and numerous wizarding artefacts including props used in the films (see Figure 3). Taking inspiration from the Warner Bros Studio Tour, Kyriakou and the family ‘went down to London to go to the studios, and […] thought “why can’t we do this at home?”’ (Boult, 2016). This example of building one’s own personal part of a virtual world and furnishing it with both replicas and authentic film props is not only a highly specialised fan practice, but also a form of worldbuilding that allows a very literal inhabitation of the world-of-the films.
Further examples of this more literal inhabitation or fantasy home-making include a hotel in London (the Georgian House Hotel, Pimlico) which includes a number of ‘Wizard’s Chambers’ – suites decorated in ‘magical gothic design’ seemingly inspired by sets from the films, complete with four-poster beds, tapestries and cauldrons, all hidden behind a secret-bookcase doorway (‘The Wizard Chambers’, n.d.). A holiday destination in the English Lake District called ‘The Quiet Site’ includes a number of ‘Hobbit Holes’ that sleep two to six people, marketed as a fun and homely alternative for a family camping trip (‘Hobbit Holes’, n.d.). The Hobbiton set tour in New Zealand is even bookable for weddings, allowing people to celebrate one of the most memorable days of their lives in the idyllic setting of the Shire, the imagined home of several hobbits and several million fans. Though illustrative of the leisure and tourism industries jumping on the fantasy bandwagon and making money from those who would pay anything to spend a night in the Leaky Cauldron or get married in a hobbit hole, these cases also show the creative lengths that people go to in imaginatively inhabiting the worlds-of fantasy films, engaging the ironic imagination and enabling a dual inhabitation that fuses the fantasy world with the real one, and, on the most basic level, providing inhabitants with the home they search for.

The ‘capitalisation’ of home identified here is an important concept that looms behind both these examples and many of the case studies in this thesis. With media conglomerates creating more spin-off films and games, or even theme parks and plays, in
order to make more money from franchise fans, and professional orchestras putting on concerts of franchise film music to attract larger audiences, these fantasy homes become commodities in an economy that trades in wonder. The increasing availability of various manifestations of existing fantasy worlds contrasts starkly with contemporary sociocultural trends regarding the home: the rise of homelessness in the UK; increasingly atomised lives and social individualisation; political anxieties surrounding immigration, the Syrian refugee crisis, the Windrush generation, Grenfell Tower, the Brexit vote. Is it any wonder people are looking for home elsewhere? Should the studios that manufacture and provide increasingly immersive and absorptive experiences of fantasy worlds be seen as deplorable or admirable? These questions highlight not only the numerous complexities of this investigation, but also the depth of its social and cultural importance.

Having outlined the necessary theories behind worldbuilding, suture, inhabitation, the ironic imagination, and cultural homelessness as a motivator for fantasy consumption, we now find ourselves suitably equipped theoretically and methodologically for the main analytical body of the thesis. Our first introduction to the world of a film or a franchise is perhaps the most formational and influential, and for the majority of inhabitants this happens in the first film, generally within the opening sequence. The following chapter looks at the opening and closing sequences of the films in more detail, to show the role of music in the creation of musical worlds and the many ways in which it is able to draw viewers into them.

Some viewers may have already encountered a particular fantasy world before watching films that take place within it, either through books that preceded it, hearing the music, seeing the trailer or via some other medium. For them, the opening sequences of the films, and the first film in particular, may conjure some cognitive dissonance as the viewer seeks to reconcile their image of the world with the one they are presented with. In terms of worldbuilding and inhabitation, the opening sequences are arguably just as formational in these contexts.
Part One: Music Within Film

Chapter Two: In and Out of Home

“One does not simply walk into Mordor” – Boromir

This seemingly insignificant line from Peter Jackson’s *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) was only ever meant to highlight the treacherous nature of the journey to be undertaken from Rivendell to Mount Doom, but has since been adopted into digital culture as a meme that is altered to suit any context. The phrase, often accompanied by the image of a pensive Boromir, has been shared across several social media platforms and even referenced by Google Maps (see Figure 4).

![Figure 4 – Walking Directions from ‘The Shire’ to ‘Mordor’ on Google Maps](image)

Although the opening ‘one does not simply’ of Sean Bean’s now notorious line has been suffixed with such endings as ‘resist bacon’, ‘find someone like you’ and ‘go to IKEA and only buy one thing’, the original line remains true in several ways. The route is riddled with orcs and marshes and poisonous fumes – but the act of film-watching in a cinema is also riddled with identification processes, boundary crossings and socio-cultural spaces that an audience member must travel through (whether they realise it or not) in their film-watching experience. Before viewers can even get to Mordor - even before the film has begun (although a film’s exact beginning point is another matter) - they must pass from the outside world into the darkened space of the cinema, where distractions must be captured and bound, and discomforts, annoyances and other obstacles to the immersive experience must be limited and controlled. There viewers may be set upon by capitalist machines and bombarded with advertising before the film is silently announced, and after a few words of warning from the oracles of film classification, the viewers find themselves at the foreboding and intriguing gates of the Opening Titles. Even then, safe passage through that

11 Unfortunately this ‘Easter egg’ (hidden joke, often online) is no longer functional.
gateway into the world of the film is not assured. Disruptive questions might be posed by
the style of the titles – the font might jar or the music irritate, putting the viewer on guard
and making it difficult for them to accept and dwell in this alternative land. One does not
simply walk in, sit down and watch a film.

The transitional processes involved in the cinematic experience have been explored
by writers such as Rajinder Dudrah (2012) and Annette Kuhn (2002, 2010), the latter
focussing in large part on memories of cinematic experience in her book An Everyday
Magic: Cinema and Cultural Memory (2002). Kuhn recognises the elastic nature of time
and space for movie-goers within the physical space of the cinema, and the roles that
lighting, décor, warmth and comfort play in enabling the subject’s transition into the film-
watching mode. Today, cinemas and multiplexes may erect themed lobby installations or
play franchise-specific music in order to extend these transitional processes, starting them
even before an audience has entered the cinematic space. Several spaces, processes and
practices are identified in the above paragraph on transitions into filmwatching (the realm
of the Hollywood blockbuster could easily be thought of as another filmic space or world).
Each space that a viewer travels through in the film-watching process plays a different
role, and these vary considerably in different contexts of home, cinema or elsewhere. Once
the film starts, however, the processes in play are very much the same, and it is these
moments – as the lights dim and the storytellers of the film proper (image, text, sound and
music) start to speak – that I have chosen to analyse. There is very little existent analysis
on the opening sequences of films, and even less on closing sequences, and hence this
chapter represents a significant contribution. Though text and image do much to depict or
describe a film’s world, I will focus on the roles of the two more immersive or perhaps
subliminal storytellers at work: sound and music.

Opening titles have always served the necessary function of introducing the film
and its makers or distributors, but their narrative function as part of the filmic space itself
is a development indebted in great part to the pioneering work of graphic designers and
filmakers Saul and Elaine Bass, who came to prominence in the mid-1950s. Saul Bass
created opening sequences for films such as The Man with the Golden Arm (Preminger,
with the Golden Arm is regarded as something of a turning point in the consideration of
title sequences as an equally important part of the film, perhaps due to the fact that director
Otto Preminger sent the prints to theatres with explicit instructions to only run the first reel
once the curtains were drawn back (Kirkham, 2011). Bass’s work came in an era of
increasing independent production in Hollywood that saw the destabilisation of some of the most well-established conventions of Hollywood storytelling.

One early example of music and sound building a unique film-world can be found in the opening sequence of Orson Welles’ highly influential *Citizen Kane* (1941). The investigative and intriguing long-dissolve shot transitions move ever closer to the mysterious Xanadu mansion, and Bernard Herrmann’s creeping score of alto and bass flutes and other low, deep instruments creates a highly evocative atmosphere over the two and a half minute sequence. Herrmann himself recognised the importance of music in this opening section, claiming ‘without that music that sequence is not complete’ (Herrmann, 2007). Dimitri Tiomkin describes the rigid expectations placed on composers such as himself and Herrmann in the classical era:

> [t]he opening title music had to be full of joy and gladness. It was actually forbidden at some studios to use minor keys in the opening music for a picture, their reasoning being that ‘minor’ meant sad and ‘major’ denoted happiness. The conviction with which they said these things was incredible, and sometimes funny (Thomas, 1977: 72).

Opening sequences such as that for *Citizen Kane* subverted these expectations, claiming the film’s beginning as a chance to build a world, rather than living up to a studio’s expectation that an opening should always feel good.

![Figure 5 – RKO Production Logo from Citizen Kane](image)

In the realm of Hollywood cinema, production logos (also known as vanity cards) usually precede a film’s opening sequence, and have long featured movement and synchronised sound. The RKO Radio Pictures logo, for example (see Figure 5), featured widening circles emanating from a radio tower with accompanying Morse code beeps, and appeared before RKO films including *King Kong* (Cooper and Schoedsack, 1933) and
Citizen Kane. John Williams composed the opening fanfare of Star Wars (Lucas, 1977, later subtitled Episode IV: A New Hope) in the same key as Alfred Newman’s 20th Century Fox fanfare that preceded it. Because of this, the film’s opening became a sonic extension of the production logo, blurring the lines between studio titles and opening titles and suturing the production logo into the film itself. The 20th Century Fox fanfare became such an important part of the Star Wars franchise that Newman’s music was released as part of the original soundtrack in 1977, and the release of Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (Edwards, 2016) without the Fox fanfare or traditional opening crawl text caused no small amount of disturbance among fans (see Couch, 2016). Although Newman’s fanfare was originally composed to sonically announce the work of a particular film studio, it became tied up in the Star Wars story and fandom through its musical linkage to the world of Star Wars, and thereby came to represent or facilitate a kind of homecoming at the start of each film which Rogue One therefore lacked.

Production logos are more commonly incorporated into films either by their visual alteration, or by replacing their standard musical accompaniments with elements of the films’ sound worlds. Early examples of this more self-aware practice of postmodern filmmaking include George Lucas’s American Graffiti (1973), in which Universal’s spinning globe logo is accompanied by the sounds of a radio tuning into a particular station, the station’s jingle and then ‘Rock Around the Clock’ by Bill Haley and his Comets, which continues under the opening credits. In Chinatown (1974), director Roman Polanski paints the Paramount logo in sepia tones to match the visual aesthetic of the opening credits, and begins Jerry Goldsmith’s evocative ‘love theme’ for the film with the appearance of the logo. More recently, films such as The Simpsons Movie (Silverman, 2007) and the Pitch Perfect films (Moore, 2012; Banks, 2015; and Sie, 2017) have had characters from the films singing the well-known Fox and Universal fanfares, here exemplifying the use of sound to introduce the film-world by mimicking a common film-watching practice – singing along to the opening fanfares. Every film in the Lord of the Rings, Hobbit and Harry Potter franchises incorporate studio credits into the film in some way by altering the sound, music or appearance of the production logos. In his analysis of the opening titles of Fellowship of the Ring (FOTR) James Buhler identifies sound as the source of enchantment and points to the studio title, rather than the film title, as our introduction to the film proper: ‘sound, however, wraps this corporate credit in a veil of enchantment […] in these opening moments of The Fellowship of the Ring we witness, it seems, the birth of a world’ (2006: 232). In these cases, filmmakers use every tool at their
disposal to bring us into their created world as effectively and efficiently as possible, perhaps before we even consider the film to have started.

Considering the world(s) of film franchises, the opening sequences of subsequent instalments play a slightly different role, or indeed take on further roles. As well as building an audiovisual space in which to begin the film, these opening sequences must also remind us of what has gone before, help us recall what we already know of the film-world, and perhaps even inform us as to where (and when) in the world we find ourselves at the beginning of a new episode. The opening titles of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, the sixth episode of the franchise, include aural snippets of dialogue from the previous film (such as Bellatrix Lestrange [Helena Bonham-Carter] shouting ‘I killed Sirius Black!’) which are heard alongside visual flashbacks, to give audiences a mnemonic recap of several important plot points. Many franchises remind us what world we are in by establishing and reusing audiovisual tropes, such as the visual treatment of the production logo, the same recognisable sound design or theme tune, or even the use of specific fonts or colours. In this way, our entry to the film-world is conditioned by these tropes and the memories we associate with them. The outrage caused by the lack of crawl text (and of John Williams’ ‘Main Title’ theme) in the opening to *Rogue One* (2016) is therefore understandable, because the cognitive dissonance caused by the absence of these tropes forced fans to access a familiar world through an unfamiliar route. These tropes become a kind of shorthand to denote the totality of a film-world both visually and aurally, and the ways in which they operate can be understood by interrogating their textual status.

If the body of a film is considered as a text, then opening sequences and their constituent parts can be seen as paratextual in their relation to the main film-texts – that is, they stand at the edges of the text and act as mediators or bridges between the film and the viewer. Drawing on the work of literary theorist Gérard Genette, scholars such as Jonathan Gray (2010) and Michiel Kamp (2016) have adopted the concept of the paratext into film, television, videogame and other media. According to Genette (1997: 1-2),

> the paratext is what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public. More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a threshold, or [...] a "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an "undefined zone" between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard and fast boundary [...] 

Applying this to our film-texts, opening titles can easily be seen as a threshold, somewhere between the inside and outside of a film – a notion strengthened by the merging of the
production logo into the film proper which blurs the lines of when a film truly begins.\textsuperscript{12} Gray quotes Genette to point out the importance of paratexts in \textit{fictional} texts, an important distinction considering the highly fictional nature of fantasy film-worlds:

far from being tangentially related to the text, paratexts provide “an airlock that helps the reader pass without too much difficulty from one world to the other, a sometimes delicate operation, especially when the secondary world is a fictional one.” In other words, paratexts condition our entry to texts, telling us what to expect […] (2010:25).\textsuperscript{13}

Fantasy films, then, require a high degree of care and attention in the creation and constitution of their paratexts to enable safe passage into and out of the film worlds; at least, the most successful of these films will aim to smooth these paratextual transitions by minimising the amount of cognitive dissonance experienced by viewers and creating as airtight a seal as possible. Genette’s airlock analogy may prove useful in understanding the ways that music transports us from our world into the world of a film in the following case studies.

\textbf{Opening Sequences – The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit franchises}

Each of the six films in question here open in much the same way. From darkness, animated production logos and a few opening credits give way to the film’s main title (‘The Lord of the Rings’ or ‘The Hobbit’), before an opening prologue section, and then the film’s title card (i.e. ‘The Fellowship of the Ring’). Notably, sound begins in the darkness before the first logo, thus building the soundworld first, as noted by James Buhler in his chapter ‘Enchantments of The Lord of the Rings’ (2006) which provides an illuminating analysis of the role of sound in the opening sequence of \textit{The Fellowship of the Ring}. In this particular sequence, glassy and ethereal sounds fade in from nothing and pre-empt the visual coming together of elements of the New Line logo before morphing into a harmonic drone as the production credits continue. In line with Tolkien’s own mythology (in which the created world is born of celestial sound) Buhler identifies sound as the instigating force in the film’s opening, and also points to how sound can blur the lines between the film-world and ours: ‘appearing in advance of the filmic image and consequently seeming to

\textsuperscript{12} Paratexts can be further classified as ‘peritexts’ and ‘epitexts’, the former being attached to the text, such as opening and closing credits, title sequences, classification certificates, studio logos, and indeed prologues and epilogues, and the latter being unattached, such as trailers, interviews, reviews, soundtracks, posters and other promotional materials.

\textsuperscript{13} Gray omits a word from Genette’s original text which reads ‘without too much \textit{respiratory} difficulty from one world to the other.’ (1997: 408, emphasis mine). This puts less emphasis on the living, breathing nature of the reader/viewer, which I will return to later through the use of ‘suture’. 58
draw the latter into being, sound raises the question of origin: where does the film begin? This enigma in turn presses an ontological question: where does the world – indeed being itself – begin?’ (2006: 232). Just as sound seems to pre-empt or extend the film’s beginning, the film-world emerges from the darkness as seemingly pre-existent, rather than coming into existence with the start of the film. This is a perfect example of the logos and prologue acting paratextually, as a threshold between the text and the viewer or between the primary and secondary worlds, blurring the lines between text and paratext.

Sound is not only exalted through its precedence of the opening image, but also through its foregrounding in the opening sequence with the use of visual silence – 25 seconds of black screen separate the New Line studio title and the main \textit{Lord of the Rings} title, leaving audiences little choice but to submit to a temporary state of blindness and focus entirely on the disembodied voice of the prologue’s female narrator (later embodied in the form of Cate Blanchett’s Galadriel). The fact that this voice is heard first in Sindarin, one of Tolkien’s invented Elvish languages, before being translated into English three seconds later, creates a moment of hesitation: what is this unknown language? Who is speaking? Why does the speaker require translation? This hesitancy is similar to that referred to by Todorov between the marvellous and the uncanny, and thus the prologue’s (and thereby the film’s) fantastic nature is heightened by the estranging use of sound and the joining of the familiar with the unfamiliar. The efficiency with which this film world is aurally established before the main title is remarkable – viewers may not recognise the language, but they know they are not in the world they were in a few minutes prior. The film-world is sonically constructed \textit{around} the audience, rather than visually \textit{in front of} the audience.\footnote{This immersive sonic worldbuilding is furthered by the speaker arrangement in many cinemas: \textit{FOTR} was screened in Dolby Digital EX (also referred to as 6.1, or a configuration of six speakers surrounding the audience and one subwoofer).} The use of total darkness thus provides a kind of audiovisual airlock: for 25 seconds the audience is enclosed in a paratextual vestibule that carries them from one world to another, allowing the familiar air of the cinema to drain out while the unfamiliar air of this new world floods in in the form of sound, invasively flooding their ears before their eyes are allowed to catch up.

Space and time are important notions to establish in transporting an audience into a fantasy film-world. The first moments of \textit{FOTR} establish a sense of space and depth in a variety of ways, many of which become recognisable tropes employed in future episodes. Visually, the New Line and \textit{Lord of the Rings} titles are both animated and rendered
distinctly three-dimensional, turning a two-dimensional screen into an inhabitable space and drawing viewers into it – particularly the LOTR title whose metallic materiality makes it seem tactile, and the dawning of the sun on its ridges suggests a sense of beginning. Aurally, the two voices (Elvish and English) are also positioned differently in the sonic field – the whispered Elvish being quieter, more distant and harder to make out, and the English voice noticeably louder and extremely close with no reverb. Not only does this create an enlarged sense of filmic space, but it also engenders stronger identifications with the voice of Galadriel, a comforting closeness in the presence of the unknown. This vocal foregrounding is also used later in the film when Galadriel speaks telepathically inside the minds of other characters and is seen to be heard only by them. Hence, it is likely that on subsequent viewings the recognition of this voice and its aural proximity might give repeat viewers the impression of hearing it inside their own minds. There are therefore several ways in which such aural and visual subjective positioning acts as suture to draw a viewer into a world that is being stitched together all around them.

Regarding temporality, the seven-minute prologue provides a history of the Ring and a prehistory for the trilogy’s main narrative, detailing events that took place roughly 3000 years before the film’s (second) beginning. The opening monologue sets up this prehistory, alluding to a forgotten time; ‘…much that once was is lost, for none now live who remember it.’ The audience’s transition into the world and time of the film narrative is aided by this temporal leap – first they are introduced to Middle-earth and (part of) its history, taken back to a forgotten past and made familiar with the sights, sounds and races of Middle-earth. Then they are brought back to the present, or a present; having been familiarised with Middle-earth’s history they are then introduced to the Shire, either consequentially as the narrative begins, as in the theatrical release, or by Bilbo Baggins in a kind of secondary prologue in the extended edition. Narratively the prologue and its large temporal leaps actually enable a smoother transition for the viewer by dislocating them from their own present world and time before relocating them in a kind of alternative present, and by processing these transitions one after the other rather than simultaneously. Here the concept of an airlock must evolve to become something more flexible or manoeuvrable – something that is able to transport viewers to several places on their paratextual journey into the text, rather than a linear route from A to B.
Once the audience finds themselves in the Shire at the start of the film’s main adventure, they are not only well-versed in the legends of Middle-earth and familiar with many of its sights and inhabitants, but they have also been made musically familiar. At least ten of Howard Shore’s major themes are introduced throughout this seven minute prologue, the most prominent being the ‘History of the Ring’ theme, a dark and sinewy motif which is first played by violins over the LOTR title (see Example 2). The theme is heard eleven times on four separate occasions in the prologue: four times over the title and introduction of the rings of power, once when Isildur takes the ring from Sauron’s hand, three times at Isildur’s death and the ring’s escape, and three times at Bilbo’s discovery of the ring. Thus, even before the film’s main narrative has begun the Ring motif has become intrinsically bound to the Ring itself and its own journey – in Shore’s words, ‘it’s showing you how the Ring has travelled from hand to hand’ (Adams, 2010: 136). Although the high levels of action and numerous narrative strands serve to quickly engage a viewer, the opening sequence is perhaps such a feast for the eyes that they take precedence over the ears, and thus a great number of Howard Shore’s main musical themes are gently introduced without being (re)cognised. That is not to say that they go unheard, but rather that there is another mode of listening taking place where affect supersedes cognition and musical appreciation is more subliminal. This comes in line with Jeff Smith’s argument that most film music is apprehended using levels of musical cognition that exist somewhere between a physiological response and a close attentive appreciation (borrowing from Peter Kivy), modes he describes as: ‘the free association which takes music to be representational, and the understanding of music in terms of emotional expressivity’ (1996: 239). At the very beginning of the franchise the representational role of each theme is in a fluid state, and the music therefore plays a more expressive and affective role in heightening the drama and mood.

James Buhler adopts Saul Kripke’s semiotic concept of the primal baptism to describe the first time a signifier coincides with what it signifies – that is, when a leitmotif
accompanies the character, place or theme it represents (2000: 44). Taking the History of the Ring theme as an example, its primal baptism is not its first hearing with the _LOTR_ title but indeed its second invocation (and, indeed, fifth iteration) when Isildur takes the Ring from the severed finger of its creator, the Dark Lord Sauron. In an exposition on John Williams’ music for _Star Wars_, Buhler posits that the use of a leitmotif before its primal baptism can act as a source of myth, arguing that inconsistency of leitmotivic deployment serves as a trace of self-conscious mythologization because such moments belie another logic at work besides the obvious signifying one – a musicomythic logic. […] Moments […] when the music seems not entirely bound up with its semiotic function are what gives this music its mythical character. The music seems to intuit connections that are beyond immediate rational comprehension. This semiotic failure is the mark of the mythic, pointing to a realm beyond reason, beyond language […] (ibid.)

Hearing the History of the Ring theme before it is attached to the Ring thus imbues the opening with a mythic weight. Buhler continues to argue that it is through this semiotic failure that the mythic character of the music comes to represent the Force in the _Star Wars_ films, and in a similar sense the mythic nature of the History of the Ring theme arguably carries something of the Ring’s supernatural and even autonomous nature.

Two further motifs are introduced during the prologue’s battle scene, referred to by Doug Adams as ‘The Evil of the Ring (Mordor/Sauron)’ and ‘The Ringwraiths’ (2010: 136). The first of these themes is clearly accompanied by its signified as the last alliance wages war against the armies of Mordor, but the second, which accompanies the battle both before and after Sauron’s appearance, is perhaps being employed more for its aggressive musical qualities than as a true signifier – the ringwraiths (undead kings of men who serve the Dark Lord) have not yet been introduced. Several questions arise here regarding the nature of leitmotifs, the reliability of nomenclatural systems and the ultimate authority of composers. If the Ringwraiths theme does accompany its namesake characters most often, does its use in their absence tie them musically to Mordor or Sauron? Does this semiotic ambiguity indeed imbue the score with mythical quality or trigger cognitive dissonance for repeat viewers? In this case, as the ringwraiths are servants of Sauron it is not too much of a stretch for their theme to be used to accompany their master. On the contrary, Shore is establishing his arsenal of Mordor themes and familiarising audiences with the musical language of Middle-earth. As Adams points out, ‘Shore here establishes the voice of the world’ (2010: 136).
One final example of a theme being used before its primal baptism is the Lothlórien theme, the very first musical material heard in the entire franchise, which ties back in with James Buhler’s identification of its mythical qualities in his work on the prologue. The theme itself, a soft drone of open fifth strings and a haunting chorus of female voices singing a simple melody based on an Arabic mode (the maqām hijaz, see Example 3), abounds with mystical, Eastern and ethereal musical tropes. The sound of voices singing in unison also ‘conjures the chant of an ancient world’ (Buhler, 2006: 235); to quote Howard Shore again, ‘this is Middle-earth of thousands of years ago’ (Adams, 2010: 51). Thus, the Lothlórien theme not only serves to represent one particular community of Elves but also evokes the ancient, prehistoric sound of Middle-earth. This makes both musical and mythological sense, as the Elves are the most ancient, quasi-angelic race within Tolkien’s legendarium. The fact that the Lothlórien theme is used as a precursor or perhaps invoker or summoner of the main title, and in a more ‘enchanted’ instrumentation than the horns and orchestra that follow, lends the theme an added layer of myth and transcendence. Hence, when it returns later in Lothlórien proper, its primal baptism brings with it these mythical and cosmogonical connotations.

Middle-earth and Howard Shore’s related motivic system are musically established in the first seven minutes of FOTR, whose film world is constructed both sonically and visually throughout the prologue, gradually drawing viewers into the world as they perceive it. Although many of the above examples line up with the paratextual analogy of the airlock, they also serve to prove its insufficiency through their multiplicity of meanings and pathways. Thus, the interpretation of the ways in which music can work paratextually throughout the film text as well as at its borders requires a more elastic theoretical apparatus – one which can describe not only the transportation of viewers and the constitution of subjectivity, but also the continual construction of the world itself around the subject, and which reflects the more porous, organic nature of subjectivity and its need to breathe: the concept of suture. There are numerous parallels between Gray’s airlock analogy and suture – both bring or connect two things together to create an airtight or watertight seal, looking to restore stability to a structure or atmosphere and create a smooth surface or transition. However, where Gray’s entryway paratext rigidly ‘conditions our
entrance to texts’ (2010: 25), suture allows for a plurality of subjective identifications and transition points, hooking a viewer and tugging them in the direction it wants them to follow, as opposed to an airlock which provides only one way in or out.

Returning to the case studies at hand I will illustrate examples of musical suture within more opening sequences (other moments of suture being addressed in a later section). There are numerous tropes introduced in the opening of *The Fellowship of the Ring* that are then reused in *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*, many of which also appear in each instalment of *The Hobbit*. These opening tropes include a musical prelude over the New Line title, the History of the Ring theme over the *LOTR* title, a prologue of some kind, and the introduction of the film’s most prominent theme over the film title. Table 1 shows how each of these tropes is employed and adapted in each of the films. These repeated musical devices are good examples of suture in play. They give the franchises a sense of coherence and consistency, but also allow the audience to become familiar with the journey into Peter Jackson’s Middle-earth, entering it at different times and places but always with the same musical tropes to reassure them. This familiarity, and particularly the repeated use of the ‘History of the Ring’ theme at the start of each film, helps to suture the viewer quickly back into the film world without having to spend time rebuilding it.
As can be seen in the table there are certain changes that Howard Shore makes to the scoring of these audiovisual tropes, most notably to the New Line title music and to the setting of the Ring theme in *ROTK*. In *The Two Towers* the brief horn and strings prelude over the New Line title consists of just eight bars and lasts only 30 seconds, but quickly re-establishes Shore’s musical world of Middle-earth in both harmony, melody and instrumentation. Melodically the line consists of a series of rising scalar patterns in various transpositions, generally from tonic to minor third (see Example 4). This rising cell presents itself in two of Shore’s themes already established in *FOTR* – the Fellowship theme, and the Seduction of the Ring theme (see Example 5), the similarities between which have been identified by Doug Adams (2010:76), and the cell can also be seen in the countermelody to the History of the Ring theme (see Example 2 above). The six-time repetition of this opening figure increases the strength of its recollection of either (or all) of these themes, and places it comfortably within the musical vocabulary of Shore’s thematic catalogue. The use of horn melody and strings harks back to Shore’s preferred instrumentation of the Fellowship theme, and also foreshadows the heavy use of horns in the Rohan theme, which dominates the *Two Towers* score. Lastly, the modulations between

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>New Line Title</th>
<th>LOTR Title</th>
<th>Prologue [dur.]</th>
<th>Film Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>TTT</em></td>
<td>8 bar $\frac{3}{4}$ melody on horn and strings ascends, modulates through several keys. Instrumentation reminiscent of Rohan theme.</td>
<td>Ring theme, a touch faster but identical orchestration, metre and key. Altered after two iterations, simpler melody and major harmony.</td>
<td>[3:28] Gandalf and Balrog battle. Repeated music from same <em>FOTR</em> scene but a tone higher.</td>
<td>EE = Rohan theme – reduced iteration, violins rather than horns, tonic pedal, diminished intervals. TR = ‘Fate of the Ring’ theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ROTK</em></td>
<td>Oboe and violins set up waltz-like dance metre.</td>
<td>Ring theme shifted into $\frac{3}{4}$ time over arpeggic string accompaniment. One iteration, cut short and cadenced onto chord IV.</td>
<td>[8:55] Sméagol back-story, Frodo and Sam in Mordor, fellowship in forest.</td>
<td>Gondor theme – just first half (unfinished). Same in both editions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
each bar often move to harmonically distant keys – a feature of Shore’s writing already established in the first film. This can be best displayed through a harmonic analysis of the cue using Scott Murphy’s system of tonal triadic progression classes (TTPCs) (see Murphy 2014).\textsuperscript{15}

Example 4 – Opening music from \textit{T TT} with harmonic and transformational analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TTPCs:</th>
<th>m3m</th>
<th>m9m</th>
<th>m4m</th>
<th>m1M</th>
<th>M2M</th>
<th>M2(M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fm</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td>Fm</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D(open)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 5 – Rising third cell in two other \textit{LOTR} themes

Drawing on neo-Riemannian theory and other methods of transformational analysis Murphy proposes a nomenclatural system to define any triadic progression between two chords. These TTPCs take the form of XnY, where X represents the tonicised or ‘home’ triad, Y the non- tonicised triad, their case (upper or lower) represents major or minor, and n is the ordered pitch-class interval between the roots of the first and second chords.\textsuperscript{16} Best explained by example, the TTPC ‘M4m’ therefore represents a major chord and the minor chord with root four semitones higher, for example C major and E minor. If E minor was the tonicised chord, and the progression was then from E minor to C major, the TTPC would be m8M (this is called its tonal inverse). Example 4 contains a harmonic analysis of the opening cue of \textit{The Two Towers}, with the TTPCs written above, and what quickly becomes clear is that without any clear tonic the harmony meanders from bar to bar. All of

\textsuperscript{15} Scott Murphy’s work is particularly applicable here for several reasons. Firstly, much of Murphy’s work uses film music as subject material and so his methodologies have been developed with filmic examples very much in mind. Secondly, neo-Riemannian operations were deemed insufficient as a way of interpreting the triadic progressions here as there are very few instances of the principal transformations (P, R and L) among the chosen examples, and indeed more progressions that come outside the secondary transformations (N, S and H) and would therefore have required multiple transformations to be interpreted in this way.

\textsuperscript{16} The tonicisation of a particular triad is established in numerous ways both harmonically and melodically, but can be most clearly understood as the chord that sounds most ‘complete’ or ‘settled’ in relation to other chords – indeed, the chord that sounds like home.
the modulations here are considered to be chromatic – that is, the second chord lies outside the ‘family’ of chords built on each degree of the first chord’s scale, and thus each new chord can be considered tonicised for the chord that succeeds it. Five or six different TTPCs are employed here, many of which can be found elsewhere in Shore’s thematic library, thus giving this sequence a distinctly Middle-earthian harmony. More particularly, the m4m progression features in many iterations of the History of the Ring theme, and both m3m and m4m progressions characterise Shore’s music for Gollum, being found in both the Pity of Gollum theme and Gollum’s Song (see Table 2). Similarly, the M2M is one of the few chromatic progressions that appears within the Fellowship theme, and furthermore the combination of two M2Ms (resulting in a wider and perhaps rarer M4M) in both the Fellowship motif and the opening cue creates an even stronger link between them. Thus the first eight bars of TTT evoke recognisable strains of Middle-earth harmony, first Gollum and then the Fellowship. This is just one of several ways in which the sonic language of Middle-earth is quickly re-established before any strongly thematic material has been heard.

Table 2 – Harmonic comparison of music for Gollum and the Fellowship with the opening of TTT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Chord progressions</th>
<th>TTPCs (comparisons in <strong>bold</strong>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pity of Gollum</td>
<td>B♭m F♯m B♭m D♭m Fm</td>
<td><strong>m8m</strong> m4m <strong>m3m</strong> m4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gollum’s Song</td>
<td>G♯m B♭m Cm D B♭m Cm</td>
<td><strong>m3m</strong> m1m (m3m+m1m≈m4m) m2M M9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M0m m1m m2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship Theme</td>
<td>A C A F C Dm F G A C</td>
<td>M3M M9M M8M M7M M2m m3M <strong>M2M</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>M2M</strong> M3M M9M M8M <strong>M2M</strong> M2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTT opening</td>
<td>Fm A♭m Fm Am B♭ C D</td>
<td><strong>m3m</strong> m9m <strong>m4m</strong> m1M <strong>M2M</strong> M2M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Solidifying its relationship with the appearance of the golden *Lord of the Rings* title, the History of the Ring theme invokes the same mythic sense of loss and sorrow in the TTT titles as its first hearing: a solo violin rendition with molto vibrato, the two minor chords and m11m TTPC evoking a downcast, disheartened feel. The theme’s use here further tropifies it as a gatekeeper to Middle-earth, the only fitting musical accompaniment to the main title. After two iterations of the melody, though, the theme takes a different turn; where the *FOTR* Ring theme fell to G♯m for two more minor melodic iterations, here the harmony lifts to C lydian and the melody extends into soaring semibreves, now accompanying aerial shots of a snowy mountain range at sunset. The sense of awe and
mystery evoked is heightened here by aural narrative clues; barely audible snippets of
dialogue become clearer and reveal themselves as being taken from the previous film – a
scene when Gandalf faces off to the Balrog and the two plunge into the abyss of Khazad-
Dûm. Shouts from Gandalf and Frodo continue as the camera accelerates toward and into
the mountainside to join the action taking place within and visually confirm the sonic recap
of a scene audiences have already witnessed. The use of sound here as a memory trigger
eases audiences gradually into the recollection of a dramatic scene, placing them sonically,
temporally and then visually into a familiar narrative moment. The scene continues almost
exactly as it did the first time, and although Shore rescored the whole section he copies the
music that accompanied this scene in FOTR almost exactly. The only differences are that
in TTT the music is a tone higher than before, a change that very few (if any) would notice,
and a small edit is made to the narrative order – Frodo’s cry of ‘NO!’ which previously
followed Gandalf’s fall now precedes it. This allows the camera (and thus the viewer) to
move with Gandalf into the abyss after the scene’s final shot, rather than staying with the
fellowship as the scene breaks from the familiar and shifts to the new, detailing a
previously unknown narrative thread.

The opening of Return of the King (ROTK) is unusual in its apparent divergence
from many of the established norms of the franchise. There remains a kind of musical
prelude over the New Line title before the Ring theme accompanies the familiar LOTR
title, but the overall style of the prelude and Ring theme are drastically altered. A solo oboe
sings an unfamiliar melody over orchestral chords in $\frac{3}{4}$ time that turn into a dance-like
waltz, heightened by the characteristic use of triangle and pizzicato bass. The melody itself
bears no resemblance to any of Shore’s established themes, and the harmony is more
classically romantic, centring on B♭ minor and alternating with E♭ minor for the first two
phrases and then C major for the second two with doubled harmonic rhythm. Undulatory
harmonic fixations such as these are identified as ‘fully Romantic’ by Joseph Kerman,
describing alternations of tonic triads with colouristic chords in the music of Schubert
(1962: 38, in Murphy 2014: 494). The two main TTPCs in play here are m5m and m2M,
and although Scott Murphy mentions no common associations with m5m, m2M ‘tends to
match up with a general experience of suspense or mystery’, which is certainly the case
here as the triadic alternation immediately precedes the anticipated Ring theme (Murphy,
2014: 488).
Example 6 – ‘History of the Ring’ theme: waltz setting from ROTA

The History of the Ring theme itself is also transformed into a triple-time waltz (see Example 6), the biggest alteration the theme has seen so far in the franchise, and one that strikingly suggests that something is different. After one iteration the theme is cut short and cadences onto an A major chord to pivot into the next Shire-like section in D major. The setting of the Ring in 3/4 rids it of its mythic weight and renders it more light-hearted. Where the original preceded a tale of legendary history, the dance-like waltz suggests an alternative, more recent history – which is exactly what follows. The prologue tells the history of Sméagol and his transformation into Gollum, a story that takes place 555 years prior to the main narrative and thus suits an archaic but less mythic musical accompaniment. Irish flutes and rich string chords paint a pastoral, Shire-like setting by drawing on Shore’s ethnic coding of the Shire as Celtic (which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three). However, the absence of the Shire’s thematic material and the introduction of new melodies create a setting that is at once recognisable as Shire-like and yet melodically unfamiliar. Once again the very first musical material heard enables the spatiotemporal orientation of the audience through the adaptation of established audiovisual tropes, drawing viewers into the world with the same threads they are now so used to following and giving them clues as to where and when they are.

There are many similarities and differences between the LOTR and The Hobbit film trilogies, particularly regarding their opening sequences. Many of the established tropes from LOTR continue within each of the Hobbit films: the font of the pre-title credits, the style and animation of the main title, its accompaniment with one of the film’s major themes, the camera travelling over a hand-drawn map, and a prologue section to provide historical information or narrative recapitulation. Thus, many of the sonic pathways into Peter Jackson’s Middle-earth are reused in this second trilogy released nine years after the

17 The ‘Hobbit’ title is depicted in the same 3D golden lettering as the LOTR titles were, with sunlight dawning on it from the side – an effect which is heightened by the 3D releases of the Hobbit films, making the films (and this title image in particular) even more immersive.
first, including many of Howard Shore’s musical themes. Where the LOTR title was thrice accompanied by the History of the Ring theme, the Hobbit title in An Unexpected Journey (AUJ) brings with it a full hearing of the Shire theme (the ‘Pensive’ setting to be precise), with solo clarinet and pizzicato strings invoking the theme’s pastoral sentiment. This nostalgic main title is preceded by thirteen bars of orchestral scoring accompanying the new studio titles – the mythic darkness of the familiar New Line title has now been replaced with the blue skies of the Warner Bros logo, which animates into the New Line logo (notably constructing the latter from parts of the former) and is followed by the Metro Goldwyn Mayer logo, complete with lion and accompanying roars.

If the FOTR opening can be said to create a sense of mythic origin, the opening titles of AUJ are comparatively brasher and more imposing, both visually and aurally. The bold orchestral scoring outlines a simple melody with suspensions and triadic progressions that bear much resemblance to Shore’s LOTR music, although the melody itself is unfamiliar. As shown in Example 7 the two sharpened 4th suspensions resolving to the 5th of a minor chord are reminiscent of the first two notes of the History theme, and the use of uncommon TTPCs such as the m1m, m0M and M1m (otherwise known as a ‘slide’ transformation) also give the first eight bars a distinctly Middle-earth feel for the audience familiar with Shore’s existing soundworld. Although the new titles and wandering harmony of the film’s opening might give a sense of uncertainty, the dawning of light on the Hobbit title and a full iteration of the Shire theme’s pensive setting puts viewers (and particularly fans) at ease, once again drawing them into the Shire and thus into the wider world of Middle-earth. As Bilbo’s narration begins the prologue we also hear both ‘Rural’ and ‘Hymn’ settings of the franchise’s most homely motif – the music here does everything it can to remind viewers of where they find themselves, all the while drawing on the most familiar forms of suture to reassure them that despite what they may have heard about the film, Middle-earth is just as it was, and all is well.18

18 The troubled production history of the Hobbit films was widely reported, most notably due to the last minute change of director when Guillermo del Toro stepped out during pre-production and Peter Jackson stepped in (Topping, 2010). Fans were similarly unsure as to how the film would look in a higher frame rate at 48 frames per second, an aesthetic choice made by Jackson but met with apprehension (Laforet, 2012).
Although *AUJ* begins in a familiar location it takes a while for the exact time to become clear; it seems to be sometime before Bilbo’s eleventy-first birthday, which is in fact *FOTR*’s point of departure, and thus it is fitting that the same musical themes are used. The ten-minute prologue moves through at least four different temporalities as Bilbo gives a brief history of the cities of Dale and Erebor (including the invasion of Smaug the dragon) before recounting his first meeting with Gandalf (Sir Ian McKellen) as a child, leading to the narrative transformation of old Bilbo into young(er) Bilbo (from Sir Ian Holm to Martin Freeman) via a sky-born smoke circle and the rewinding of roughly 60 years. Musically these temporal shifts are communicated through both familiar and unfamiliar sounds and motifs. Dale and Erebor are spatiotemporally new, and thus Shore takes the chance to introduce new motifs for each location – particularly for the Kingdom of Erebor and the dwarves who dwell there – motifs which are melodically original but whose style and instrumentation are very much in line with related motifs from the *LOTR* catalogue, such as horns and low male voices for dwarf cultures. Shots of child Bilbo meeting Gandalf at a party with his characteristic fireworks are musicked by the instantly recognisable cod-Celtic folk strains of New Zealand group Plan 9, who provided Hobbit party music in *FOTR* (and indeed all diegetic music for all six films), tying these two Shire parties together musically and thus helping to suture viewers familiar with the franchise swiftly into the mood, location and era of this short scene. By the time the viewer has arrived at the film title and been introduced to the new (young) Bilbo, music has actively
sutured several new spaces and times into a familiar world, and in introducing these new spatiotemporalities and their signifying tropes has sufficiently sutured the viewer into the world, ready for another adventure.

*The Desolation of Smaug (DOS)* begins with yet more new material, this time a simple two note alternation in violins and winds with a wandering low string countermelody, all over the now familiar Warner Bros blue sky, golden New Line logo and MGM roaring lion. What is most interesting here is the harmony – all minor triads moving to distantly related keys and back again, adding yet another sinister note to the presence of the conglomerates. Transformational analysis proves fruitful once again, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3 – Tonal Triadic Progression Classes in the opening of DOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triads</th>
<th>Em B♭m Em Gm B♭m Dm (– D5 – D –) Em Gm B♭m Dm…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TTPCs</td>
<td>m6m m6m m3m m3m m4m (–m0M–M2m–) m3m m3m m4m…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequent use of m3m and m4m progressions is reminiscent of both the History of the Ring theme and of the Pity of Gollum, and so the opening music fits very much with what one would expect from Shore’s Middle-earth language. The addition of the m6m is intriguing – being the most distant or chromatic transformation of a tritone interval it has not featured heavily thus far in the franchise. In a wider sense, Scott Murphy notes that often ‘m6m accompanies mortal threats and dangers issued less from adversarial characters, and more from situations, objects, or natural phenomena’ (2014: 488), and this description fits perfectly with the sense of growing danger and unrevealed malice (of both Smaug and the Necromancer) at this point in the narrative. The brief moment of major tonality in the middle of this passage accompanies a sorrowful clarinet iteration of the Shire motif, here cut short as the harmony refuses to follow it any further (staying on the tonic rather than moving to the subdominant). Thus the music draws both harmonically and melodically on the memory banks of the viewer to suture them into Middle-earth at a specific point in the narrative, before the world is even visibly revealed.

The opening of *The Battle of the Five Armies (BOTFA)* is in many ways the exception that proves the rule. The familiar studio titles roll, but where bold orchestral strains have previously set about establishing the sonic language of the film a simple drone of open fifths takes their place, accompanied by the distant metallic sounds of Tibetan gongs and gamelan. As the WB logo shifts to the New Line title a low, sinister brass
ostinato is introduced – a bulging, descending semitone which would remind even the most novice filmgoer of John Williams’ *Jaws* motif – and this imbues the solid gold substance of the two logos with a more sinister nature, as this motif and the metallic sounds are both reminiscent of Shore’s ‘dragon sickness’ music from *DOS*.\(^{19}\) The now familiar Smaug theme is heard just as MGM’s lion is revealed eye-first, drawing similarly dark parallels between this previously tame beast (whose roar is notably preserved and amplified over the accompanying music) and the theme’s signified dragon. After a few moments of building tension under several opening credits, a climactic reiteration of the Smaug theme accompanies the appearance of The Hobbit title. The Smaug theme is about as far from the Shire motif as musically possible – in fact, Smaug is in a sense a twisted inversion of the Shire motif; the latter rising diatonically from tonic to dominant, the former falling more chromatically from tonic to dominant.

An examination of the forms of musical suture in action here reveals something quite different to Jackson’s other five films. Where every other film begins with a prologue of sorts providing either historical information or narrative recapitulation, *BOTFA* instead picks up directly where *DOS* left off – an angry dragon with a grudge about to lay waste to an entire town. The threads of musical meaning gradually being added to the opening sequence serve as forms of narrative suture, conjuring images of dark and perhaps even cursed gold, reintroducing Smaug the dragon musically, and thus tying the beginning of this film to the end of the previous one. Rather than introducing anything new or separate as in the other openings where a greater level of worldbuilding suture is required, here the musical suture is purely narrative in function, reminding viewers of the most recent plot points and of the villain on the rampage, and bringing them swiftly back to the very moment in time that the previous instalment finished.\(^{20}\) This sets the opening of *BOTFA* apart from the other five openings analysed in this section, and the lack of prologue requires a different form of musical suture in order to bring viewers directly into the heat of the action. The use of Smaug’s motif over the Hobbit title breaks with the established use of the Shire theme that informed audiences expect, and as an entirely minor, chromatic and tense theme, shows how far the music of opening titles has come from the ‘joy and gladness’ that epitomised the work of Dimitri Tiomkin’s predecessors in the classical era.

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\(^{19}\) ‘Dragon sickness’ is the unhealthy obsession with gold that leads to hallucinations and other psychological disorders, experienced by Thráin II and later by his son Thorin Oakenshield.

\(^{20}\) The ending of *DOS* is examined in greater detail below, where the narrative links between the two filmic installments are further exemplified.
Rather than bringing us into the more homely region of the fantasy world (the Shire), here music sutures the audience directly into the path of an angry, fire-breathing monster.

**Opening Sequences – The *Harry Potter* Franchise**

Comprising eight films released over a period of ten years, the *Harry Potter* films also establish and employ various tropes in their opening sequences which help to standardise the suturing processes in play at the start of each instalment. That being said, many of these tropes are altered or changed, particularly sonically by the films’ four composers, who employ markedly different styles and harmonic languages. The film beginnings also help to set the tone of each film, which has been described as gradually darkening and maturing from the first instalment to the last (see Thier, 2011). Hence, as the opening sequences all differ somewhat in style and content, it is their form and the use of established tropes that help to draw viewers into the wizarding world, and which make people fully aware that the film they are watching is a *Harry Potter* film. The fact that four different composers scored the films only heightens the need for sonic familiarity to link these opening sequences together.

In a similar vein to Peter Jackson’s trilogies the *Harry Potter* studio titles and film titles are very much drawn into the narrative worlds of the films, and are often preceded, separated or followed by a prologue of some kind. Starting with *The Philosopher’s Stone* (Columbus, 2001), the very first thing we see is the standard appearance and animation of the Warner Bros logo, beginning with the image of soundstages reflected in its side before the camera pans round to reveal the full golden logo and a backdrop of white fluffy clouds in a blue sky. While this is revealed, a melody that is to become one of the franchise’s most pervasive and unifying motifs – Hedwig’s Theme – sounds boldly in the horns over chromatically scurrying strings and celeste. The theme’s first phrase ends on the dominant chord with an unresolved half cadence as the logo fades to black, and the stage is set. A three-and-a-half-minute prologue then brings viewers into the wizarding world by introducing three magical characters and three magical acts performed by them: Albus Dumbledore and his magical ‘deluminator’ which removes the lights from streetlamps, Professor McGonagall and her transfiguration from cat form, and the half-giant Hagrid who arrives on a flying motorcycle. The majority of this prelude section is continually underscored by the film’s composer John Williams, who uses full orchestral forces but most prominently features celeste, harp, mark tree and female chorus. This musical
accompaniment to the audience’s introduction to the wizarding world is in line with Jamie Lynn Webster’s findings that magical moments in *Philosopher’s Stone* tend to be accompanied by music whereas non-wizarding characters or places tend not to be (2012: 200).

The prologue, which sees the three characters leaving baby Harry on the doorstep of his last surviving (and non-magical) relatives the Dursleys, comes to an end as the camera moves toward the lightning-shaped scar on Harry’s forehead to reveal the film title. Large golden letters reading ‘Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone’ float magically, though weighty and metallic, in a now dark and stormy sky, and the second part of Hedwig’s Theme rings out above crashes of thunder and female chorus, effectively completing the unfinished iteration of the theme which accompanied the WB logo. The unsupported levitation of these title letters in the sky confirms what was suggested by the hovering Warner Bros title; breaking the physical laws of the primary world (here gravity) highlights the secondary nature of the film world and suggests the existence and presence of magic. Where the familiar hovering WB logo invokes only the magic of Hollywood, the floating Harry Potter title goes further in suturing viewers into a world which is simultaneously the same as and different to their own, familiar and unfamiliar, what Michael Saler would call ‘enchanted disenchantment’ (2012). The next two films take this illusion further by increasing the title’s sense of physical presence and magical nature; *Chamber of Secrets* (*CoS*) by placing it between moving clouds and reflecting sunlight off it, and *Prisoner of Azkaban* (*PoA*) by allowing individual letters to rise and fall independently as if subject to a levitation charm (see Figure 6).

![Figure 6](image)

**Figure 6 – Increasing physicality and magification of Harry Potter titles from PS to PoA**

The illustration, portrayal and physicality of the Warner Bros and Harry Potter logos, along with the cloudy or stormy skies in which they appear, also help to illustrate the darkening and maturing nature of the grand epic narrative arc of the whole film series. This progression of individual narratives becoming darker, as the characters grow up and the consequences of their adventures grow in scale and gravity, is very much reflected in the tone of the films (their thematic content, style, colouring and musical mood) and is
exemplified by the depiction of the Warner Bros logo. This logo is, with the exception of
the final instalment, the first visual element of each film, and its physical properties are
gradually altered along with its setting; materially the logo diminishes from polished gold
to silver, tarnished silver to stone, icy stone to a corroded metal that rapidly degrades and
rusts, all the while floating in a sky that changes from day to night, from cloudy to clear to
stormy to misty (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 – Evolution of the Warner Bros logo from PS to DHp2

The introduction to the darkening magical world of *Harry Potter* at these
significant title sequences happens not only visually but also sonically through the use of
Hedwig’s Theme, a form of which accompanies the film title in every one of the eight
instalments except for the last. Several analysts including Jamie Lynn Webster have
identified the various ways in which the theme alludes to magic or the fantastic in some
way – Webster in particular hangs this ability on the theme’s ‘metaphorically less-
grounded lilting rhythms of triple metre, melodic chromaticism, tritones […] and several
alternatives to standard harmonic expectations’ (2012: 208, see also Richards, 2013). The
use of the first part of the theme (hereafter referred to as ‘H1’) for every title sequence by
John Williams, the composer of the first three films, established its status as an important
trope or feature of the beginning of any *Harry Potter* film, a gatekeeper of the magical world which heralds the beginning of another adventure and sutures the audience back into the wizarding world by summoning the memories of previous films and their narrative events. As each successive composer inherits the task of musicking the magical world from his predecessor, this particular thematic signpost is preserved but adapted into the style and tone of each new film, making the theme subservient to the will of its new master and thus altering its effects (and affects). As might be expected, H1 takes generally the same form in the first three films, except for a few iterations in *PS* that use a D♮ rather than a D♯ (see Example 8). Williams may have adapted to using the sharpened 7th (D♯) in the rest of his work to give the bar a stronger sense of a dominant chord, or indeed to complete the use of all twelve pitch-classes which is incomplete with the flattened 7th (D♭).

Example 8 – Tracking the first part of ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ (H1) in all eight opening sequences

Patrick Doyle makes significant changes to the theme in the opening of *Goblet of Fire* (*GoF*). It is the first film not to use the first half of the theme for the WB logo and the second half for the *HP* title, instead using entirely original music for the former, and an adapted version of the first half of the theme for the latter. As shown in Example 8 the theme sheds its quaver anacrusis, shifts into simple duple time and is to a certain extent diatonicised, sharpening the A in the second bar but also re-sharpening the F and naturalising the D in the third bar to normalise the harmony. The final tonic note of the melody is replaced by scurrying semiquaver arpeggios rising in the violins. These changes not only force the theme to conform to the more march-like aesthetic qualities of Doyle’s
music that precedes it, but also signify the first step in a gradual diatonicisation, disintegration and thus disenchantment of Hedwig’s Theme over the course of the franchise. This diatonicisation can also be seen to a certain extent in the shifting harmony of Hedwig’s Theme. Using Murphy’s system of TTTPCs to map triadic shifts and transformations, a correlation is found among the so-called chromatic and non-chromatic transformations being used to harmonise Hedwig’s Theme (see Table 4). Although DHp2 has been omitted, the trend suggests that the later the film, the less chromatic any harmonic progressions tend to be.

Table 4 – Tracking chromatic and non-chromatic TTTPCs in the opening titles of Harry Potter films

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>TTTPCs (chromatics in bold)</th>
<th>Totals (chromatic : non-chromatic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS, CoS, PoA</td>
<td>m3m, m4m, m9M, m10m, M10m.</td>
<td>5:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoF</td>
<td>m1M, M4m, M6m, m8M, M9m.</td>
<td>2:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OotP</td>
<td>m3m, m3M, M4m, m5m, m9m.</td>
<td>2:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBP</td>
<td>m2M, then m3M, m5m, M5M, M11m</td>
<td>1:0 then 1:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp1</td>
<td>(m9m).</td>
<td>(1:0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nicholas Hooper returns the opening of Order of the Phoenix (OotP) to a seemingly more traditionally chromatic setting of Hedwig’s Theme, which emerges from the mist along with the WB logo and a characteristically magical harp glissando. Harmonically, however, the theme is undermined by placing it all over a held tonic pedal of E in the basses, which shifts dramatically and somewhat discordantly to a G in the 11th bar before returning to the E in bar 15. An octave leap divides the two phrases of the theme, making room in the lower register for the addition of a chromatic countermelody in bar 12 which increases tension, distorting and confusing the final part of the theme which also sheds the lower A# as the two voices converge (see Example 8). The use of the theme also seems to be a mere nod to the traditions of the franchise as the musical tone and mood quickly shifts to the prominent use of solo piano, minimalist repetition and the first heard use of highly synthesised electronic sounds. Hooper’s score for Half-Blood Prince (HBP) operates in a similar way, this time only employing the first four bars of Hedwig’s Theme
to accompany the WB logo – a mere eight notes which prove enough to transport viewers on a now familiar route into the magical world of *Harry Potter*. After an aural flashback of Bellatrix Lestrange shouting ‘I killed Sirius Black!’ taken from the previous film (a similar device to *The Two Towers*), the music segues swiftly into a highly emotive chain of suspensions over a four chord sequence. This simple, haunting cue continues under shots of Harry and Dumbledore immediately following the battle at the end of the previous film, and notably continues to accompany the ‘*Harry Potter and*’ title. This is the first time an episode title has been seen *without* Hedwig’s Theme, which further evidences the disintegration of the theme and the relegation of its role to a mere signpost; a necessary nod to the childlike beginnings of the story which gives way to the more serious tone of music that matches the darker, graver nature of the later films.

Alexandre Desplat, who composed the music for the *Deathly Hallows Parts One* and *Two* (*DHp1* and *DHp2*) takes the disintegration and disenchantment of Hedwig’s Theme to its logical conclusion, firstly with a musical disintegration through transposition and rhythmic augmentation in the opening titles of *DHp1*, and secondly through its replacement by a wholly new theme for the *DHp2* titles. The Warner Bros logo in *DHp1* is the most animated of the series – the material visibly degrades from silver metal to brown rust as the camera flies between the logo’s jagged spikes. The object itself is aurally enchanted in several ways; its degradation is sonified with metallic scratching and scraping sounds, but is also apportioned dark magical properties through the use of two recognisable sonic tropes – an extremely high-pitched whining sound that typically comes from ‘Horcruxes’ (powerful cursed objects hunted by Harry and his friends), and whispers of ‘Parseltongue’ (the ability to speak to snakes, possessed by many dark wizards) both of which have been aurally established in previous films (Parseltongue as early as *Chamber of Secrets*). This gives a strong impression that the Warner Bros logo is somehow cursed or being cursed, crumbling under the power of some dark magic. Surrounded by these eerie, unnerving sounds and gradually submerged by them is a monophonic rendition of Hedwig’s Theme on solo celeste. This theme, although growing increasingly fainter under the growing intensity of the scrapes, whines and hisses, can be heard transposed down a minor third for the second phrase, which is rhythmically augmented as if to sound like a music box coming to the end of its wind-up power (see Example 8). Hedwig’s Theme has been twisted, bent and now broken by the composers who have manipulated it, mirroring the loss of innocence and gradual disenchantment characterised by the franchise’s
darkening and maturing narrative and confirmed by DHp1’s opening line, uttered by Rufus Scrimgeour (Bill Nighy): ‘these are dark times; there is no denying’.

It seems fitting, then, that Alexandre Desplat should open the final film, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part Two*, with an entirely new theme. Where the regular viewer has grown to expect Hedwig’s Theme over the opening title, they instead hear *Lily’s Theme* – a haunting melody sung by solo female vocal ‘aah’ over a low string drone, which is then reprised by full string orchestra. The melody is entirely diatonic, providing an antidote to the original chromaticism of Hedwig’s Theme and an endpoint to the diatonicisation started in *Goblet of Fire*, and the first iteration is sung over a tonic pedal before the strings then give it a full minor harmonisation. It may seem unusual to break from the tradition of using Hedwig’s Theme over the opening titles, but the theme is no longer required as a gatekeeper to the wizarding world because of one other notable break from the norm. David Yates, director of the final four instalments, chooses to place a 30-second prologue before the opening title sequence; a shortened flashback of a scene from the very end of DHp1 which links the two parts together and thus diminishes the need for Hedwig’s Theme to mark the beginning of a new story. The use of a completely new theme also marks a point of arrival of sorts. If, as Jamie Lynn Webster (2009: 527) identifies, the magical world of Harry Potter becomes increasingly involved with and conflated with the real or primary world as the films progress, then the complete eradication of Hedwig’s Theme from the opening titles may also represent the totality of this conflation. So far from the enchanting children’s film of a boy’s discovery of the world of wizardry, DHp2 is a much more serious film (and in part a war film) whose characters just happen to be witches and wizards, and the difference between the two themes reflects this gap in maturity and tone.

**Example 9 – Melodic comparison of ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ and ‘Lily’s Theme’**

Hedwig’s Theme and Lily’s Theme, shown in Example 9, differ in numerous ways. From celeste to solo female vocal; from magical to human; from mechanised enchantment to embodied disenchantment; chromaticism to diatonicism; children to adults; light-hearted to gravely serious – all of these contrasts can be heard between the divergent styles and
instrumentations. However, there are numerous similarities between the themes, which in fact enable Lily’s Theme to be read as an altered, re-written form of Hedwig’s Theme. Example 9 illustrates the melodic points of alignment between the two themes. Both start with a quaver anacrusis to the tonic, and have four other points of synchronisation on either tonic or dominant notes. Both are constructed of four simple phrases – each phrase in Hedwig’s Theme includes the same dotted-quaver rhythm, and pauses are included in the first hearing of Lily’s Theme after each two-bar phrase which highlight this architectural similarity. Both share the same high point in the third quarter of the theme. Lastly, there are three melodic similarities, boxed in Example 9, which give further weight to the idea that Lily’s Theme is a disguised, grown-up form of Hedwig’s Theme and thus performs the same suturing functions with a new musical style. It should not be ignored, either, that Lily is Harry’s deceased mother and hence that this nomenclatural alteration represents a transference of significance from a pet to a family member, or perhaps more significantly a transition from love to loss – from innocence to experience. Desplat himself identified this in an interview on the two scores:

“Hedwig’s Theme” does reoccur a lot more in Part 1 where loss of innocence was the main theme of the film and where “Hedwig’s Theme” was referring to childhood and Hogwarts [...] The theme of death is very present in [DHp2] since Lily, Harry’s mother, is the lead character of this episode. We start the film with hearing Lily’s theme, which will kind of ghost the film all along and be the music thread that will take us from the beginning to the end of the film (Leaky Cauldron, 2011).

The transformation of Hedwig’s Theme over the course of eight opening titles mirrors the narrative arc of the series, and maintains a familiar way of suturing viewers into the film-world while allowing composers to establish their own narrative voices and musical languages. Hedwig’s Theme and its transformations may represent the most important and most recognisable form of musical suture in the entire franchise, existing not only throughout the eight films but also in the 2016 spin off film Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them, as well as in videogames, theme parks, studio tours – all of which is examined in Part Two. It is interesting to note that the theme is notably employed not only in the title sequences of the films, but also very often over the start of the end credits, signalling the end of each chapter of the narrative and beginning the audience’s exit from the film world. This is just one example of musical suture acting to desuture a viewer from the film, a concept which is further explicated in the following section on the films’ closing sequences.
Homeward Bound: Suture and Desuture in Closing Sequences and Credit Songs

The following section shifts focus to the closing sequences and credits of my case studies, to examine the ways in which filmgoers are cinematically and musically prepared to leave fantasy worlds and to re-enter their own. I will also suggest ways in which these film-worlds create the illusion of continued existence even once the film has ended – a particularly potent concept for two popular franchises where opportunities for huge commercial gain rely on viewers returning for the next filmic instalment, as well as on the creation of additional routes into the world via alternative media. The viewer must be made to believe that the world does not cease to exist as the film ends but remains there, behind the wall of scrolling credits, ready and waiting to welcome them back in, via future episodes or experiences and through whichever medium they may choose.

If an amount of suture has been used in a film’s opening (and indeed throughout a film, as identified in the final section of this chapter) both to draw a viewer into a film world and to tie the world cohesively together around them, it stands that for a viewer to imaginatively leave the world (or be ejected from it) two things would be conceptually required; a hole must be made in the fabric of the world through which the viewer may leave, and the suture pulling them centripetally inwards must be severed or undone, allowing the centrifugal forces of increased self-awareness to draw them outwards. If, as Seung-hoon Jeong claims, ‘film sutures the spectator into the entire diegesis, thereby desuturing one’s sense of reality boundary,’ then the desuturing of the spectator from the diegesis will also entail the re-suturing of their sense of reality (Jeong, 2013: 49). Sheli Ayers (2004: 96) likens the idea of desuturing to a ‘coming-to-consciousness’, something that a film’s ending necessitates. Just as a large amount of suture is found in films’ openings, a similar amount of desuturing will predictably be required in their closing sequences. The nature of this desuturing has been theorised by several writers including Seung-hoon Jeong, David Abel (2008) and Katarzyna Marciniak (2005), all of whom employ ‘desuture’ in noun form as suture’s antonymic counterpart. Slavoj Žižek argues that ‘the only thing that actually de-sutures is suture itself’ (2002: 20, original emphasis), suggesting that suture and desuture may in fact be identical in form but opposite in function.

As mentioned above, Claudia Gorbman sets up the notion of film music’s so-called ‘inaudibility’, which comes into play when dealing with music as suture. By referring to film music as ideally ‘inaudible’, Gorbman suggests that music should always be
subservient to the voice and to the image, and thus not ‘heard’ or attended to consciously (1987: 76). Jeff Smith argues that this notion poses a particular problem for suture theorists taking it for granted:

If Gorbman, for example, is right in claiming that ‘noticeable’ music reminds the viewer of cinema’s materiality and thereby weakens the subject-effect, we must then conclude that the spectator is constantly slipping in and out of the very subject position that the text has created for him, incessantly moving between identification and cognition, pleasure and unpleasure, belief and disbelief, rapture and distance. (1996: 237).

To be clear, Smith finds both Gorbman’s notion of inaudibility and its incompatibility with suture theory to be problematic. While Smith uses this constant slippage to argue for the existence of listening modes between identification and cognition, or between hearing and not-hearing (as identified above), Katarzyna Marciniak views this subjective oscillation as proof of the dialectical nature of suture proposed by Slavoj Žižek. She claims that ‘the spectator always oscillates between suture and desuture […] to speak of the logic of suture, Žižek posits, means to consider both processes simultaneously – stitching and antistitching or, better yet, a critical awareness of the way the narrative tempo takes the spectator in and out of its filmic world’ (Marciniak, 2005: 15). This shift to viewing suture as just one half of the picture, or just one of two operations in constant play, recontextualises Smith’s approach and demonstrates the different levels on which we might think about suture – whether music is heard or unheard, present or absent, (re)cognised or not (re)cognised, it may still in all these modes be acting as suture or desuture, and even as both, in different ways and to varying degrees. Rather than constantly slipping between the extremes of, as Smith extrapolates from Gorbman, pleasure and unpleasure, belief and disbelief, rapture and distance, the filmgoer instead finds themselves in the space between these discrete poles, fluctuating between modes of viewing and listening that remain in flux.

What is perhaps more important here is to understand the conveyance of meaning through musical suture and desuture. Moving away from the problematic notion of music’s inaudibility, James Buhler concludes that ‘[t]he suturing effect of music resides not so much in its inaudibility, then, as in its ability to clarify meaning for us without quite letting on as to how it is accomplishing its work.’ (2014: 403-404). The case studies below illustrate ways in which music-as-suture may simultaneously be acting as desuture, undoing itself, unpicking itself and uncoupling the audience from the film-world through their awareness of the music and its codified meanings. By analysing the closing sequences of the case study films I aim to reveal more precisely how music is used to clarify meaning through suture and desuture, often by its foregrounding and increased ‘audibility’ – more

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specifically, how the music of closing sequences and end credits tells viewers that a film is ending or has ended, but that its world has not. As fantasy franchises reliant on the coherence and continued inhabitation of their worlds, it is even more important that the film’s endings leave the worlds intact and ready to be expanded, and that they leave us with the desire to return.

Harry Potter

Figure 8 – Desuture through freeze-frame at the end of PoA

Although they share four directors and vary hugely in tone, the eight instalments of the Harry Potter franchise are also unified by tropes that appear in the closing sequences, and desuture is used not only musically but also in the guise of numerous other devices at the films’ endings. One such example is the use of freeze-frame at the end of Prisoner of Azkaban (see Figure 8), a technique which Seung-hoon Jeong identifies as a ‘desuturing moment’ as it essentially ‘freezes’ time and enables preconscious perception to become conscious (2013: 40). Narratively, all eight films feature a debrief-style moment of dialogue between the protagonists Harry, Ron and Hermione, usually with a quip about having a ‘quiet year at Hogwarts’ or a poignant phrase about what has happened and what is to come. These epilogic scenes are all between fifteen and 150 seconds long, and all take place within the final four minutes before the end credits, usually themselves constituting the final scene. Similarly, six of the eight films feature a conversational debrief of some kind between Harry and a teacher, all of which precede the ‘trio’ debrief by a few minutes: four with Professor Dumbledore in his office (PS, CoS, GoF, OotP), one with Professor McGonagall (HBP) and one with Professor Lupin (PoA). Furthermore, Dumbledore does feature in the endings of the final moments of the last two films: in his grave in DHp1, and
in an afterlife in *DHp2*. These tropes together help to prepare the audience narratively for the end of each instalment, and their repeated use contributes to their strength and weight of codified meaning.

Devices such as these form part of a more complex narrative model that includes several other elements as well as specific shooting/editing techniques and sonic devices which signify the film’s closure. Hogwarts, the Black Lake and the Hogwarts Express all appear in the majority of the films’ final shots, and this repetition codifies their visual signification cinematically and symbolically: cinematically their presence indicates the end of the film and thus of the narrative; symbolically they represent the continual existence of the fantasy home-space (Hogwarts) and the viewer’s journey back to the primary world (see Figure 9). Most of these closing shots use aerial camerawork to display Hogwarts or the Black Lake (and often both) from above, which creates a physically impossible subject position and gives the shot a desuturing effect similar to what Žižek calls ‘constructing a place of impossible subjectivity’ (2002: 36). Where point-of-view shots can be used to complete or suture the gaps of what is hitherto unseen, these aerial shots instead *desuture* the subject by removing them from the permanence of ground level and eroding their sense of subjective space.21 Desuture opens a hole in the world: where it was seen as a whole it is now seen only in part, and the viewer is pulled outwards through the cognitive dissonance of their impossible location – an effect that is visually amplified by the backwards movement of the camera in three of these final shots (*CoS, HBP, DHp2*).
Figure 9 – Final shots of each *Harry Potter* film in order (excluding DHp2 epilogue)
Although the established model for film endings is morphed and adapted throughout the eight films, music plays a crucial role alongside these ending tropes in each manifestation. Most commonly, and perhaps most significantly, non-diegetic music is foregrounded throughout all eight of the closing scenes, particularly after the last line of dialogue when the music swells and crescendos to the credits. This musical foregrounding is often at the expense of other soundtrack elements (sound effect and dialogue), which are drowned out by the overwhelming presence of the score. One example of this is at the end of *Chamber of Secrets* where the rapturous applause of the entire Great Hall gradually fades out as the triumphant orchestral score becomes increasingly louder, even though the subject/camera position remains within the same acoustic space. Musical foregrounding (and the inherent erasure of sound and dialogue) erodes a film’s sense of realism in a similar way to the creation of impossible subjective spaces by giving prominence to an extra-diegetic narrative agent, and in a sense highlighting the film’s enunciation where previously this was masked or disguised. Within cinematic tradition, directors have long turned to music for its ability to finish something, perhaps drawing on the orchestral tradition of symphonic or operatic finales and their ability to conjure a sense of completion and closure.

**Table 5 – Musical foregrounding in all *Harry Potter* film endings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Duration of musical foregrounding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>PS</em></td>
<td>47s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>CoS</em></td>
<td>110s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>PoA</em></td>
<td>18s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>GoF</em></td>
<td>44s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>OotP</em></td>
<td>31s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>HBP</em></td>
<td>50s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>DHp1</em> (ending)</td>
<td>69s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>DHp1</em> (epilogue)</td>
<td>88s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>DHp2</em> (ending)</td>
<td>85s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>DHp2</em> (epilogue)</td>
<td>65s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All eight *Harry Potter* films finish with a fade to black and an orchestral score that outlasts the visual, further exemplifying the employment of music as the main
communicator of a film’s ending. Table 5 details the duration for which music is foregrounded in each of the *Harry Potter* films’ endings, here measured from the end of the last line of dialogue until the first credit. These moments of musical prominence vary in duration but average around a minute in length, when the narrative endings and epilogues for each of the final two instalments are included (both listed in Table 5). The ending of *Philosopher’s Stone* provides a good example of music acting as the film’s final storyteller. Two closing lines are exchanged between the trio before the train departs from Hogwarts; Hermione (Emma Watson) comments ‘…feels strange to be going home, doesn’t it?’ to which Harry replies ‘I’m not going home. Not really.’ As Daniel Radcliffe finishes his line the violins arpeggiate dramatically upwards over a descending bass line, crescendoing to a tonic pedal and the entrance of one of John Williams’ more emotive themes, a motif that Jamie Lynn Webster entitles ‘Love/Reflection’ (2009: 371). This theme is first introduced twelve minutes into the film as a lonely Harry draws a birthday cake in the dust on the floor, and is used a further eight times including at the appearance of his dead parents in the Mirror of Erised, and to underscore Dumbledore’s poignant explanation of the lifesaving power of Harry’s mother’s love. Each use relates in some way to a reflection on the love and loss of family or friendship, and its place in the finale is no exception after Harry’s realisation of where he truly finds ‘home’ to be. Here the foregrounding of music causes a shift in cognitive registers from a more unconscious response to a more conscious apprehension, or from more ‘unheard’ to more ‘heard’. As music draws attention to itself the viewer (re)cognises that the film is ending, understanding that they must depart from Hogwarts on the train with everyone else. However, this particularly emotive cue invites the audience to identify with Harry in the designation of Hogwarts (and by extension Harry’s magical world) as a home for them. The final triumphant moments of the score with a reharmonised major (Lydian) form of Hedwig’s Theme put the finishing touches to a well-built world of love, friendship and goodness, filling our ears and minds with nostalgia even before the image of our surrogate home has faded to black.

This formula is repeated in all consequent *Harry Potter* films in varying permutations, and the same Love/Reflection motif is employed to finish two further films: *Chamber of Secrets* and *Deathly Hallows Part Two*. The former, again composed by John Williams, features an even more grandiose orchestration and a more extended instance of the reharmonised Hedwig’s Theme, including several false endings, flourishes and restatements of the tonic chord, still fading to black from an aerial shot of Hogwarts and its grounds. In *DHp2*, Alexandre Desplat chooses to employ the exact same cue from the end
of the first film (PS) over the final two minutes of the ’19 years later’ epilogue, imbuing the closure of the franchise with a cyclical sense of fulfilment as the protagonists’ own children make their first journey to Hogwarts. This farewell scene is in many ways a recreation of Harry’s first departure from Hogwarts; both scenes synchronise rhythmically to exactly the same underscore and match each other remarkably in this respect. Harry’s discussion with his son on the station platform mirrors Hagrid’s discussion with Harry roughly 25 years prior. Shots of the children on the train, of the farewell parties on the platform, and of the train’s departure all coincide with exactly the same points in the cue (see Table 6). This makes the epilogue scene more clearly reminiscent of the end of the first film, using an intensely nostalgic set of musical and visual sutures to tie the franchise’s ending to the beginning of its grand narrative. It also ties up some of the loose ends and questions of ‘what happens next’, while leaving some threads, such as the protagonists’ offspring, loose and open for further adventures – in this case, through the story of Harry Potter and the Cursed Child (see Chapter Four).

Table 6 – Closing scenes of PS and DHp2 and their synchronisation with the score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>PS</th>
<th>DHp2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harry &amp; Hagrid / Harry &amp; Albus on platform.</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children on the train.</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train leaving the station.</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farewell party on the platform.</td>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nostalgic memory is a particularly strong suturing agent here. The reuse and foregrounding of a well-established cue desutures listeners from the film through its own familiarity and increased audibility, but simultaneously sutures them to the world-of-the film by evoking a sense of nostalgia for the world, and perhaps even a desire that the world might continue to exist. The end credits for *PoA, GoF, OotP* and *HBP* (the middle four films) all employ visual or structural devices that recall characters, objects or other motifs from the films in some way: *PoA*’s credits are stylised to resemble the ‘Marauder’s Map’ and framed sonically with Harry speaking the incantations necessary to read it (‘I solemnly swear that I’m up to no good’ and ‘mischief managed’); *GoF*’s primary credits are written on burnt scraps of paper emerging from the Goblet of Fire; *OotP*’s credits appear in the same typeface as Professor Umbridge’s educational decrees and in her characteristic shade of pink; and the end credits of *HBP* resemble the abstract, inky animation used in the film to depict thoughts in the ‘pensieve’. These devices remove the boundary between film and credits, thus blurring the line between the film world and the real world and enabling a smoother, more gradual transition than the more traditional black-screen credits of the other four films.

Musically the end credits revisit and reuse the most recognisable or most commonly used cues from the films. Five of the eight films use a form of Hedwig’s Theme to signal the start of the credits, mirroring the opening titles and its use at the beginning of each film, thereby creating a symmetrical sense of closure with a powerful desuturing function: as soon as the audience hears the familiar strains of Hedwig’s Theme (partnered with the other closing tropes identified above) they know it is nearly time to leave. In a way comparable to Alison Landsberg’s concept of the ‘prosthetic memory’ (see Landsberg, 1995 and 2004), the nostalgic impulse of this theme is amplified not only by its repeated use, but also by the memory of all the experiences that the theme has been tied up with and come to represent; that is, the totality of our experience of the wizarding world. Following Landsberg’s definition of prosthetic memory as ‘memories which do not come from a person’s lived experience in any strict sense’, it is arguable here that Hedwig’s Theme is able to conjure in the audience the memory of previous film endings, previous film beginnings, and even the prosthetic memory of everything that took place in between. (Landsberg, 1995: 175). The three films whose credits do not start with Hedwig’s Theme: *OotP, HBP* and *DHp1*, use the cues ‘Dumbledore’s Army’, ‘Fireworks’ and ‘Obliviate’ respectively. The first two of these cues, which are the main new themes introduced in each film and which are in a major key, act in summation of the films, recalling their most
joyous moments. “Obliviate”, however, features a minor ostinato that withholds any sense of closure from the film, which is apt as DHp1 is the first part of a two-part narrative, and this non-resolving credit music suits the film’s cliff-hanger ending which depicts Voldemort taking the Elder Wand from Dumbledore’s grave.

Example 10 – Adapted form of ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ from GoF credits

The credit music for Goblet of Fire is unusual in that it consists of previously unheard material – the primary credits (animated rather than scrolling) are accompanied first by a completely new arrangement of Hedwig’s Theme (see Example 10), and then by Nicholas Hooper’s ‘Hogwarts’ Hymn’, a cue that appears only in the credits. The Hymn is a simple, majestic and pompous piece with rousing melodies and chains of suspensions, richly orchestrated in a romantic style and repeated in several transpositions. A hugely climactic perfect cadence in full orchestral forces gives a symphonic finality to the primary credits, and the anhemitic nature of the piece in a sense eulogises and celebrates the film (and Hogwarts, its home-space), conjuring a sense of nostalgia for it even before it has truly finished. The choice here to use previously unheard music for the first part of the credits points to a continuation of the worldbuilding role of the composer, and enables the credit sequence to be seen as a vital part of the film and its world.

The worldbuilding role of credit music continues here with another interesting addition – that of a pop song by the fictional band ‘The Weird Sisters’ who make an appearance in Goblet of Fire at the Yule Ball (a formal dance-cum-school disco). Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker and Radiohead’s Jonny Greenwood among other musicians appear as band members, and although only one song features in the film (‘Do The Hippogriff’), three Weird Sisters songs were written, recorded and released by the band on the film’s soundtrack (‘Weird Sisters’, n.d.). The last of these, a slow-dancing rock ballad called ‘Magic Works’ closes out the credits with the recognisable voice of Cocker who opens the song with the line ‘this one’s going out to all the lovers out there.’ Just as such a slow-dance number could conceivably have appeared towards the end of The Weird Sisters’ Yule Ball set, so any fan or filmgoer who stays to the very end of the film credits is treated

22 An abridged, rhythmically diminished version of Hogwarts’ Hymn is heard for a few seconds in the film before Harry’s name comes out of the Goblet (c. 33 minutes in), but with a drastically altered melody.
to this ‘end-of-the-night’ rendition. Not only does this extend further opportunities for viewers to learn about and inhabit the world even once the film’s narrative is over, the chorus lyrics also represent an overt invitation to continue that inhabitation and exploration:

*So, believe that magic works*  
*Don’t be afraid of being hurt*  
*Don’t let this magic die*  
*The answer’s there, oh, just look in her eyes.*

These lyrics encourage the listener to keep the magic alive – that is, to stay, to believe, to buy the soundtrack, to listen to the Weird Sisters’ songs and the rest of Nicholas Hooper’s score and to return to the Hogwarts school disco.

One common practice today for many film-watchers is to stay in the cinema until the lights come up at the end of the credits, or to fast-forward the DVD to see if any post-credits scenes or surprises await. As Alex Suskind identifies, ‘[f]or current blockbusters, the post-credits sequence is de rigueur, both a wink to hardcore fans and a way to further advance the story into potential sequels or spinoffs’ (2014). These scenes are often referred to as stingers, tags, codas and even ‘credit cookies’, and beside the Weird Sisters track only two other *Harry Potter* films feature stingers of any kind. The credits for *Chamber of Secrets* are followed by a 20-second clip of the magical bookshop in Diagon Alley, the window of which displays an advert for Gilderoy Lockhart’s latest book ‘Who Am I?’ – a humorous nod to Lockhart’s erasing of his own memory. Where this stinger features only a hint of potentially diegetic music amidst the street noise, the *Prisoner of Azkaban* credits are followed by two small musical tags that do two different things. Firstly, a voiceover of Harry uttering two magical commands bookends the credits in the same way that they began – ‘mischief managed’ closes the map on which the credits appeared, and ‘nox’ extinguishes the light by which it is read. This is accompanied by the same cue that opened the film, the first half of Hedwig’s Theme on solo celeste. After the dominant note at the end of the first phrase, however, the theme concludes early with a single tonic note adding to the sense of finality of the fade to black. This finality is disrupted by the film’s closing stinger, which follows after seven seconds of complete black silence – a bar of Peter Pettigrew’s theme on solo harpsichord (see Example 11). Representing a morally-ambiguous character, the theme repeats one note seven times before faltering to the semitones either side, thus unsettling the preceding perfect cadence with the clashing dissonance of a semitone cluster that rings out and slowly decays to nothing. This musical joke almost mocks the sureness of the celeste’s closing tonic, but more than this it can be
heard as alluding to the unfinished nature of the grand narrative of the franchise – evil is still out there, the story is not finished, and viewers must return to find out what happens next. This final musical sinew is both suture and desuture – it sends viewers on their way with a chuckle and simultaneously plants the idea in their minds that everything – the film and the world – is not over.

Example 11 – Final music of PoA credits

Musical suture/desuture can be heard as operating throughout the final moments of these films, transitioning audiences out of the films and simultaneously extending an invitation for continued inhabitation of the film-worlds, and it will be helpful here to draw on Daniel Yacavone’s world-in/world-of distinction (2014: 19). End credits represent a shift from the world-in to the world-of the film; from the depicted or denoted, fictional and representational world (to borrow Yacavone’s terminology) to the wider world of its creation and existence described by Yacavone as formal and presentational (40-41). During a film’s end credits the world-in becomes, or perhaps is replaced by, the world-of, and music helps to bridge this divide, to smooth the transition, and to tie the two worlds together. As music is foregrounded and promoted over the image as the primary narrator towards the end of a film, our attention is held by the music, altering our mode of viewing to a heightened listening and allowing the image to slip away and the credits to roll. Rather than simply ejecting the audience from the film-world and snatching it away from them, music gives an alternative way to continue inhabiting the world-of the film, reducing cognitive dissonance and giving viewers the choice as to how long they wish to imaginatively remain in the film-world before leaving (both cognitively and physically). The following section turns to the ending sequences of the LOTR films and identifies further ways in which music enables this continued inhabitation of film-worlds.

Lord of the Rings

Whereas the Harry Potter films all tend to climax musically into the end credits, each instalment of The Lord of the Rings slides more gradually from film to credits, using music to smooth over the fade to black and the introduction of the first credit rather than to coincide structurally with them. In this way, music’s suturing agency links the closing
shots to the credit sequences with familiar orchestral cues from the films, making the end points of each film subtler and less overt. This technique lends itself to the instalments’ more contemplative endings, and encourages the viewer’s continued immersion in the film-world well into the credits. Indeed, in what follows I argue that the ways in which the \textit{LOTR} credits are accompanied musically not only enable the continued inhabitation of the world but also empower the viewer to choose how long they want to stay and when they wish to leave. As the credits (and credit music) for these films last from seven to twenty minutes (compared to the \textit{Harry Potter} films whose credits average around ten minutes in duration, the longest lasting only twelve minutes), the possibility of remaining in Howard Shore’s musical world (and thus imaginatively in the film’s world-of) for such an extended period of time is in itself significant in terms of suture and desuture. Here, the viewer has greater freedom to make their own choice about when the film is finished and when they want to leave the world.

The Lord of the Rings, though divided into three segments, was initially written and thought of by J.R.R. Tolkien as one book (Anderson, 1987), and as such the three instalments of Peter Jackson’s cinematic trilogy form three continuous parts of one grand epic narrative in a much stronger way than the seven more distinct narratives of each \textit{Harry Potter} book/film. In this way, \textit{The Fellowship of the Ring} and \textit{The Two Towers} do not come to full conclusions but rather end at narrative breathing points, and thus their closing scenes tend to take stock, looking back at where they have come from and forward to where they are going – for the characters often literally as well as figuratively. To this end, Shore’s music does less to communicate the impending closure of each film than was seen in the \textit{Harry Potter} series, choosing instead only to begin any sense of closure and transition shortly before the fade to black and first credit, and thereby relying much more on the credits to enable the audience’s transition from Middle-earth to the real world. In an interesting contrast to the \textit{Harry Potter} films, \textit{FOTR} and \textit{TTT} both make use of aerial shots to begin the process of desuturing the viewer, but both are shots of Mordor, the narrative’s end-point destination, as opposed to the franchise’s primary home-space, which would be the Shire (where, indeed, \textit{ROTK} finds its end).

Musically, the closing sequences and credits are interesting in several ways – most particularly in their use of credit songs. Each of the three instalments (and indeed each of the \textit{Hobbit} films) features an English-language song that begins within the first 40 seconds of the credits. Sung by well-known female artists (Enya, Emiliana Torrini and Annie Lennox respectively) with particularly distinctive and timbrally recognisable voices, these
songs provide new musical material for the credits and create opportunities to reflect. The vast majority of Howard Shore’s vocalists and choruses sing in one of Tolkien’s invented languages, rather than in English.\textsuperscript{23} The vocal music in these scores is therefore primarily timbral and textural, intended for colour rather than for the communication of lyrical meaning (although Tolkien’s ‘foreign’ texts and David Salo’s translations all contain literal meaning for those who go looking for it), and so the English language credit songs contrast with the films’ other vocal music in their lyrical comprehensibility. This draws attention to the songs themselves, helping to desuture viewers from the film by creating a bridge between the two worlds in which the songs simultaneously exist. To clarify, the songs can be thought of as existing within Middle-earth as a part of that musical world in their lyrical content, their use of Shore’s harmonies and melodic motifs, and their characteristic instrumentation – in this sense they operate as an extension of the musical world-of-Middle-earth. That being said, the newfound lyrical comprehension paired with the familiarity of the soloist’s voices brings the songs into our world, enabling viewers to make further connections with the songs and thus to be sutured to the world of Middle-earth in a looser sense through more subjective affiliating identifications (see Kassabian, 2001: 3).

Taking The Two Towers’ credit song as an example, ‘Gollum’s Song’ exemplifies this dual inhabitation of worlds and the gradual, subtle shift from film to credits that its use facilitates. The film’s closing scene features an extended conversation between Gollum and Sméagol, the character’s two (now distinct) personalities, in which they decide to lead Frodo and Sam to their deaths. Finishing with such a window into Gollum’s psychiatric state, the ominous underscoring, mostly consisting of themes for Gollum and the Ring, continues as Gollum leads the hobbits onwards and the camera tilts up to reveal Mordor and Mount Doom, their final destination. Equal phrase lengths and a regular cycle of four non-related chords (G♯m, Bm, Cm, D) give the cue a kind of momentum and sense of continuation, and as the harmonic cycle continues the violins enter an octave higher with a new melody and the shot of Mordor fades to black. The first credit appears not with a triumphant sense of finality or climax, but merely as a continuation of a story that, again, music has taken over the telling of. Once Emilíana Torrini starts singing it becomes clear that the evenly-phrased melodies heard on violins and hummed female voices were in fact

\textsuperscript{23} There is only one instance of English language singing in the films outside of the credits, which is in ROTK – a momentary scene as Aragorn nurses Éowyn to health is accompanied by Liv Tyler (who plays Aragorn’s love interest Arwen) singing “The Houses of Healing”.

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the melodies of the verse and chorus of the song. In this way the song is birthed naturally from the score, its melody and harmony already being familiar and very much linked to Gollum’s musical material.

The melody and harmony of ‘Gollum’s Song’ are taken from one of Shore’s main motifs for the character, entitled the ‘Pity of Gollum’ theme by Doug Adams, who identifies the song as a ‘further exploration’ of this theme (Adams, 2010: 39). Lyrically the singer identifies with Gollum/Sméagol and in a sense personifies him – this is seen not only through the descriptive language (‘we are lost, we can never go home’) but also through the use of the first person and the alternation of ‘I’ and ‘we’, alluding to Gollum’s dual personalities and tendency to refer to himself in the plural. Torrini’s vocal timbre contributes to the song’s worldbuilding agency through its otherness – as an Icelandic singer with an unusual vocal quality, her voice lends itself to the foreignness of Gollum while simultaneously softening it, perhaps humanising Gollum in some respects. The use of a Scandinavian singer fits well with Tolkien’s Middle-earth mythos, it being inspired by Norse mythology and other northern-European folk cultures (Shippey, 2007), and so further bridges Middle-earth with our world. Lastly, as a narrative device the song looks both backwards and forwards in the franchise. Through its provision of a sung history of Gollum it pre-empts the opening scene of ROTK, which provides a more detailed pre-history for the character. Closing TTT with material derived from the Pity of Gollum theme also bookends the film in a sense, as similar material was used to start the film’s opening sequence (see above). In all these ways the credit song is able to seamlessly transport the audience from an audiovisual filmic experience to a purely musical form of storytelling – just as the three-dimensional world of the film is made two-dimensional by the erected wall of credits, so the audience’s attention is diverted by the song and its story, allowing the film to end quietly and imperceptibly. The audience is sent on its way, not wrapped in nostalgia for the finished episode as in the Harry Potter films, but instead meditating on what is to come and the perils the protagonists may face.

Annie Lennox’s credit song ‘Into the West’ provides another neat bookend to the franchise by mirroring in many respects the trilogy’s mythical opening in FOTR. The preceding underscore pre-empts the song’s melody, harmony and instrumentation in a similar way to TTT, resulting in a similarly seamless shift from the film into the song. As the elf Galadriel is one of the main characters to depart from Middle-earth along with Gandalf, Bilbo and Frodo, it is easy to hear ‘Into the West’ as giving voice to Galadriel in some sense, particularly given her presence in this concluding scene and her use of the
phrase ‘into the west’ in FOTR. On a wider level it is easy to hear Annie Lennox as the voice of Galadriel; both are well-respected female figures known in their worlds for strength of character, integrity, altruism, durability and even perhaps a sense of wisdom, and Howard Shore has also commented on their resemblance (Adams, 2010: 384).

Hearing ‘Into the West’ as the voice of Galadriel gives the song a symmetrical sense of finality by closing the franchise with the same voice that opened it – it is the voice of Galadriel that narrates the Prologue of FOTR and indeed that summons the film and its mythical opening into being (see Buhler 2006), so it is fitting that the same personality should also oversee and call into effect its final sublimation into myth. Lyrically the song tells of grey ships carrying their passengers to white shores in the West, to the journey’s end, to home, to find peace, safety and ‘the ones who came before’. This describes the Elves’ journey to Valinor, the celestial home of the Elves in Tolkien’s mythos and indeed the destination of Frodo and the final ship on which he leaves, but also our homeward journey as temporary sojourners in Middle-earth.

The final 25 minutes of ROTK include a number of endings: the destruction of the Ring and the rescuing of Frodo and Sam; the reunion of the Fellowship; the coronation of Aragorn and his reunion with Arwen; the marriage of Sam and Rosie; the departure of Frodo, Bilbo and Gandalf; and the final homecoming of Sam, Merry and Pippin. Besides tying up the narrative threads these endings are all united in their depictions of home, whether that be a new home, such as for Aragorn and Frodo et al., or a return to the home they fought for, as for the other hobbits and their homecoming to the Shire, epitomised by Sam’s line that closes both the film and the book: ‘Well, I’m back.’ The end of the story is thus a mixture of partings and homecomings, and though the audience witnesses Frodo’s departure from Middle-earth, it is seen from the shore, from the perspective of Sam and those left behind – those who remain in Middle-earth. In the final scene, Frodo’s presence is transformed into that of an acousmêtre (Michel Chion’s term for the disembodied voice [1994, 1999]) as his voiceover addresses Sam and we cannot help but hear him speaking to us: ‘My dear Sam. You cannot always be torn in two, you will have to be one and whole for many years. You have so much to enjoy, and to be, and to do. Your part in the story will go on.’ It is with these words ringing in their ears that the audience leaves Middle-earth, resolving not to be torn between the two worlds, but accepting that the story lives on

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24 This is a good example of Richard Dyer’s ‘perfect fit’ for a star persona matching the personality of the character they portray (Dyer, 1998: 129).
in them as long as they continue to live it. This alludes to a dual inhabitation of both the fantasy world and the real world, and indeed strengthens the idea that although the films have ended (for now), the world-of Middle-earth remains home to those who wish to call it so. Heard in this way, the lyrics of ‘Into the West’ take on a more potent meaning to those who seek to remain, as Sam did, within Middle-earth: ‘Don't say “we have come now to the end” […] You and I will meet again, and you’ll be here in my arms, just sleeping.’

The Hobbit

The parting lines of ‘Into The West’ seem to prophesy the creation of the Hobbit films, promising a reunion and a homecoming that The Hobbit aimed to provide for fans, as well as inviting fans to continue inhabiting the world of Middle-earth through film-watching and other means. Although the ‘worlds-in’ the two trilogies are slightly different, with the Hobbit films preceding LOTR temporally and taking place in different Middle-earth locations, a number of the closing tropes from LOTR are reused in the Hobbit film endings. This includes the use of credit songs, which again appear within the first 40 seconds of each film’s credits. Here, however, all three songs are sung by well-known male artists: Neil Finn, Ed Sheeran and Billy Boyd, the last being most famous for his portrayal of Pippin in the LOTR films. It is notable that Peter Jackson chose to use male singers for the Hobbit credit songs, and indeed that all three songs are closer to pop in terms of style, timbre and idiom, breaking from the sound-world of the films where the LOTR songs remained more closely related.25

The first of The Hobbit’s credit songs, ‘Song of the Lonely Mountain’, is melodically and thematically linked to the musical world of An Unexpected Journey in that a very similar song is sung by Thorin Oakenshield and his company, and the melody features heavily as a motif for the dwarves’ journey in Shore’s score. That being said, the song that features in the film (entitled ‘Misty Mountains’ in the credits) uses two stanzas of lyrics from Tolkien’s The Hobbit and a melody written by Plan 9 and David Long, whereas the credit song was written by Neil Finn, using the same melody but different lyrics (Rolling Stone, 2012). Ed Sheeran wrote and recorded ‘I See Fire’, the credit song for Desolation of Smaug just days after he was approached by Peter Jackson, having been recommended as a possible artist by Jackson’s daughter (Didelot, 2013). This song has

25 Tolkien’s novel notably contains no female characters, which prompted the creation of Tauriel’s character and the use of Galadriel in the Jackson adaptations – thus, if the novel and films can be thought of as male-dominated, these male singers fall in line with this interpretation.
even fewer connections with the film – indeed its lyrical content is only loosely related to
the narrative, and the pop-folk instrumentation evokes a completely different sound world
to the preceding scores. Lastly, Billy Boyd’s voice in ‘The Last Goodbye’ is instantly
recognisable as that of Pippin, having previously sung ‘The Edge of Night’ in a memorable
and poignant scene in The Two Towers (Adams, 2010: 300). The use of a familiar voice,
though narratively anachronistic, gives the song a highly nostalgic impulse and allows this
particular credit song both to bridge the gap between the two franchises and also to bid
them farewell. The official music video for this song features clips from all six Jackson
films as well as a plethora of behind-the-scenes footage of the actors both in and out of
costume, making sure to feature all the main and subsidiary characters. This farewell, then,
operates on several levels – a farewell to Middle-earth but also a sentimental salute to
those who helped to create it, a notion strengthened by the artistic hand-drawn sketches of
each cast-member that accompany the first part of the Battle of the Five Armies credits.
Boyd also reminds us of what is ahead in narrative terms, heralding the LOTR trilogy
musically through his recognisable voice, and thus the song looks backwards and forwards
in different senses.

The Hobbit credits themselves are approached differently in comparison to those
for LOTR, as the narratives of the first two instalments (AUJ and DOS) finish with more
suspenseful endings than the subtle, gradual endings of the LOTR episodes, and feature a
cut to black rather than a slow fade. In contrast to the musical storytelling characteristic of
the LOTR endings, these two films also feature an absence of musical underscoring in their
final moments: the final 40 seconds of AUJ and 19 seconds of DOS resort to non-diegetic
silence. This heightens the suspense created by the sudden awakening of Smaug the dragon
(AUJ) and Bilbo’s closing line ‘What have we done?’ as Smaug sets off to destroy
Laketown (DOS), and the films end suddenly, with a moment of black silence before the
credits appear and the music returns. Here the film and credits are musically separated
rather than linked, in both cases by low, rumbling bass sounds with large amounts of
reverb: a long, drawn-out dragon growl in AUJ and a loud bass drum hit in DOS, both
synchronised with the cuts to black. Not only does the absence of music render the viewer
unprepared for the film’s impending closure, it also separates the credits narratively from
the main film-text, a separation emphasised by seven seconds of black screen before the
credits or credit songs begin. The absence of desuturing music leads viewers into a sudden,
disorientating darkness, and it is not until the first credit and the reintroduction of music
that the film is confirmed as being over.
As alluded to above, the final film (Battle of the Five Armies) ends quite differently to the other two, and returns to some of the LOTR tropes such as the foregrounding of non-diegetic music as a narrative agent, which sonically connects the final scene to the credits. *BOTFA* is also linked to *FOTR* through a degree of narrative overlap. In the final scene of *BOTFA*, a temporal cut subtly moves the clock forward 59 years;²⁶ young Bilbo (Martin Freeman) becomes old Bilbo (Sir Ian Holm) via a camera shot of the Ring in his hand, and in response to a knock at the door that breaks his contemplation of the Ring he exclaims ‘No thank you! We don’t want any more visitors, well-wishers or distant relations!’ This line is taken from his response to Gandalf’s knock at the door in *FOTR*, and after Gandalf’s familiar reply, ‘and what about very old friends?’ the scene is momentarily recreated word for word as Bilbo greets Gandalf and welcomes him in. Where the scene in *FOTR* was shot from outside the door, here the scene is recreated from Bilbo’s perspective inside his house, and rather than following Bilbo to the door the camera turns instead to a map on his desk. As the conversation continues out of sight, sound is again promoted to the role of primary narrator. Narrative suture here works to tie the two films, and indeed the two franchises, together, but music also plays a strong role in this suturing through an exact recreation of the underscore from *FOTR*: the repetition of the Shire theme at the same points in the two scenes, in the same setting and with identical instrumentation. Although the *BOTFA* scene was all re-filmed, Peter Jackson matches the actor’s vocal inflections, the timing and the music as closely as possible to the original. Once again, sound and music are the film’s final storytellers and those responsible for tying up its loose ends and safely detaching the audience from the world-in the films. The cyclical stitching of the end of the latter narrative to the beginning (or one of the beginnings) of the former gives a sense of continuation to the franchise and even invites viewers to continue the experience, to stay in the world-of the films by re-watching *LOTR* and following the onward journey of the Ring, an invitation made stronger by the use of Billy Boyd’s voice as argued above.

²⁶ The temporal jump is in fact 59 years and 3 months, moving from 22nd June T.A. (Third Age) 2942 to 22nd September T.A. 3001 (dates gathered from <http://lotrproject.com/timeline>, accessed 6/2/17).
Lastly, the *BOTFA* credits recreate a device used in *ROTK* by replacing the plain black background with sketches and drawings of the films’ characters, locations and props. This is reminiscent of a similar device used in both trilogies by which geographical travel is suggested through the use of maps and flyover camerawork – both use aged paper or parchment and archaic styles of writing or drawing in ink or lead (see Figure 10). Tom Conley identifies this ‘cartographic impulse’ as reaching back to early modern craftsmen or ‘king’s engineers’, and outlines the maps’ roles as narrative devices (2006: 220). The more tangible or physical nature of these credits adds another level of worldbuilding to the final instalments, again offering and encouraging an extended form of inhabitation of the world. It is at this point that the world-in the film *becomes* the world-of the film; all of Middle-earth becomes portable, ownable, studyable and memorable through its semiotic transposition onto a piece of paper, a two-dimensional image of a three-dimensional reality. Furthermore, the depiction of the film’s characters alongside the names of the actors who played them further aids this elision of the two worlds. The secondary world of
Middle-earth and the real world are conflated not only by English language songs which exist in both, but also by the revelation of the secondary world’s constructed nature.

Outs and Ins – Oscillating Sutures In Media Rex

Maps, sketches and other parchments appear not only at the beginnings and endings of Jackson’s films but indeed throughout, as elliptical devices which stand in for long geographical journeys and allow the films to replace arduous journeying sequences with satisfactory explanations. One example of this is towards the end of ROTK (though indeed with half an hour of the Extended Edition remaining) where an aerial shot of the city of Minas Tirith pulls out and simultaneously transitions to a pictorial representation of the city on a hand-drawn map (see Figure 11). The following sequence follows the hobbits’ journey back to the Shire, with a voiceover by Frodo (speaking acousmétrically) as the orchestra present some new material from Howard Shore – a theme based on familiar harmonies and with long, stretching phrases, aptly named ‘The Journey Back’ by Doug Adams (2010: 127). As the camera works its way across the map the viewer is momentarily transported across Middle-earth to the Shire where the map fades away (see Figure 12), and although the actual journey will have taken the hobbits several months the audience is given thirty seconds to breathe, reflect and re-orientate themselves spatiotemporally. Here the act of homecoming is both simplified and expedited, and thus ‘home’ becomes more accessible and more tangible to the viewer while the narrative form of the film as a retelling of an ancient story is also cemented by the presence of old manuscripts and an audible storyteller.
Tom Conley, in reference to a similar instance of the map device in *FOTR*, links this fluid camera movement to Gilles Deleuze’s concept of free subjectivity: ‘wherever “point of view” becomes difficult to discern in a film it usually underscores the presence of the camera itself and the spectator whose imagination is in and of the space being shown’ (2006: 226). For Conley, the question is one of gaze – are we sharing the gaze of Gandalf when viewing these maps, the gaze of an absent narrator, or indeed of the camera itself? To return to the above-mentioned Žižekian concept it is arguable that moments of supposed ‘impossible subjectivity’ – when the viewer’s gaze places them in an impossible subject position or allows for impossible actions (such as flying or passing through walls) – create two possible outcomes. Firstly, these conflicted subject positions produce some hesitancy as to the subjective or objective nature of the camera shot – what Deleuze refers to as ‘free indirect discourse’ between the two poles (1983: 81). However, besides their desuturing ability, the hesitancy of conflicted subject positions may also be able to re-suture viewers into the worlds through its affirmation of the fantastic – within the worlds of these films (and of *Harry Potter* in particular) these subject positions are not altogether impossible, and indeed aerial shots and cameras moving through walls may imbue the viewer with a stronger subjective sense of the fantastic. The following section thus focuses on a few instances of impossible subjectivities throughout the films, identifying them as ‘breathing points’ or moments of decreased tension, and analyses the oscillation of sutures and desutures (both musical and non-musical) in play.

Several scholars including Kristen Moana Thompson (2007), Laura Crossley (2007) and David Butler (2007a) have identified within Jackson’s *LOTR* films the
repetitive use of aerial cinematography, drawing on New Zealand’s dramatic and varied landscape as a worldbuilding tool to establish both the grandeur and expanse of Middle-earth as well as the lengths of journeys undertaken across it. As Thompson notes, ‘repeated zooms-out, aerial and high angle photography, and extreme long shots punctuate the beginnings and endings of each narrative sequence as the fellowship move from one kingdom to the next’ (2007: 287). Narratively, these shots depict more than just the transnational movement of characters, and where Thompson views these moments as punctuative I would suggest that they operate more as breaks between chapters of a novel. In this way, extended periods of aerial photography (often with foregrounded musical scoring) can be thought of as paratextual in the sense that they communicate the narrative structure of the text and thus inform a film’s reading, just like a page break between the chapters of a book. These are paratexts in media res, to adopt and extend Jonathan Gray’s alternative to the entryway (and exitway) paratexts analysed in the preceding two sections (2010: 40).

David Butler calls on Slavoj Žižek’s theory of impossible subjectivity to explain what he sees as the breaking of suture caused by many of Jackson’s more virtuosic camera movements, which, though impressive, often do more to draw attention to themselves (and indeed to the camera and the artifice of the film’s enunciation) than to serve the scene, the immersion of the viewer or the establishing of space (2007a: 161). The concept of a problematic gaze returns here as Butler points out that for many of these aerial camera shots ‘no owner of the gaze is identified; the shot exists outside of and beyond the denizens of Middle-earth’ (162). One particularly problematic shot that Butler identifies is a very long shot where the camera moves past the head of one of the colossal Argonath statues toward the end of FOTR, establishing the expansive diegesis and the spatial relationship of the fellowship’s comparatively tiny boats with the enormous statues. In his commentary, Jackson speaks of a helicopter frightening the birds nesting in the eye of the statue as it flew past – even though the birds were created with CGI and thus his helicopter never existed. Besides the problematic examples provided by Butler and Crossley, I would like to suggest that the use of aerial and extreme long shots can also be used to create breathing points within a film’s narrative, desuturing viewers through the increased impossibility of their subjective state (aerial shot, louder music) but in doing so producing a sense of distance, allowing the viewer to breathe, relax and take stock before re-entering the film and its world again. The Argonath shot therefore works as an oscillation of suture and desuture; a helpful breathing spot before the final narrative plunge.
A similar moment occurs in *TTT* when Gandalf and the fellowship first arrive at Edoras, the capital of the Kingdom of Rohan. Éowyn, the King’s daughter, exits the Golden Hall of Meduseld which sits atop the rocky mountain on which Edoras is summited and sees three horses approaching from far off, established with extreme long shots of the horses from her vantage point. A few shots of the fellowship arriving at the city gates cut to a seventeen-second aerial shot of Edoras, tracking round as the helicopter circles the hill showing the snow-capped mountains in the far distance (see Figure 13). Although this shot is rather long in duration, it helps to situate Edoras among the surrounding countryside and mountain ranges, and the music (which was already highly foregrounded in the preceding shots of Éowyn and the fellowship) helps to suture the cut to this shot with the preceding ones. Here music is active in a number of key ways. Firstly, the music heard is the clearest and most prominent iteration of Shore’s ‘Rohan’ theme so far in the series, played in full length by a solo Hardanger fiddle and accompanied by orchestral strings and prominent horns which take up the melody as the theme is repeated. Alongside this establishing shot the cue is firmly inaugurated as Rohan’s theme, while also establishing something of the Nordic culture of Rohan, the Hardanger being a Norwegian folk instrument with a distinctive, resonant sound (due to sympathetic strings under the fingerboard). Secondly, the harmony of the theme (see Example 12) is altered at the end in a way that provides some narrative information: the final chord of the theme is changed from a C major, the subdominant, to C minor, with the last E of the melody flattened accordingly. Thus, in Scott Murphy’s system of TTPCs, an ordinary m8M becomes a more unusual-sounding m8m. Murphy identifies several examples of the m8m in film music, including John Williams’ ‘Imperial March’ from Star Wars which uses this progression extensively, and
he traces it via Matthew Bribitzer-Stull (2015) back to Wagner’s ‘Tarnhelm’ progression from the leitmotif of the same name in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, but most notably he claims the m8m’s cinematically-codified connotations are ‘antagonism, with offshoots of the eerie and sinister’ (Murphy, 2014: 487). This is extremely apt here as Théoden, the King of Rohan and inhabitant of Meduseld, is at this point under the curse and possession of one of the fellowship’s main antagonists, Saruman.

Example 12 – Harmonic alteration of Rohan theme, replacing m8M with m8m

![Harmonic alteration of Rohan theme](image)

This seventeen-second aerial shot provides many things for an audience. Moving their gaze to an impossible subject position forces the viewer to distance themselves from the film’s action and to relax cognitively, allowing themselves at this breathing point to be carried by an invisible helicopter (or perhaps, more imaginatively, the unseen claws of an eagle) along a path in which they have no agency. As a break in the action, there is no plot or dialogue to follow, and so a viewer’s cognitive engagement is reduced. This desuturing is heightened by both the dominance of music over all other sound as well as by the visual beauty of the shot itself; as Laura Crossley notes in her examination of the ‘lighting of the beacons’ sequence, ‘the spectator could be forgiven for forgetting the purpose of this sequence and simply admiring the landscape’ (2007: 174). As the music turns sour, however, and departs from the harmony the listener is expecting, the score takes over as the primary narrative agent, foretelling the sinister nature of what waits within the Golden Hall and in doing so beginning to resuture the viewer into the world, in preparation for the next scene. This moment provides the perfect example of the oscillation of suture and desuture, as music acts on the viewer to create a break in the narrative and provide an element of relaxation before it then draws the viewer back into the world-in the film. Here music acts paratextually *in media res* as both suture and desuture.

The *Harry Potter* series, as noted above, makes ample use of aerial photography in its opening and closing sequences and indeed throughout, with all directors favouring the
aerial shot of Hogwarts either as an establishing shot, as an interlude or chapter break, or to show the passing of time. One further example, taken from the *Prisoner of Azkaban*, uses a tracking shot of Harry’s owl Hedwig in flight above the countryside surrounding Hogwarts, to bridge two chapters and simultaneously show the changing season from autumn to winter. After seeing Hedwig take off from Harry’s conversation with Professor Lupin, the camera cuts to an aerial shot of Hedwig flying through a valley and follows her flight as the weather shifts from mild to blizzard in the blink of an eye (see Figure 14). As Hedwig flies past a snow-covered Hogwarts the camera zooms in to a clock tower where it finds Harry again, looking out of the window at his classmates departing on a trip to the local village of Hogsmeade. The 20-second sequence that joins these two Harrys sutures together a temporal cut of several weeks or even months, and relies on the cognitive disengagement of a subjectively desutured audience for it to be effective. Narratologically speaking this suture covers and disguises the rupture between story-time and discourse-time (see Genette, 1980). The landscape changes from dry to snowy in the space of a few seconds, and although this is not outside the realms of magical possibility, the audience’s attention is drawn to Hedwig’s flight and away from the not-so-subtle shift in season.
Music, again, has a large role to play in the desuturing and resuturing that takes place here. Hedwig’s whole flight is accompanied, somewhat predictably, with a full iteration of Hedwig’s Theme, played by horns with a scurrying violin and celeste countermelody – indeed, just as it is heard over the opening titles of the first three films. This gives the sequence a strong ‘interlude’ feeling – Hedwig’s Theme is by now used almost exclusively as a structural signpost to mark beginnings and endings, and so here its use marks the ending of one season or chapter and the beginning of the next. The twenty seconds that separate these chapters thus form a musical-visual interlude, which segues nicely into the following scene through a two-fold manipulation of the music. Firstly, where temporality is visually condensed within the sequence, the ending of Hedwig’s Theme here features rhythmic augmentation, stretching it out as if to make the final cadence coincide with the camera’s arrival at the clocktower. Secondly, the final note converges with the first note of a new theme, a melancholic minor theme in compound time, and thus in a sense the two themes are sutured together (see Example 13). This latter theme is referred to as ‘Love/Reflection/Longing’ by Jamie Lynn Webster (2009: 376), but
to avoid confusion I will adopt Williams’ cue name for the theme, ‘A Window to the Past’. This longing theme has a much stronger narrative impulse than Hedwig’s Theme, which is more neutral, and it sets the scene well for a sad and lonely Harry who is confined to Hogwarts while his friends go on an exciting excursion to Hogsmeade.

**Example 13 – Rhythmic augmentation in Hedwig’s Theme and segue into ‘A Window to the Past’**

This is another good example of music acting paratextually, or perhaps *peritextually* (that is, attached to the text rather than separate from it), *in media res*. Hedwig’s Theme becomes a signpost, signalling an opportunity for film-viewers to relax their attention and engage on shallower, less cognitively taxing levels, and it is repeatedly used for this function in the first three films. As a signifier for magic and the fantastic, Hedwig’s Theme also helps to continually reaffirm the fantastic nature of the world in which the films take place. Impossible subject positions may not pose such a big problem in fantasy cinema—indeed, having the viewer fly with an owl or move through a wall (as suggested by instances throughout the *Harry Potter* films) may go some way in reinforcing the films’ sense of the fantastic. This is heightened at times such as Quidditch matches when the camera work often places the viewer on a broomstick racing along beside Harry and his teammates. Moving beyond the limitations identified by Butler and Crossley (and indeed beyond Gray’s model of media paratexts) these subjective spaces and actions *are* in reality impossible, and they therefore instil a hesitancy akin to many other fantasy tropes, where the viewer must choose to accept the rules of the fantasy world (and its depiction/enunciation) as they are presented to them. In a sense, the viewer is desutured by this hesitancy, and resutured by their choice to engage in fantasy via the willing activation of pretence (to return to Saler’s terminology). These films need moments of desuturing, not only for narrative tempo and structure, but to keep the magic alive and to re-invite us into it – and music is vital in these processes.

The *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* films, just like narrative films of many other genres, are full of moments like these. As viewers, we need them to orient ourselves through the complex process(es) of watching a film. As argued by Matthew Bezdek (2016) and Stephen Hinde (2017), film viewers are in varying states of continual oscillation between awareness and unawareness of their surroundings, their companions, their bodily
states, their hunger or fatigue, or any other interrupter vying for their attention in the filmwatching process. To this end there are numerous agents in play in the continual oscillation of suture and desuture experienced by film-viewers. Returning to Katarzyna Marciniak, to consider suture means to develop ‘a critical awareness of the way the narrative tempo takes the spectator in and out of its filmic world’ (2005: 15). Viewing these oscillations more critically, rather than ‘incessantly moving between identification and cognition, pleasure and unpleasure, belief and disbelief, rapture and distance’ as Jeff Smith extrapolates from Claudia Gorbman (1996: 237), the cycle of suture and desuture results instead in movement between different modes of engaged listening and viewing, and most importantly, *always brings the viewer back home*. At times, music becomes the main storyteller and thus requires a more attentive level of cognition (though this does not necessarily mean the viewer is any less enraptured by the film); at others, music’s affective nature remains subliminal and less overt. In any case, it is doubtful that any of the examples of desuture above would ever cause a film-watcher to be somehow completely removed from the film itself, just as any example of suture is unable to tie a viewer permanently into a film-world – all suture is fragile. Thus, the experienced oscillation in fact entails a complex web of interrelated listening modes, narrative agents, filmic and non-filmic elements drawing our attention or enacting their effect beneath our conscious radar. It is clear: one does not simply watch a film.

Chapter Three: Echoes of Home

Introduction: Musical Worlds

If music is able to draw filmgoers in and out of a film world by acting as suture or desuture, music will also be involved in the constitution of the world itself. Music’s worldbuilding capabilities can be found in both diegetic and non-diegetic musical elements; that is, we gain insight into or perceive a film-world as much through the music played, heard or listened to by its inhabitants as through the accompanying musical score. In other words, music of both the world-in and the world-of the film contributes to our understanding of the world as a whole and combines to form what may be referred to as a ‘musical world’, a term I will use to refer to all forms of music related to the film-world. This chapter focuses on the musical representations of homes within the films and the ways in which ‘homely’ music gives the musical worlds a sense of familiarity and comfort.
The musical worlds of each of my case-study franchises contrast in several ways, and the composers’ approaches to musical worldbuilding are rather different in each case. For **LOTR**, Shore developed a cohesive singular sound-world and leitmotivic system for different races and cultures in the trilogy, and extended and adapted it for the *Hobbit*. In the case of *Harry Potter*, John Williams created a distinct orchestral sound-world (though not too dissimilar from his other scores such as that for *Home Alone* [1990]) for *Philosopher’s Stone*, which he then added to in *Chamber of Secrets* and evolved further in *Prisoner of Azkaban*. Williams’ addition of jazz- and renaissance-inspired styles and instruments in *PoA* paved the way for the composers that followed to morph and develop the musical world of *Harry Potter* in their own creative directions, and thus each film starts to have its own aesthetic style and related yet distinctive sound-world. Thus, in contrast to *LOTR*, the musical world of *Harry Potter* evolves with the tone of the films, until the final films in which Alexandre Desplat’s music is much more sombre and serious in tone.

The musical worlds of *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* are both vast and varied; soundtracks alone amount to over nine hours for *Harry Potter* and over seventeen hours for the Jackson trilogies, and the sheer amount of music makes it difficult to analyse them on a large scale, or at least to draw any comparisons between them on a ‘macro’ level. We can gain a clearer picture of the ways these worlds are constructed and adapted by analysing specific instances of the employment of music, or indeed, specific regions of the musical worlds. Hence, this chapter provides an analytical way into these worlds by focusing on the musical articulation of homes within them. Structurally the chapter draws on Hamid Naficy’s distinction of ‘house, home and homeland’ as a methodological tool to unpick the different types of homespace that exist within each fantasy world, and the definition of each will be critiqued in each section. The first section analyses the different ways in which the Shire and Hogwarts are musically articulated and established as the primary homespaces for each of the film series, looking both at diegetic and non-diegetic music to gain a picture of the musical worlds of these spaces. The notion of ‘homeland’ is then investigated in terms of the musical representation of the wizarding community as a whole within *Harry Potter*, focussing on soundtracks and further instances of diegetic ‘wizarding’ music. The chapter finishes with a survey of the franchises’ secondary homespaces – houses that provide refuge or hospitality to the films’ protagonists – and the ways these are musically established or communicated as ‘homely’.

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The Musical Establishing of the Shire as a Primary Home-Space in *LOTR*

*The Fellowship of the Ring* begins, as outlined in the previous chapter, multiple times. Once the eight-minute mythic prologue has been spoken out of darkness by Lady Galadriel, the prologue segues (via a map of Middle-earth) into the film’s beginning proper, and a secondary narrator – Bilbo Baggins – picks up not where Galadriel left off, but by beginning his own story. Bilbo is writing his book *There and Back Again: A Hobbit’s Tale*, and chooses to begin it in the same way Tolkien begins *The Lord of The Rings* – by introducing the reader to the ways of Shire-folk in a section entitled ‘Concerning Hobbits’. Peter Jackson also starts his trilogy in this way; after the historical prologue he takes time to familiarise the viewer with the verdant landscape of the Shire and with the simple, bucolic ways and customs of its inhabitants. Indeed, the extended edition of *FOTR* incorporates an extra three-minute sequence of hobbits going about daily life (as described by Bilbo) before Gandalf arrives in Hobbiton and the story truly begins, such is the importance of understanding the hobbit way of life. The Shire (and the fight to protect it) becomes the main impetus for the forthcoming journeys undertaken by four of its denizens, and thus it is narratively crucial that it and its inhabitants be well established in the film’s opening chapters.

Audiences are introduced here not only to the sights and citizens of the Shire, but also to its *sounds* – to Howard Shore’s library of motifs that come to represent the Shire, as well as to the musical practices and tastes of the hobbits. Both diegetic and non-diegetic musics further convey the character of the hobbits, and this early establishing of the musical Shire themes alongside the halflings is of the utmost importance considering how often the themes are employed throughout the trilogy: rather than one character- or location-specific leitmotif, Shore generates a collection of melodically and harmonically interrelated musical themes, settings and accompaniments to enable him to portray the Shire and the hobbit characters in a variety of moods and circumstances. As Doug Adams notes, ‘[t]he Shire and the hobbits are indelibly intertwined, and so are represented by a single body of thematic material’ (2010: 22). These themes are used pervasively, not only in the Shire itself but wherever in Middle-earth one of the four main hobbits is found – often when they are speaking or thinking of home, or indeed displaying a particularly hobbit-like characteristic. ‘Shire’ music becomes both an anchoring point and a driving force for the films through its representation of *home*, and the following analysis examines the establishing and consequent employment of these particular elements of Shore’s
musical language. Hamid Naficy’s definition of home states that ‘[home] can be built, rebuilt, and carried in memory and by acts of imagination’ (1999: 5), and it follows that the music that represents the Shire may also be built, rebuilt, remembered and imagined. The fact that this music is almost entirely thematic reiterates the importance of thematicism to the sense of home within Shore’s language.

In his comprehensive study of Howard Shore’s LOTR scores, Doug Adams identifies eleven themes relating to the Shire and the hobbits, as well as five ‘Hobbit Accompaniments’ (simpler musical figures, 2010: 22-35). Referred to predominantly as settings (‘pensive’, ‘rural’, ‘hymn’, ‘lullaby’, ‘playful’ and ‘heroic’), the majority of these themes are interrelated melodically, harmonically and orchestrationally, often being heard on similar instruments. Adams describes one theme named ‘A Hobbit’s Understanding’ as ‘crossing portions of the pensive, rural, and hymn settings, but complicating them with extended melodic lines and realigned rhythms’ (ibid., 28). Perhaps the most widely used theme is the ‘Pensive’ setting (see Example 14) – this is played most often by a violin section or solo wind instrument (often clarinet, flute or Irish whistle) and appears four times in the eight-minute introduction to the Shire, at quieter moments. The more spritely ‘rural’ setting accompanies the majority of this section alongside images of the hobbits’ favourite things: ‘food… the brewing of ales and the smoking of pipeweed… peace and quiet and good, tilled earth’. It is the pensive setting, though, which follows the hobbits out of the Shire and on their adventures, stretching even as far as two of the three Hobbit (2012-2014) titles as outlined in the previous chapter; such is its power to conjure the verdant image of the Shire and its peace-loving inhabitants’ love for their home.

**Example 14 – Pensive setting (from FOTR)**

The Shire themes are predominantly major in tonality, with the exception of ‘A Hobbit’s Understanding’ and the song ‘In Dreams’ which lean more towards the relative minor. The simple, optimistic tonality of these themes reflects the nature of those they signify, and this nature can also be heard to some extent in the instruments used for both diegetic and non-diegetic Shire music. Appendix B of Adams’ book lists the non-orchestral instruments that feature in the soundtracks, organising them according to the peoples or cultures they accompany. The entry for the Shire and the hobbits includes nine (mostly
folk) instruments: bodhrán, Celtic harp, dulcimer, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, musette, accordion and whistle (2010: 386-387), many of which are also used by Plan 9 in their diegetic source music for the hobbits at Bilbo’s party. Entitled ‘Flaming Red Hair’, this ‘Celtic inspired’ piece uses several other folk instruments from varying countries including hurdy-gurdy, rommel-pot and mouth harp (Earl, 2011). The folk influences in both the Plan 9 piece and Shore’s instrumental choices strengthen the identification of the hobbits as a lively rural community by association with the Celtic folk traditions of the British Isles. As I have argued elsewhere (2016: 510-511), this musical sleight of hand is at odds with Tolkien’s desire for the Shire to visually and metaphorically represent England in many respects; as he states in a letter, “the Shire” is based on rural England and not any other country in the world’ (Tolkien, 2014: 250). Nevertheless, Shore draws on the stereotypical view of the Irish people as homely and hospitable (see Phelan, 2017).

Beyond creating a concrete sense of the nature and culture of the Shire and the hobbits, the music goes further by establishing the Shire as the films’ primary home space. The soaring major melodies and spritely accompaniment figures pair with images of celebration, peace, beautiful landscapes and perfect weather to construct a home that borders on utopian (and is thus politically questionable, or indeed, fantastic in essence). Doug Adams phrases it well:

it establishes the sense of home, a regular and safe way of life that is threatened by Sauron and the Ring. The Shire theme reminds the audience that for all its spectacle and flourish, Tolkien’s story is primarily about simple themes: friendship, loyalty, and the sanctity of home (2010: 22).

From Bilbo’s introduction the following 24 minutes of the extended edition take place within the Shire, and in this time 32 distinct iterations of Shore’s Shire themes are heard, averaging one every 45 seconds (see Table 7).

**Table 7 – Occurrences of Shire themes in Shire section of FOTR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Pensive’ Setting</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Rural’ Setting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Hymn’ Setting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘A Hobbit’s Understanding’</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accompaniments</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Hobbit Outline’</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Hobbit Two-Step’</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Hobbit End-Cap’</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the music heard during this section is derived from ‘Shire’ material, with only a few instances of less optimistic harmonies or melodies related to the Ring themes, all of which accompany Bilbo and his difficulty in parting with the Ring. Such an extended period of similar musical material truly establishes the Shire musically as well as narratively. If, as Martin Phillips (2007: 158) identifies, ‘the adventure narrative can be seen as revolving around home environments and wilderness, and to involve movement from home into the wilderness’, it is arguable that Shore’s music reflects this ‘dialectical geography of home and away’ by clearly demarcating Shire music from the rest of his musical world.

The Shire themes, and particularly the pensive setting, go through numerous transformations as they journey with Frodo and the other hobbits throughout Middle-earth, and the first notable departure from the norm is heard in *FOTR* as the newly-formed fellowship sets out from Rivendell on their quest to destroy the Ring. Although the elven realm of Rivendell is outside the Shire and already the furthest from home the hobbits have ever been, they have much further to go, and here the pensive setting is galvanised into a bold iteration on horns in A major – the first time the theme has been played by brass. Furthermore, the melody rings out amidst a flurry of dissonant string tremolos (see Example 15) that bring the boldness of the theme into question, creating a large amount of tension and indeed reflecting the anxiety of the ring-bearing Frodo, stepping onto an uncertain and dangerous path.
Example 15 – ‘Pensive’ setting of Shire theme with dissonant accompaniment, *FOTR*

The theme is further destabilised by a persistent dominant pedal in the low brass and timpani, creating even more harmonic tension that is resolved as the theme crescendos and gives way to the film’s first full iteration of the Fellowship theme. Thus, just as the hobbits and their musical theme become clouded with uncertainty, the strength of the fellowship shines out in glorious trumpets and mediant harmony to reassure the hobbits (and us) that even though they are far from home, they are not alone but united with the fellowship.

Figure 15 – ‘The best salt in all the Shire’, Samwise Gamgee in *TTT*

In *The Two Towers*, as Frodo and Sam find themselves even further from home crossing the wilderness, snippets of Shire music further highlight the dialectical ‘home/wilderness’ nature of their journey by placing the nostalgic Shire melody in a
setting that more accurately describes their bleak surroundings. One example is when Frodo discovers Sam has brought a small box of seasoning with him – ‘the best salt in all the Shire’ – just in case (see Figure 15). The conversation is without musical accompaniment, arguably reflecting the barren wasteland the characters are traversing, until Frodo comments ‘it is special. It’s a little bit of home.’ This is answered by a melancholic clarinet statement of the pensive Shire setting, a phrase which in and of itself is based on a major mode or pentatonic scale (see Example 16). However, here the accompaniment consists entirely of minor chords, reharmonising the melody and cadencing onto the tonic minor. A sweet moment of the recollection of home is soured by the reality of their distance from it, and the tonic major that should have welcomed the resolution of the melody is darkened.

Example 16 – Reharmonised form of ‘Pensive’ setting in TTT.

Perhaps one of the most powerful uses of the hobbit music outside of the Shire happens in ROTK on the slopes of Mount Doom as Frodo collapses at their final destination under the weight and agony of the ring. Sam asks Frodo if he remembers the Shire, and as he describes the springtime activities that would be taking place there, the air is filled with strings and choir hums on simple major triads, and an Irish whistle picks out Shire-like intervals over the top. Here, Sam (and Howard Shore) turns to the Shire to attempt to bring Frodo some peace and respite, trying to remind him of the goodness in the world and distract him from the evil round his neck. For Sam, there is still some comfort to be found in the thought (and sound) of home even though it seems unlikely he will ever return. However, Frodo responds, ‘oh Sam – I can’t recall the taste of food, nor the sound of water, or the touch of grass. I’m naked in the dark. There’s nothing, no veil between me and the wheel of fire. I can see him, with my waking eyes!’ As Frodo describes his reality the music once again sours, major tonalities become minor ones, the Irish whistle fades away and angelic choirs are replaced by low male voices and orchestral chords meandering through distantly related progressions in doubled harmonic rhythm (see Table 8). The meta-diegetic nature of the music here gives the audience a powerful view into the minds
of Sam and then Frodo, portraying their differing psychological states and highlighting the fact that Frodo is being mentally overcome by the dark power of the Ring. Removing the Shire music from Frodo not only symbolises his inability to recall home, but also his loss of identity; darkness has robbed him of his hobbit-ness as well as his imagination, memory and subjective self-awareness, a theft which comes to light later as Frodo momentarily refuses to destroy the Ring.

Table 8 – Chord progressions and TTPCs on the slopes of Mount Doom in ROTK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sam describes the Shire</th>
<th>Frodo describes the darkness</th>
<th>Sam: “I can carry you!”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major progression</strong></td>
<td><strong>Minor meandering (doubled harmonic rhythm)</strong></td>
<td>Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D G D A</td>
<td>C Cm Em Cm Am C#m Bbm Dm</td>
<td>D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5 M7M M7M M5M</td>
<td>M0m m4m m8m m9m m4m m9m m4m m0M</td>
<td>M2M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the chords used for Sam’s speech are related to the simple harmonies of the Shire, it is primarily the use of Sir James Galway’s Irish flute that is most evocative of Hobbiton here. The simple major progression detailed above is in fact taken from another of Shore’s themes. Referred to by Doug Adams as ‘the Grey Havens’ (2010: 132), these chords (and the melody and countermelody that they later accompany) come to represent a heavenly afterlife and the hope and belief in a good future, first being heard in ROTK as Gandalf describes such an afterlife to Pippin: ‘white shores, and beyond, a far green country under a swift sunrise.’ The progression may be read as a condensation or simplification of the ‘Hymn’ setting of the Shire theme (see Table 9), and has a distinct religiosity as Adams notes: ‘[t]he pervasive plagal flavor shapes the theme like a series of “amen” cadences’ (ibid.). This combination of Shire flavours and memories with the hopeful, forward-looking Grey Havens theme elevates the Shire to an even more idealised status, conflating it with Gandalf’s (somewhat nationalistic) image of a celestial ‘far green country’ and indeed joining the places together as the impetus for the two to complete their quest. This is fitting, as while Sam will live out his days in his homeland of the Shire, Frodo is destined to cross the seas to the Grey Havens, the ordeal of his quest preventing him from finding peace at home in the Shire.

Table 9 – Harmonic comparison of the Shire ‘hymn’ setting and the ‘Grey Haven’s theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shire ‘Hymn’ Progression</th>
<th>‘Grey Havens’ Progression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I III IV I IV V I V</td>
<td>I IV I V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Once the Ring has been destroyed, Frodo finds that he is able to envisage the Shire, and as he recounts memory after memory the same ‘Grey Havens’ chords return – though here without the Irish whistle. The removal of this ‘Shire’ instrument from Frodo’s recollection of the Shire in comparison to Sam’s reinforces the notion that the Shire will never be home to Frodo in the same way as it is to Sam. This difference features throughout the underscoring of the story’s conclusion, prophesying Frodo’s departure as well as the impending departure of the audience signalled by the lyricised version of the Grey Havens theme, Annie Lennox’s ‘Into The West’. The Shire themes have followed the hobbits on their journeys to the very end and have proven themselves resilient, adaptable and enduring – a constant source of hope and a reminder of the peace and goodness that the hobbits are fighting to protect. Howard Shore’s musical language for the Shire represents perhaps the most important of all his themes, and at the end of *ROTK* it is the pensive setting that rings out slowly and majestically in full orchestral forces as all of Gondor bows before the four small hobbits that changed the fate of Middle-earth.

**End-cap: The Shire in *The Hobbit***

‘I often think of Bag End. I miss my books. And my armchair. And my garden. See, that's where I belong. That's home. That's why I came back, 'cause you don't have one. A home. It was taken from you. But I will help you take it back if I can.’ – *Bilbo Baggins, AUJ.*

Although the story of *The Hobbit* very much revolves around the notion of home, that home is no longer the Shire but Erebor, the dwarven kingdom under the Lonely Mountain that Bilbo helps the dwarves to reclaim from Smaug the dragon. Thus, in Jackson’s second trilogy, themes for Erebor, Thorin Oakenshield and the House of Durin take over a similar role that the Shire motifs held previously, reminding the company of their quest and the homecoming they desire. That being said, the majority of Howard Shore’s Shire themes do return in the *Hobbit* films, alongside some new additions that represent Bilbo and his unique character. In the first thirteen minutes of *An Unexpected Journey* before the main title card, the Pensive, Rural and Hymn settings are heard several times each, as are ‘a hobbit’s understanding’ and the hobbit outline, end-cap and skip-beat. The story begins, at least, in the Shire that audiences have come to know and love.

The majority of the musical Shire material is heard in the first part of *AUJ* before Bilbo has left the Shire on his adventure, and is mostly absent from that point until he returns home at the end of *BOTFA*. There are some moments, though, where Shore calls on
the familiar Shire motifs for much the same reasons as in *LOTR*; to illustrate the traditionally hobbit-like character traits of Bilbo Baggins and his love of home, peace and companionship. One such instance takes place in *AUJ* when Lady Galadriel asks Gandalf ‘why the halfling?’ As she does so, the familiar Lothlórien theme, here on cor anglais, gives way to the even more familiar Hymn chords and Pensive setting on Irish whistle, which continue as Gandalf recounts the ‘everyday deeds of ordinary folk’ that keep evil in check, and the courage he finds in Bilbo’s company. Although this scene takes place in Rivendell and features only a wizard and an elf, the Shire themes have come to represent the nature of a hobbit, and the nostalgic effect of this full statement is substantial. Most notably, Shore has scored these films from the point of view of someone who is already familiar with the Shire themes – if watched chronologically from *The Hobbit* to *LOTR* a first-time viewer would be unaware of the connotations carried by this music.

**Example 17 – ‘Bilbo’s Adventure’ theme from *AUJ***

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Example 17 – ‘Bilbo’s Adventure’ theme from *AUJ*} & \\
\text{The *Hobbit* scores differ in approach to the *LOTR* ones in that there are far more themes and motifs for specific *characters* as well as races and cultures. For example, Gandalf is given his own theme in this trilogy, and Shore creates numerous additional themes for Bilbo, whereas none of the hobbits in *LOTR* received such treatment (Adams, 2010). Many of Bilbo’s themes are closely linked to Shore’s pre-existing Shire material, such as the theme that has become known as Bilbo’s Adventure (Ojala, 2015; Adams, 2017) which shares melodic similarities with the pensive setting of the Shire theme (see Example 17), but some are less obviously related. Another theme, known as ‘Fussy Bilbo (Bilbo’s Antics)’ constitutes a baroque-style minuet with a halting accompaniment and ornamented melody (see Example 18). The theme is introduced as numerous unknown dwarves begin to invade Bilbo’s house, much to his dismay, and comes to represent what Adams describes as his ‘persnickety’ nature (Adams, 2017). One reason for the increase in individualised themes may be Howard Shore’s consideration of *The Hobbit* as a different type of story: ‘’The Hobbit' was written before 'The Lord of The Rings,' Tolkien wrote it back in the '30s as a children’s story – so it has a much lighter feel to it’ (Shore in Zalben, 2014). In a similar sense, the more ‘baroque’ style of ‘Fussy Bilbo’ as compared to
the more conventionally neo-romantic music of *LOTR* may help to communicate the *Hobbit* narrative as chronologically previous to that of *LOTR*. Similarly baroque styles can also be found in the musical style and instrumentation of other themes in the trilogy, such as those for Laketown and Bard, strengthening this sense of narrative and temporal differentiation. In terms of homes and homespaces, the Shire in particular is given a more nuanced sense of temporality with the added variety of Bilbo’s themes.

Example 18 – ‘Fussy Bilbo’ theme from *AUJ*

There are several ways in which Howard Shore has knitted together the musical worlds of *LOTR* and *The Hobbit* besides the use of shared motifs. Several *Hobbit* motifs melodically pre-empt their *LOTR* counterparts, such as the Dol Guldur themes which feature rhythmic and melodic similarities to *LOTR*’s Mordor motifs (see Ojala, 2015). Others are linked in different ways, such as the use of the minor 6th pitch class in five distinct Elven themes (Rivendell, Lothlórien, Woodland Realm, Mirkwood and Tauriel – see Example 19).
Example 19 – The minor 6th in five ‘elven’ themes from LOTR and The Hobbit

In the example all themes have been transposed into A minor or major, and the minor 6ths are marked with a * to demonstrate the pervasive use of this particular pitch class which harmonically links all of Shore’s elven themes in both trilogies, and gives many of them a kind of leaning appoggiatura. This leaning is clearest in the Mirkwood theme, in which both bars begin with a minor 6th appoggiatura akin to the ‘Seufzer’, a musical ‘sighing’ motif common to Italian operas and cantatas of the seventeenth century (see Taruskin, 2013). Another way in which the worlds of LOTR and The Hobbit are linked is through some temporal crossover. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the ending of BOTFA brings Bilbo back home again and recreates one of the earlier scenes of FOTR. The fact that this scene is accompanied by a full restatement of the Shire theme’s ‘pensive’ setting – the one musical statement that has most come to epitomise ‘home’ throughout both trilogies – imbues the scene with an even stronger sense of going ‘there and back again’, returning not only to the location from which the Hobbit films started, but also to a time, place and musical cue already familiar from the first of Peter Jackson’s adaptations.

Home, as has already been established, represents one of the strongest motivators in the epic narratives of both case study franchises. The difference between Middle-earth’s
secondary nature and J.K. Rowling’s wizarding world’s co-existence with the primary world results in wholly different geopolitical structures, borders and boundaries, and thus notions of home, community and belonging are also narratively and musically articulated in different ways. The concept of a primary or secondary home-space can be further dissected into subtly different understandings of the terms. As mentioned above, Hamid Naficy’s separation of house/home/homeland will prove useful here in providing a deeper understanding of notions of home within the film-worlds. Within the LOTR and Hobbit narratives, the Shire functions as something of a home and a homeland for the hobbit protagonists, and thus the two concepts are fairly interchangeable. Though both Frodo and Bilbo would think of their hobbit hole – Bag End in Hobbiton – as home, the Shire comes to represent home, being referred to as such in several conversations, and is a truer ‘homeland’ than Middle-earth, most of which is unknown and uncared-for by the hobbits, at least before their respective adventures.

The distinction of house, home and homeland becomes a little clearer in the case of Harry Potter. Being orphaned at a very young age and entrusted to the abusive ‘care’ of his non-magical aunt and uncle, Harry grows up in a house that could barely be called a home, and indeed throughout the story Harry visits and stays in houses – other people’s homes – that are portrayed as homely or unhomely to varying degrees. However, it is Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry that is articulated as Harry’s true home, a surrogate home, and one which comes under threat of infiltration, invasion and destruction as the narrative progresses. Furthermore, it is fairly easy to frame the wizarding community – or indeed those who stand against the Dark Lord Voldemort and his ‘death eater’ followers – as Harry’s adoptive homeland, with the main impetus to fight being its protection. Similar to an imagined nation state with its own social systems of government, education and leisure, the wizarding world represents more than just Harry’s kind, but also a sense of community, family, shared identity and experience: a true homeland bounded by the innate magical abilities of its inhabitants, in line with Patricia Seed’s definition of a homeland as being intellectually and spiritually experienced as well as geographically bounded (1999: 90). The following section analyses musical articulations of the homespaces in Harry Potter, looking first to the musical portrayal of Hogwarts as home and then the wizarding community as an imagined homeland, the concept of house being further investigated in the final section on secondary homespaces.
Harry’s journey from being an ordinary boy to a fully kitted-out boy-wizard starting his first year at magic school takes a good deal of narrative preparation, and thus he only arrives at Hogwarts 37 minutes into *Philosopher’s Stone*. The first sight of Hogwarts Castle occurs as the first year students cross the Black Lake on enchanted boats, and the camera tilts slowly upwards from an aerial shot of the boats to reveal the castle sitting above the lake. This dramatic reveal coincides with the last of several orchestral iterations of the second section of John Williams’ ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ – a theme which will henceforth be referred to as ‘H2’ (see Example 20). This theme has been heard only four times before this moment and, as Jamie Lynn Webster notes, three of these instances accompany Harry’s numerous acceptance letters from Hogwarts (2009: 516), thus creating a strong link between the theme and the franchise’s primary homespace in preparation for the musical point of arrival. H2 is further established as a motif for Hogwarts through its repeated use for aerial establishing shots of the school or its grounds, occurring twice more in *PS* and another four times in *CoS*, including Hogwarts’ first appearance in the second film. This tropified use of an immediately recognisable motif helps to imbue Hogwarts with a reliable and unchanging dependability, besides adding to its imposing sense of grandeur: always heard from outside the castle, the high-reaching horns and violins of the orchestra and the steep, wide intervals of the melody reflect the monumental and imposing nature of the building itself.

**Example 20 – Second section of ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ (H2) from *PS***

Music within Hogwarts bears more warmth, and John Williams creates several more cues to fill the school with joy and magic, including the brass anthem ‘Hogwarts Forever’, which plays as the first years are shown around, and the scurrying winds of ‘Christmas at Hogwarts’. Narratively, Hogwarts is continually affirmed as being homely, with students sorted into ‘houses’, surrogate parent figures such as Hagrid, and even Harry identifying at the end of *PS* that returning to the Dursleys’ is ‘not going home. Not really.’ That being said, Hogwarts also houses many dangers: in Professor Dumbledore’s first
welcoming speech he announces that ‘the third floor corridor on the right-hand side is out of bounds to everybody who does not wish to die a most painful death.’ Katherine Fowkes highlights the ways in which Hogwarts is simultaneously homely and unhomely, aligning this with a sense of the Freudian uncanny, and noting perhaps most saliently that the world of Hogwarts seems both familiar and unfamiliar (2010: 159). One example of music that embodies this sense of the uncanny while establishing a positive, homely sound is the use of chromaticism in ‘Hogwarts Forever’. Written for four French horns, the melody in the upper voice is in a major key and completely diatonic, whereas the supporting three voices feature increasingly discordant chromatic notes in a way that adds an unusual, even comical nuance to a familiar-sounding melody and style (see Example 21).
Hogwarts does not remain the same throughout the film series – in fact, it evolves physically, visually, geographically, ethnically (through a subtly increased diversity) and indeed musically as the composers take the baton from their predecessors. Amidst these subtle shifts Hogwarts remains recognisable, though, partly through the fact that directors never cut directly to Hogwarts for its first appearance, instead transitioning through scenes on the Hogwarts Express or shots of the horse-less carriages that complete the students’ journey. H2 is still employed for aerial shots of the castle by Williams in PoA, as well as by Patrick Doyle in GoF, but it is used more sparingly, and the first shots of Hogwarts in
each film use different music. For example, in *PoA* the Hogwarts choir rendition of John Williams’ ‘Double Double’ is extended backwards over shots of the carriages making their way to the castle, before cutting to the choir’s performance in the Great Hall. Thus, the exterior shot of the castle is no longer accompanied by the monumental music of *H2*, but by music from its interior: music which prophesies the approach of evil (‘something wicked this way comes’) and in doing so begins to chip away at Hogwarts’ homeliness – a process that continues throughout the series.

The repeated invasion or infiltration of Hogwarts takes various forms in each film, each perhaps more sinister and threatening than the last. An evil teacher, a cursed diary, an escaped prisoner, and a disguised death-eater – all threaten the safety and security of the castle, but it is not until Voldemort’s ‘rebirth’ at the end of the fourth film that the threat to Hogwarts increases. In *OotP* Dolores Umbridge (Imelda Staunton), an official from the Ministry of Magic (which denies Voldemort’s return and brands Harry a liar) arrives as Hogwarts’ new Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher, and quickly assumes tyrannical control of the whole school, forcing Harry and those who wish to fight alongside him (calling themselves ‘Dumbledore’s Army’) underground. For the first time, the once homely Hogwarts is made unhomely as Professor Dumbledore’s ultimate authority is threatened and the ministry begins to restrict the school’s freedoms. Dwayne Avery writes in great detail on the unhomely in cinema, which can be characterised as ‘the unnerving way in which the familiarity of home can quickly become alien, precarious and foreboding’ (2014: 3). Avery draws, as Katherine Fowkes does, on Freud’s concept of the uncanny, as well as on notions of border violation, dislocation, homesickness and exile, many of which enter the narrative with Umbridge. Once Dumbledore is killed in *HBP*, Professor Snape takes over as headmaster, the school is run by death-eaters and Harry is quite literally exiled. To quote Neville Longbottom (Matthew Lewis) in *DHp2*, ‘Hogwarts has changed’.

Musically the infiltration of Hogwarts can be traced alongside the darkening of the narrative and musical mood in the latter half of the series, although the school features less in films six and seven (*HBP* and *DHp1*) as more of the action starts to take place in the wider world (to the extent that none of *DHp1* takes place at Hogwarts). Firstly, the invasion of Professor Umbridge and the consequent formation of Dumbledore’s Army in *OotP* are given two distinct musical themes by Nicholas Hooper. Whereas Williams and Doyle employed chromaticism principally as a signifier for magic, Hooper alters this by creating an entirely diatonic major theme for Dumbledore’s Army and giving Umbridge a
minor theme with chromatic inflections. Umbridge’s theme, shown in Example 20, does not immediately reveal her true evil nature, being quite light-hearted in its bouncing compound time, and yet its insistent, repetitive tonic notes alternating between tritones and other chromatic intervals become quite grating, and it is not too far a stretch to imagine Hooper deliberately referencing the ‘devil’s interval’ here for subtle effect. In contrast, the theme for Dumbledore’s Army (in Example 21) comes to symbolise the resistance, and its strict diatonicism can be heard to symbolise the good, pure nature of the protagonists in their aims to protect Hogwarts and its values. The theme itself serves as a tonal antidote to Umbridge’s E minor figure, being in the relative major key of G major. Lastly, Dumbledore’s Army could be assigned as a homely, positive theme for Hogwarts as well as its band of protectors. When the group first discover the Room of Requirement, a magical room that appears fully equipped for whatever the users are in need of, and in which the group conduct their illicit magical defensive training, Harry remarks: ‘it’s brilliant, it’s like Hogwarts wants us to fight back!’

Example 22 – Tritone chromaticism in ‘Professor Umbridge’ theme from OotP

Example 23 – Strict diatonicism in ‘Dumbledore’s Army’ theme form OotP

Although the Hogwarts Express is treated to a short, almost nostalgic recapitulation of Hedwig’s Theme (H1) in HBP, the transition to the Great Hall is made in non-diegetic silence and without a shot of the castle exterior, eschewing convention and casting doubt not on location – as Hogwarts is visibly recognisable – but on the nature of the location: Hogwarts, as with the rest of the wizarding world, is filled with insecurity and has lost its charm. Just two years later, in DHp2, everything has changed. Hogwarts appears in a
gloomy, dim light, guarded by dementors and staffed by death eaters, and Professor Snape – now headmaster – looks out over the students in black who march in rank and file across the courtyard below. Once so homely, safe and inviting, the school has become a beacon of Avery’s ‘unhomeliness’: a prison of fear, torture and suffering – a fact lamented by the wordless voice of ‘Lily’s Theme’ which together with an enduring tonic pedal renders these scenes sombre and mournful.

Hogwarts in DHp2 sounds (and looks) nothing like the home it used to be – that is, until two specific musical moments re-establish something of the lost spirit of Hogwarts. Having been exiled from the wizarding community, Harry, Ron and Hermione make their way back to Hogwarts through a secret tunnel from a house in nearby Hogsmeade that leads to a painting in the Room of Requirement. The painting swings forward into the room where the remnant of Dumbledore’s Army have established their headquarters, and as Neville Longbottom steps aside to reveal their new guests (Harry et al.), Alexandre Desplat references Williams’ ‘H2’ theme for the first time. The theme, imbued with a nostalgia for the earlier films and representing the childlike memory of a more homely Hogwarts, rings out in a full sixteen-bar orchestral statement, and Harry’s return to the school is given a musical sense of reunion and restoration. Desplat draws on an established musical trope from earlier films that represents Hogwarts as it used to be, and he alludes to this reunion of characters and setting in an interview: ‘now we’re back in Hogwarts where the battle takes place, and all the friends are there so it made sense to have [Hedwig’s Theme] there’ (Leaky Cauldron, 2011). He makes further use of the H2 theme in a second instance that occurs just five minutes later. The benevolent Professor McGonagall duels Professor Snape in defence of Harry, and as Snape flees the castle McGonagall assumes control of the school, relighting the lamps of the Great Hall to return some warmth and homeliness as another full H2 rings out amidst the cheers and applause of the children. This is an important moment as Hogwarts musically celebrates its own liberation and regains a sense of homeliness that comes from being back under the authority of a trustworthy figure.

Following these events, and with the Order of the Phoenix (the good guys) successfully smuggled into the castle, Hogwarts becomes the nexus for the rest of the action as the forces of good and evil rage in the ‘Battle of Hogwarts’. In a sense, Hogwarts stands in as a symbol for the entire wizarding community – Harry and his friends are fighting not only for their own lives or for the protection of the school, but indeed for the safety and security of witches and wizards everywhere. The following section frames the
magical community as a true or adopted homeland for Harry, and analyses the musical establishment and evolution of the wizarding world throughout the film series.

The Wizarding Community: an Imagined, Audible Homeland

Sean Carter and Klaus Dodds note that the notion of ‘homeland’ features frequently in war/action films as something to be defended, protected or liberated; ‘a safe national space in which citizens can feel safe and secure from the realities of an anarchic world’ (2014: 98). Their concept of an ‘imagined homeland’ is quite applicable here: not only is the wizarding world imaginary in the literal sense (and thus reliant on the engaged imagination of the subject), it also requires some willing imagination from the filmic characters who inhabit it, it not being geographically demarcated but indeed delineated by the magical characteristics of its inhabitants. The wizarding world could be framed as more of a ‘constellated community’ than a homeland, and yet the existence of wholly magical locales (Diagon Alley, Hogsmeade, Platform 9¾, Hogwarts, 12 Grimmauld Place, Godric’s Hollow), segregated by the sole presence of magical folk and hidden by protective charms and enchantments, argues the case for a more tangible, situated homeland. Though witches and wizards coexist with non-magical people (‘muggles’), these are places where the magical way of life is the norm, safe spaces for the practising of magic by a people who effectively live in hiding: a form of self-imposed exile, described by Katherine Fowkes as a ‘system of apartheid’ (2010: 163). Thus, the wizarding ‘homeland’ that welcomes Harry with open arms can be seen to comprise both the network of magical homes and spaces and the magical folk who inhabit them.

An investigation into the musical portrayal of the wizarding community gives extra depth and understanding to the sense of homeliness that fills the films’ magical spaces and also acts as a strong impetus for both the films’ action and the viewer’s continued return to the fantasy world in filmic/non-filmic contexts. The aforementioned wizarding places are often depicted as requiring some form of magical transition in order to gain access to them, such as running ‘through’ a train station wall or tapping certain bricks in the back of an old pub, acting in a similar way to Gray’s ‘airlock’ by enabling the transition from non-magical to magical space. These transitions (in which music plays a strong role just as in the opening and closing sequences) can be further defined as ‘homecomings’ in the sense that they transport Harry (and the viewer) from muggle to wizard territory, from foreign land to homeland, from exile to return, and indeed from the mundane to the wondrous.
Philosopher’s Stone documents the beginning of Harry’s exile from the wizarding world, being trusted to the care of his non-magical aunt and uncle after the death of both his parents, as well as his return to it at the age of eleven. As noted by Jamie Lynn Webster (2009: 5, 2012), the magical and non-magical worlds are musically demarcated by the presence or absence of non-diegetic music: magical events and locations are treated to heavy orchestral underscoring, and muggle locations such as the Dursleys’ house are notably depicted in non-diegetic silence (with no underscore). The musical treatment of all magical events (Harry’s conversation with a snake, the arrival of the letters etc.) emphasises the musical silence in the Dursleys’ house, reiterating its unhomeliness and Harry’s alien status.

This alignment of music with magic continues into some of the consequent episodes, though less overtly. Where non-diegetic silence represented an absence of magic, it comes to depict the death or loss of magic in some sense at several junctures in the narrative. Significant moments of non-diegetic silence occur after the death of Professor Dumbledore (in HBP, lasting over 3 minutes), and after Harry’s revelation that he must die in order for Voldemort to be defeated (in DHp2, 90 seconds of silence). Both of these are moments of significant emotional loss, and indeed serve to counteract the more childish sense of wonder at the magical world, or perhaps to advance the narrative of maturation that threads through the series, reminding Harry (and us) of the inevitability of death, and thus linking the magical and muggle worlds together through experiences of death and loss. This conceptual linkage of silence and death culminates in an afterlife scene in DHp2 that depicts Harry and Dumbledore in a vast white space that looks something akin to King’s Cross Station. The five-minutes spent in this liminal space feature no music at all, and occasional wind/sand/train sounds that bridge the diegetic divide. Here, the afterlife is musically depicted not as magical but as an absence of magic, again using non-diegetic silence as a symbol of equality and of the limitations of magic regarding natural laws of life and death.  

In the more musical land of the living, five major magical spaces are consecutively introduced in PS in the first twenty minutes: Diagon Alley, Ollivander’s wand shop, Platform 9¾, Hogwarts Castle and the Great Hall, and the transition (or indeed homecoming) to each is given a prominent musical accompaniment. Looking at the first

\[27\] The use of non-diegetic silence here as a representation of death and liminality is comparable to the moment of Gandalf’s death in FOTR which also features a break in the musical underscoring.
three examples as Harry makes various transitions into his adopted homeland (the last two being covered above), all three feature the use of musical silence followed by highly evocative musical gestures that mimic or enhance the supernatural processes being depicted. The magical rearrangement of a brick wall to reveal Diagon Alley is accompanied by a scurrying chromatic line on celeste and violins getting progressively higher and busier as more and more bricks start to unfold, finally giving way to a triumphant new chromatically inflected theme in the Lydian mode, depicting the hustle and bustle of the wizarding street. The vanishing of the stone column that Harry rushes through to reach Platform 9¾ is given a similar rising chromatic line, cadencing onto two major chords as Harry reaches the platform, which then bursts into a triumphant fanfare as he rounds the corner and see the Hogwarts Express. Finally, the light and wind that fill Ollivander’s as Harry’s wand ‘chooses’ him are supplemented by harp, string arpeggios and choir, which crescendo and pick out the chords of the H2 theme. This is not a geographical or physical transition but a rite of passage into the magical world nonetheless – and thus an equally important transition into the wizarding homeland. In all three cases, music marks not only the presence of magic in the scene/location by drawing on established tropes (chromaticism, celeste, and so on), but also the importance of these transitions as Harry moves deeper into the wizarding world that welcomes him home. At times, this welcome is quite literal, as one unknown wizard in the Leaky Cauldron pub bids him ‘welcome back, Mr Potter, welcome back!’

These homecomings and music’s alignment with magic create a strong sense of home for Harry (and thus for the audience through his perspective) in magical spaces and with magical folk. This magical homeland draws on specific tropes – Jamie Lynn Webster identifies ‘celeste, harp, treble choral voices and windchimes’ as established instrumental signifiers of benevolent magic, tracing some of them back to operatic and balletic traditions (2012: 205). However, it is the frequent and varied use of chromaticism by all four Harry Potter composers that helps to designate the wizarding world and its shifting relations to the muggle world and to Harry. Alongside the trajectory of maturation and the darkening of the narrative, chromaticism also shifts from the representation of (mostly benevolent) magic to the depiction of evil, the former being replaced by increasingly diatonic themes. Chapter Two tracked the diatonicisation of Hedwig’s Theme, discovering a trajectory of disenchantment that culminates in the replacement of Hedwig’s Theme with its diatonicised counterpart, Lily’s theme. A similar disenchantment can be read into the
diatonicisation of the wizarding world’s music as a whole, with chromaticism being eroded and indeed relegated to mere dissonance used to represent malevolent magical forces.

John Williams’ establishing of a highly chromatic musical palette to represent the wizarding world continues throughout the first three films, including the *PoA* additions of ‘double trouble’ and the jazz-inflected ‘Knight Bus’ theme for big band orchestration. Patrick Doyle introduces a few diatonic themes in *GoF*, and much of the diegetic music is predominantly diatonic in nature (Hogwarts March, Merpeople’s Song), though he still draws on chromaticism for much of the magical action as well as two of the more ‘cheeky’ magical characters, Rita Skeeter and Moaning Myrtle. As mentioned above, in *OotP* Nicholas Hooper introduces more prominent diatonic cues in the form of ‘Dumbledore’s Army’ and ‘Fireworks’, in melodic opposition to the chromaticism of Professor Umbridge’s theme. Hooper also introduces a key theme in *HBP* that is entirely diatonic and in a sense represents the completion of the maturation process, the triumph of experience over innocence and the death of benevolent chromaticism. This theme is ‘Dumbledore’s Farewell’, which is heard soon after Dumbledore’s death, and is also employed by Alexandre Desplat in the scene in *DHp2* where Harry discovers he must die (both of which are followed by non-diegetic silence as discussed above). The cue takes the form of a minor chorale for string orchestra featuring treble voices and solo cello, and consists of a repeated four-bar descending bassline under increasingly emotive layered suspensions, which crescendo gradually over 32 bars before climaxing and dying away to a held tonic chord. Not only is the music entirely diatonic, but there are no accidentals whatsoever: the piece is in A minor and uses only notes in the Aeolian mode. The chains of suspensions do create some dissonance, but this is a purely diatonic dissonance, in opposition to the chromatic dissonance that is now employed only in the depiction of malevolent magic. As Maria Cizmic identifies, pieces such as ‘Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* (1936) […] cement a cultural association between such affects as pathos, sadness and diatonic dissonance’; affects which are clearly being evoked by Hooper and Desplat at these moments (2011: 125).

**Example 24 – Short-lived chromatic dissonance in Williams’ ‘Voldemort’ theme from *PS***

![Example 24](image-url)
Example 25 – Prolonged chromatic dissonance in Desplat’s ‘Death Eaters’ theme from *DHp1*

As the world of good magic gradually becomes more and more diatonic, evil is progressively represented by a more and more dissonant chromaticism. Earlier examples of malevolent motifs such as Williams’ one for Voldemort (see Example 24) employ chromatic dissonance that is always resolved and relatively short-lived. Later examples by Hooper and Desplat use much more prolonged chromatic dissonance coupled with aleatoricism, as heard in cues such as ‘Inferii in the Firestorm’ and ‘Death Eaters’ (see Example 25). Thus, what can be heard alongside the series’ grand narrative of maturation is a musical polarisation of the representation of good and evil, portrayed in the earlier films by different types of chromaticism and in the later films by a starker separation of chromaticism and diatonicism. Kate Behr (2009: 263) identifies the narrative arc from innocence to experience within the protagonist’s journey, and Table 10 clarifies the narrative power of the evolving musical processes by aligning them with this narrative arc. As the films progress and Harry gains more understanding about the forces of evil that wage war on the wizarding world, music helps to crystallise the separation between good and evil by aligning it with a clearer tonal differentiation. Where the wizarding world as a whole first welcomed Harry into his new homeland, he soon learns that not all wizards are good, and as all members and creatures of the magical world must choose sides, the music clearly reflects this. Thus, Harry’s true homeland lies finally in the diatonic world of ‘good’ witches and wizards who have become his friends and family, and whom he gives his life to protect.

**Table 10** – Musical portrayal of magic/muggle and good/evil dichotomies in earlier and later *Harry Potter* films

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magic</td>
<td>Music (chromaticism)</td>
<td>No distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muggle</td>
<td>Diegetic silence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td>Diatonicism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evil</td>
<td>Dissonance</td>
<td>Chromaticism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These findings are in a sense solidified by the music of the DHp2 epilogue. As the narrative became darker and the stakes became higher, to the point of the death of several of the story’s main characters, the magical world ceased to be one filled with wonder and amazement, instead being characterised by danger, threat and oppression. Once Voldemort has been defeated the ‘magic’ returns to the wizarding world, and this is epitomised both visually and aurally within the three-minute epilogue. As Harry, Ron and Hermione see their children off on the Hogwarts Express amidst jumping chocolate frogs, magical firecrackers and enchanted paper birds, Desplat reinstates the magical wonder of Williams’ world, referencing several of his themes including Hedwig’s Theme, and the love/reflection theme with chromatic celeste countermelody, which occurs twice (see Example 26). Here the wizarding world, represented by the familiar Platform 9¾, is as it was, both musically and physically, at the start of the series. Harry and his friends have set things to rights and carried on with their lives, inhabiting the magical homeland they fought to protect and seeing their children enter it with the same wonder and excitement they once did. Music here is perhaps the most powerful signifier of the re-enchantment of the wizarding world, cyclically drawing on the nostalgic impulses induced by Williams’ earlier music to finish the series with both a childlike wonder and an adult appreciation. As the camera dollies away from the three now grown-up friends, the music of innocence accompanies the faces of experience, and all is well.

Example 26 – ‘Love/Reflection’ theme with chromatic countermelody in PS, CoS and DHp2

The world depicted within Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them is at once related and yet different to that of the Harry Potter franchise. The film focuses on the magical community of 1920s New York, the narrative is almost entirely unrelated to that of Harry Potter, and the only character crossovers are the mention of Albus Dumbledore and Gellert Grindelwald, his friend and nemesis, who becomes the villain of the spin-off series. Musically, however, the film is made to sound like a Harry Potter film in several
ways, most prominently through the use of chromaticism that pervades the score. James Newton Howard, the film’s composer, uses melodic chromaticism in many of his major themes, in this way relating his musical world to that of John Williams from the earlier *Harry Potter* films. As identified above, Williams’ motifs are among the most widely known of all the Harry Potter music, and Howard’s decision to align his world with Williams’ creates some strong identifications – examples of what Anahid Kassabian describes as ‘affiliating identifications’ which ‘depend on histories forged outside the film scene’ (2001: 3). These types of identifications are usually found in compiled scores of pre-existing music, and the numerous musical affiliations and the identifications they engender are heightened by the use of Hedwig’s Theme, which appeared in all the trailers for *Fantastic Beasts* and in the film’s opening titles, and which, fifteen years after its first hearing, comes with its own encoded system of meanings and a large side order of nostalgia. Diegetically, the film includes a jazz song (performed by a female goblin in a seedy Prohibition-era speakeasy), which is reflective of the film’s temporality but also follows a precedent set by John Williams who featured jazz both diegetically, in a scene where Professor Lupin trains students to defend themselves against boggarts, and non-diegetically, in his big-band scoring of the Knight Bus. Although the film differs slightly from the *Harry Potter* series in terms of sound and compositional style, numerous links between the music and the sound design (particularly the sonification of magic spells and apparition) convince us of the films’ shared world. As one reviewer states, ‘while Newton Howard’s score for Fantastic Beasts greatly contrasts the personal style of John Williams on many levels, it still feels like a score from that universe’ (Keeper, 2016).

**Magical Music: Diegetic Sounds of the Wizarding World**

Although the extent to which live music is heard varies among the *Harry Potter* films, diegetic wizarding music contributes to the aural worldbuilding of the films, just as the sounds of hobbit bands and drinking songs help to build the world and culture of the Shire in *LOTR*. Indeed, only four of the eight *Potter* films feature any diegetic music, most of which appears in *PoA* and *GoF*. The use of diegetic music acts as a strong worldbuilding device, detailing the kind of music witches and wizards might listen to, play or enjoy, all the while contributing to the sense of homeliness that the wizarding world is filled with. This homeliness is established in various ways, from the use of more familiar and recognisable musical tropes to the more wondrous or marvellous instances of a more
enchanted music. Table 11 provides details of all instances of diegetic music within the Harry Potter series.

**Table 11 – All instances of diegetic music in Harry Potter films**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PS</strong></td>
<td>Carol-singing ghosts float through a Hogwarts corridor.</td>
<td>An invented Hogwarts Carol: ‘Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, Ring the Hogwart bell. Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, Cast a Christmas spell.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PS</strong></td>
<td>Bewitched harp plays to put Fluffy (the three-headed dog) to sleep.</td>
<td>Harp plays without a player, a solo piece akin to a slow impromptu, in a minor key and mostly diatonic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PoA</strong></td>
<td>Hogwarts ‘Frog’ Choir.</td>
<td>‘Double Trouble’ song, conducted by Professor Flitwick, including a small band of orchestral instruments and croaking frogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PoA</strong></td>
<td>Lupin’s classroom jazz.</td>
<td>Big band jazz through a record player, interspersed with orchestral scoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PoA</strong></td>
<td>Carol-singing dwarves in Hogsmeade.</td>
<td>Briefly heard singing ‘ding dong’ before Harry knocks them over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GoF</strong></td>
<td>Hogwarts Brass Band.</td>
<td>Hogwarts March (conducted by Flitwick) at the start of the final Triwizard task, invented brass instruments with several protruding bells, comedic finish as silenced by Professor Dumbledore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GoF</strong></td>
<td>Mermaid song from the golden egg.</td>
<td>Can only be heard underwater. Solo female voice sings a verse with reverberant ‘ahh’s behind, entirely major pentatonic notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GoF</strong></td>
<td>Waltz lesson music.</td>
<td>Huge record player plays a crackly ‘Potter Waltz’ for dance lesson. Evolves into non-diegetic music as scene cuts to Neville.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GoF</strong></td>
<td>Yule Ball orchestra and rock band.</td>
<td>School orchestra (conducted by Flitwick) plays Potter Waltz for dance, segues into Weird Sisters playing ‘Do The Hippogriff’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DHp1</strong></td>
<td>Bill and Fleur wedding jig.</td>
<td>Irish folk tune called ‘The Humours of Glendart’ – Bill and Fleur dance, much diegetic clapping in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DHp1</strong></td>
<td>‘Für Elise’ on piano at 12 Grimmauld Place.</td>
<td>Hermione teaches Ron to play ‘Für Elise’ on the piano – she plays legato with a light touch, whereas Ron struggles to find the notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DHp1</strong></td>
<td>Hermione and Harry dance to the radio.</td>
<td>Harry turns up the volume of the radio playing ‘O Children’ by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, and dances with Hermione.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the above examples can be heard to draw together familiar sounds and magical contexts, all of which acts to make the wizarding world more recognisable and thereby more homely. A traditional school ball like the Yule Ball may not have been a part
of everyone’s upbringing, but a school dance or disco is probably more relatable. Similarly, the Hogwarts choir and brass band both take common extracurricular activities and adapt them into the wizarding context, the former with the addition of magical frogs who take part in the music-making, and the latter by creating wondrously (yet impossibly) altered brass instruments (see Figure 16). Having ghosts or dwarves sing carols takes the warmth and enjoyment of Christmas and gives it a magical twist. It is not uncommon to have ceilidh-style dancing at a British or Irish wedding, and the choice to use a traditional Irish jig for Bill and Fleur’s first dance makes the wedding all the more familiar, particularly to an Irish audience. Lastly, the use of an existing pop song on the radio in DHp1 (as opposed to the invented songs of the Weird Sisters band in GoF) draws the magical and non-magical worlds together. Harry and Hermione may be in a ‘TARDIS’-like tent that is far bigger on the inside than the outside, but they may also have tuned into a muggle radio station, finding themselves in exile from the magical community, in hiding from Voldemort’s death eaters, and perhaps even longing for the simplicity of the muggle life and home they both grew up in. These examples of diegetic music do not idealise the wizarding world but show it to be not all that different from the primary world, thereby adding to its familiarity and sense of homeliness.

![Figure 16 – Brass Band playing ‘Hogwarts March’ on invented instruments in GoF](Image)

The scene in which Hermione gives Ron a short piano lesson is notable for several reasons. Narratively, it used as a device to show Ron’s increasing love for Hermione as his eyes are fixed on her even as she demonstrates which notes to play. Musically, Beethoven’s piano piece is perhaps one of the most well-known pieces of the beginner’s repertoire, and will no doubt have been played, attempted or at least heard by many viewers, thus potentially drawing on childhood memories and nostalgic impulses. It is
interesting to consider the use of ‘muggle’ music and the presence of a ‘muggle’ instrument here in the Black family household, an exceptionally dark and dreary place, the epitome of unhomeliness. Catering, as it were, for a muggle audience, the use of ‘Für Elise’ injects a sense of homeliness into a musically silent and inhospitable setting, and a sense of normality and familiarity into uncertain times.

Having considered the musical articulation of both primary homes and homelands for both franchises, the investigation will now move onto the third element of Hamid Naficy’s trifurcation – the ‘house’ – to look at secondary homespaces within the franchises: houses and other places that host the protagonists on their journeys. These secondary homespaces will be analysed in much the same way as the primary ones, to show the ways in which music helps to establish these houses as homely or unhomely.

Homely Houses: Secondary Homespaces

As Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit all feature journeys made by protagonists outside of their primary homespaces, home is found at certain stops along the way, whether it is in the homes of friends such as Rivendell or the Burrow, the homes of less friendly hosts like Beorn’s house or the Dursleys’ at 4 Privet Drive, or more ambiguous settings such as Lothlórien or 12 Grimmauld Place. The musical setting of these locations does much to inform the viewer of the place’s nature and allegiances, and forms an important part of the musical constitution and coherence of the wider fantasy worlds of the films. Thus, studying the music that diegetically or non-diegetically fills these houses gives us a more comprehensive look at the fabric of these audible worlds.

Picking up from where the previous section left off at 12 Grimmauld Place, this is a house whose loyalties are ambivalent and unclear from the start. Harry is first brought to the headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix (the secret society fighting Voldemort and his followers) in OotP after being transported from 4 Privet Drive by a team of wizards in the dead of night. The house itself belonged to the Black family, of which Harry’s godfather Sirius is the last surviving member, and though Sirius is a part of the Order the family historically aligned itself with darker magical forces and the preferment of ‘pure-blood’ wizards. Thus, the interior of the house is visibly depicted as decrepit and dimly lit, with peeling black walls, a painting behind dark curtains muttering about the ‘filthy mudbloods’ invading her house, and a house elf by the name of Kreacher whose allegiances seem to lie with the muttering subject of the painting. The ambivalent nature of the house is
maintained by a sustained absence of non-diegetic music: from the moment it magically appears in the middle of a Victorian terrace until Harry is sent upstairs by Mrs Weasley ninety seconds later, the house is silent but for a few shimmering and creaking sound effects, and the hushed conversation of the Order meeting behind a closed door.

Music does creep subtly into several scenes within the house, firstly to give a little tension to the moment where Harry is suddenly accosted by a hugging figure that turns out to be Hermione, and secondly to give a sense of warmth to Harry’s reunion with the Weasleys and, most prominently through a marked crescendo, his godfather Sirius. The previous underscoring having centred on various alternating minor and major chords, Harry’s hug with Sirius is given a full root position tonic major chord. Thus, 12 Grimmauld Place itself can be seen as musically blank. In much the way that the house’s old ways and traditions have been silenced by its new inhabitants, musically the house is denied a voice and thus filled instead with the music of its occupants and their moods, relations and conversations. This is notable in a later scene in OotP where a heartfelt conversation between Harry and Sirius is accompanied by a sorrowful cue that Jamie Lynn Webster names ‘Grieving the Past’ – the music again giving voice to the emotional transference between the two characters rather than reflecting the nature of their location.

The Burrow – the home of the Weasley family – is a house whose unambiguous nature is musically depicted from the outset. When Harry first arrives there in CoS, having been ‘rescued’ from 4 Privet Drive by Ron, Fred and George in their father’s flying Ford Anglia, the moment he steps through the door is accompanied by trilling violins picking out an ascending major chord to mirror Harry’s rising joy as he beholds this magic-filled home for the first time. As he explores the house the camera cuts to dishes washing themselves in the sink, knitting needles working away on their own, and an enchanted ‘clock’ whose hands move to indicate the location of each family member. Musically John Williams uses the well-established major ‘love/reflection’ theme, but he breaks it into short phrases with pauses between, and sets it over a shimmering, twinkling bed of strings, celeste and glockenspiel in distinctly Lydian harmony. All of this works to reflect the magical properties of the house going about its daily business, the optimism of the Lydian mode imbuing the house with an innate and welcoming homeliness. This is strengthened by Ron’s comment, ‘it’s not much, but it’s home,’ to which Harry replies ‘it’s brilliant!’

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28 see (Pitman, 2012) for a study on optimism and the Lydian mode in film.
If the Burrow can be heard to be a homely house, and 12 Grimmauld Place is made homely only by its inhabitants, then 4 Privet Drive, Harry’s legal home, is a good example of an unhomely house. As Webster notes, the Dursleys’ house is musically portrayed in PS as an entirely non-magical, disenchanted place through the rigorous withdrawal of non-diegetic music from scenes that take place within it (2012: 200). In one particular sequence, however, music goes further to articulate the hostile nature of the house (and its patriarch Uncle Vernon) towards Harry, and towards magic in general. When Harry receives his first letter from Hogwarts, its delivery by owl is accompanied by a full rendition of Hedwig’s Theme. Once Vernon has taken it, unopened, from him, a low chromatic variant of H3 on cellos and basses reflects the family’s distaste and worry at the sight of the letter and its sender (see Example 27).

Example 27 – Part three of ‘Hedwig’s Theme (H3) and chromatic variant from PS letter scene

These opposing musical statements continue: more owls deliver more letters to another orchestral H1 theme, which is interrupted as Vernon rips up the delivered letters, now accompanied by descending bassoons and contrabassoon in close minor harmony. The division of magic and non-magic repeats itself once more as another group of owls delivers another pile of letters to a full orchestral iteration of H2, and the following scene depicts Vernon spitefully burning the letters one at a time, to a queasy sequence of chromatically related minor chords in full string orchestra, rising with the malicious glint in Vernon’s eye. These three musical moments evoke sentiments evolving from unease and suspense through sinister defiance to outright malice, and their alternation with repeated iterations of Hedwig’s Theme musically describes the conflict within the house – between the occupants’ anti-magical sentiment and the magic that quite literally invades 4 Privet Drive in the form of an ever-increasing number of Hogwarts invitations. Finally, the letters get the better of Vernon, whose proclamation that there is ‘no post on Sundays’ is proved wrong by hundreds of letters swarming in through the chimney and letter box, to the triumphant sound of Hedwig’s Theme ringing out above the noise. Although 4 Privet Drive
usually shows its unhomeliness through silence, its true colours come through in this sequence to portray its hostility towards Harry and his true magical identity.

*The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* both feature epic journeys made over several films, and thus several secondary homespaces provide resting or rallying points for the films’ protagonists. One that appears in both film trilogies is the valley of Imladris, known in the common tongue as Rivendell. Also referred to by Tolkien as the ‘last Homely House east of the Sea’, this is the home of an elven community ruled by Lord Elrond, and it features frequently as a resting or meeting point in both narratives. The visual and aesthetic homeliness of Rivendell and Lothlórien is noted by Martin Phillips, who remarks that the Elven realms ‘correspond more closely to the contours of the “home environment” of the Shire in that they are presented as places of harmony, contentment and ecological balance’ (2007: 159). As a major location and home to prominent characters, Howard Shore gives Rivendell its own theme. Generally sung by female chorus with string orchestra and harp, the theme features lilting cello arpeggios and a rising vocal line, decorated by harp glissandi and chimes (see Example 28).

**Example 28 – ‘Rivendell’ theme from *FOTR***

Perhaps the strongest and most evocative element of the theme is its harmony. Alternating between chords of A major and F major, the theme outlines the M8M TTPC (which can also be referred to as the PL compound transformation in neo-Riemannian theory). Scott Murphy (2014: 488) writes ‘M8M shares with M2M a sound immediately identifiable both with recent popular film music in general and with the aforementioned positive narrative associations [protagonism, heroism, light-hearted enjoyment and fun] but, perhaps owing to its chromaticism, typically blends such associations with ample references to the fantastical.’ The slow, stately tempo of the Rivendell theme veers it away from the light-hearted aspects of the M2M, but it is undoubtedly a positive theme, and clearly tied to the fantastical not only through its harmony but also the angelic voices and celestial orchestration. Furthermore, Murphy identifies a contemporary disparity between the usage frequency of M8M and its inverse M4M, with M8M pervading the contemporary film music repertoire and M4M ‘almost never’ occurring (490). This leads to what Murphy
refers to as ‘style-specific TTPC tonicization’ – in other words, whenever the two chords of M8M are heard, the first chord in the progression is instinctively tonicised by this disparity in the tonal-inverse pair, no matter what order they appear in. To clarify, where the chords A major and F major are heard in progression, the A major will sound more like the tonic because of the significant asymmetry between the M8M’s pervasive nature and the M4M’s relative neglect. When applied to Rivendell, this means that as the harmony of the theme undulates from A major to F major and back again several times, each return to A major strengthens its sense of being the ‘home’ key, giving the theme an even stronger sense of homeliness, unity and dependability. The regularity and predictability of the theme and its harmony arguably contribute to what Doug Adams describes as its ‘sense of age, wondrous probing, and openness’ (2010:43).

Lothlórien provides a comparatively less welcoming elven realm for the fellowship to move through. Finding themselves held at arrow-point on the outskirts of the woods, Lothlórien’s inhabitants are at first entirely threatening, and though Lady Galadriel welcomes them and bids them to stay and rest, the true moral allegiance of these more mysterious elves remains questionable. The Lothlórien theme reflects this. Rather than focussing on harmony, Shore constructs an Eastern-inspired melody over an open fifth drone, drawing on the Arabic mode the maqām hijaz, as outlined in Chapter Two. Although these notes are the same as in the western harmonic minor scale on the fourth degree of the mode, the drone asserts the tonal centre of the theme on its first degree, resulting in an ambiguous tonality that is neither major nor minor. As Adams notes, ‘the writing is emotionally unreadable – neither sad, happy, aggressive nor passive, but aloof’ (2010: 51). As the fellowship prepare to sleep their conversations are accompanied by another iteration of the Lothlórien theme, this time embellished by soloist Elizabeth Fraser in a song called ‘Lament for Gandalf’, with answering phrases from female chorus. Here the theme is rhythmically augmented and the dissonances of the maqām hijaz are exploited. Though still not a warm or welcoming sound, the more personal and sorrowful sound of the solo female voice shows Lady Galadriel and the Elves of Lothlórien sharing in the grief of the fellowship at the loss of Gandalf. It is not until the fellowship’s departure from the realm that the music of Lothlórien softens. As Frodo and the others remember Galadriel’s parting gifts to each of them, a solo horn rings out the Fellowship theme amidst Lothlórien’s female chorus, aurally creating a fusion of the two groups and reinforcing the support that Galadriel and her kin show for the fellowship and their quest. As the voices
move into more decidedly major tonalities, the realm sheds its previous moral ambiguities and takes on a friendlier, more benevolent character to reflect its true hospitality.

Bilbo, Gandalf and the company of dwarves find themselves in a similarly unwelcoming abode in Desolation of Smaug, having been chased into a barn by a ferocious bear, which Gandalf then reveals to be their host. Beorn, a skin-changer, is capable of taking the form of a huge black bear or a large man, and though Gandalf deems his house a wise place to stay the night, the lack of music in this scene leaves the situation uncertain – an uncertainty shared by the whole company. When Bilbo awakes, the shots of the docile and seemingly harmless animals with whom he spent the night are accompanied by a low, minor, brassy theme, which alternates between A minor and F major and softens as Bilbo wakes up. In the theatrical release, Bilbo awakes to find Beorn and the dwarves sharing breakfast, whereas in the Extended Edition he and the company must go out to meet Beorn, trying not to startle or upset him while he chops firewood. In both instances, the softness and sensitivity of the music seem at odds with the dangerous nature of their host, and fill the house with a sense of sadness. The breakfast conversation in which Beorn discusses how Azog killed most of his family makes sense of this melancholic music, and its soft and non-threatening nature predicts Beorn’s benevolence before he even commits to helping them. In this way, music imbues Beorn’s house with an incongruous and surprisingly gentle hospitality, before this is reinforced by Beorn’s words and actions.

In all of these examples, whatever the extent of the homeliness of the secondary homespaces, music plays a vital role in communicating that homeliness to the viewer, often before the place has been depicted as visually inviting or has had a chance to narratively prove its hospitality. As in the cases of Rivendell and the Burrow, music also accentuates or amplifies the perceived homeliness of a filmic space. These houses function not only as resting places for the films’ protagonists, but also as resting places for film-viewers, where narrative tension and pace are reduced and we are able to feel and experience the same homely relief and comfort that the film characters feel and experience. As components of the wider fantasy worlds, the music that fills these spaces forms just as important a part of the wider musical worlds, each style, theme or motif forming part of a whole and imbuing the musical world with a homeliness that attracts repeat listening and soundtrack consumption.
Conclusion – a Home Worth Fighting For

Music plays a number of roles in the constitution of filmic home-spaces, and in the establishment of musical worlds as ‘homely’ in some respect. In LOTR Howard Shore’s music is fundamental in giving the Shire a pastoral and familiar sense of home, and as viewers our idyllic experience of the Shire acts both to strengthen the narrative impulse in the fight for its protection, and to engender desires to want to live there – if not physically, then imaginatively through repeated viewings and the consumption of other texts. It is worth noting that the green rolling hills of the Shire (or the New Zealand countryside) and indeed the music of both source and score in the Shire may only be attractive to certain audiences, and it is important to recognise that for non-Western audiences there may be nothing ideologically or aesthetically homely about these elements. In Unthinking Eurocentrism Ella Shohat and Robert Stam ask some important questions about these identifications:

Music, both diegetic and non-diegetic, is crucial for spectatorial identification. Lubricating the spectatorial psyche and oiling the wheels of narrative continuity, music “conducts” our emotional responses, regulates our sympathies, extracts our tears, excites our glands, relaxes our pulses, and triggers our fears, in conjunction with the image and in the service of the larger purposes of the film. In whose favor do these processes operate? What is the emotional tonality of the music, and with what character or group does it lead us to identify? Is the music that of the people portrayed? (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 209).

Turning these questions to Howard Shore’s music for the Shire, the fact that hobbits are depicted with an Irish-tinged neo-romantic underscore, more overtly ‘cod-Celtic’ diegetic music, or in the case of young Bilbo with a stuffy Baroque theme, in a fantasy setting represented in no small part by the New Zealand landscape points to a kind of musical colonialism. Much of this music draws on notions of homeliness already bound up in stereotypes of Irish folk culture, leading us to identify the hobbits as primarily ‘Irish’ in nature, rather than as New Zealanders with all the cultural associations of their nation, or even as English in line with Tolkien’s intention for the Shire’s mythological representation. The musical homes identified here are thus coded in terms of both ethnicity and temporality, and are as ideologically loaded as the notion of home itself.

Homes in the world of Harry Potter can be categorised in a more nuanced way, by figuring the wizarding community as an imagined homeland, designating Hogwarts as the primary home within this homeland, and outlining other houses or refuges as secondary

29 For more on the global reception of LOTR, see Barker and Mathijs, 2008.
homespaces. Music actively communicates these distinctions in various ways, either through the binary of music and silence with magic and non-magic, as in the earlier films, or through the use of diatonic music for the forces of good and chromaticism for evil, as in the later ones. Although each composer creates a slightly different musical world, just as each director takes the story in a new, more mature direction, the importance of John Williams’ contribution should not be overlooked. If Hedwig’s Theme becomes something of a musical touchstone for the franchise, then the wider musical world that Williams creates to represent the magic and wonder of Harry’s new reality becomes the musical cornerstone of the series. Although the chromaticism that characterises Williams’ world has given way to a more sober diatonicism by the end of the series, Williams’ themes remain among the most recognisable of the franchise (a point exemplified in Chapter Four). This is recognised by Alexandre Desplat himself, who chooses to return to Williams’ wondrous world in the epilogue to DHp2. Finally, as constituent parts of wider fantasy worlds, the various secondary homespaces in both franchises are musically established, as it is predominantly music that informs the viewer of the nature and allegiances of the house and its inhabitants, be they friendly, inhospitable or ambiguous.

This chapter has provided an investigation into the musical establishing of homespaces within my case study franchises, and has argued that music can make these places seem homely and hospitable to both film characters and viewers alike, while aiding the immersive inhabitation of these spaces in the cinematic context. The analysis here has focussed on the prominent evolution of motifs and the ways in which the notion of home is used for narrative effect. The homes and homelands identified are inherently ideological, drawing on established musical styles and stereotypes, Eurocentric notions and depictions of race and nationality, and binarisms of good/evil, child/adult and home/away. The ideologies surrounding these constructed homespaces are further complicated as they are exported into other media formats, and the following chapter analyses four tourist attractions in the world of Harry Potter and their use of music to build and establish themselves as extensions of an existing fantasy universe.
Part Two: Music Without Film

Chapter Four: Trips to Enchantment – Recreating Magic and Wonder at Tour Sites

*Harry Potter* has become one of the highest-grossing media franchises of all time, valued at over $25bn in 2016, and this figure continues to rise with the addition of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) and other forthcoming films in the series (Wells and Fahey, 2016). A truly global phenomenon, the novels have been translated into 73 languages (TIME, 2013). Besides the books and films, the franchise has spawned a variety of other ‘in-universe’ books by the author J.K. Rowling, an official web outlet, several videogames, a stage production, a studio tour experience, theme park attractions, live concert performances and a vast array of official (and unofficial) merchandise. There are now so many ways in which a *Harry Potter* fan can inhabit the wizarding world besides filmmaking, and many of these routes into the world employ music and sound in the world’s construction and perpetuation.

There are far more tourist attractions related to *Harry Potter* than to *LOTR*, and hence the following chapter will analyse in turn four distinct experiences and attractions related to the *Harry Potter* franchise: the CineConcerts tour of *Harry Potter* films performed with a live orchestra, the Warner Bros ‘Making of Harry Potter Studio Tour’ in Leavesden UK, the ‘Wizarding World of Harry Potter’ theme park at Universal Studios in Orlando FL, and the West-End play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. The CineConcerts events and the Warner Bros Studio Tour are related wholly to the *Harry Potter* film series, whereas the *Cursed Child* play constitutes an extension of the world of the novels, and the Wizarding World in Orlando, though drawing heavily on the films, also finds inspiration elsewhere in Rowling’s wizarding universe. Many of these experiences also feature several forms of possible interaction between guests and the fantasy world. Here, I focus specifically on the ways in which music and sound are used to facilitate the guest’s transition into the worlds and their sustained inhabitation and enjoyment of them.

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30 The *Lord of the Rings* franchise also features live-to-projection concert performances and a tour of the Hobbiton set in Matamata, New Zealand, which will be brought into the conclusion of this chapter as a point of comparison.
In her illuminating study on the advent and future of cinematic special effects, Michele Pierson identifies a desire amongst filmgoers to be tricked or hoodwinked: to be amazed at what they behold by not knowing how it was achieved – in other words, ‘a cultural demand for the aesthetic experience of wonder’ (2002: 168). David Butler identifies a similar trend in tracking the origins of the ‘fantasy’ genre, pointing to the 1920s and 1930s categorisation of ‘wonder film’ to describe audience reactions to films that would now be defined as early fantasy (2009: 34-36). In this sense, wonder is comparable to the Todorovian hesitancy mentioned above, hovering between the uncanny and the marvellous; the sense of wonder arises in the limbo-like space where Todorov locates the essence of fantasy, from a lack of clear or rational explanation to the unanswered question: ‘how was it done?’ Today, the availability of DVD special features and ‘making-of’ documentaries, particularly in the case of the *Harry Potter* DVDs and *LOTR* Extended Edition appendices, has given audiences a greater understanding of how the films were produced, which arguably generates wonder in a way more akin to the disenchanted enchantment that Michael Saler identifies as a product of modern fantasy. Going behind the scenes through ‘making-of’ documentaries or studio tours may simultaneously reveal the artifice of the fantasy world, and yet instil a kind of wonder at the craft of its creation. Music plays an important role in each of the experiences analysed below, which create senses of awe and wonder in different ways, bringing audiences delight without leading them into delusion.

What does it mean, then, to create an authentic experience that serves as an inhabitable portion of Rowling’s wizarding world, and also as an amusement park, play, museum or concert? These particular attractions are significant because they each offer experiences that are not available through other means of engagement in the world of *Harry Potter*. Each represents a unique opportunity for fans to access different parts of the story world and to interact with it to varying extents, thus invoking the sense of wonder craved by visitors: the feeling of being somehow part of the world, being included in it and inhabiting it to some degree. Furthermore, the four experiences analysed here can be categorised using a two-dimensional framework set out by B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore in *The Experience Economy*. The writers classify forms of engagement in different experiences using two spectra, the first tracking guest participation from passive to active, and the second detailing the type of connection between guest and experience from ‘absorption’ to ‘immersion’. Plotting these axes produces four quadrants that Pines and Gilmore use to categorise experiences as ‘entertainment’, ‘educational’, ‘esthetic’ and
‘escapist’ (2011: 46, see Figure 17). Thus, in the simplest of terms an experience where a guest remains passive and is absorbed at a distance can be thought of as entertainment, whereas a more physically or virtually immersive experience that requires the active participation of the guest they refer to as ‘escapist’. These categorisations are helpful to show the differences between the four experiences analysed in this chapter, each of which exists in a different quadrant: the CineConcerts film screening can be thought of as passive and absorptive, the Warner Bros studio tour as absorptive yet active, the Cursed Child play as passive yet immersive through the use of the whole theatre space, and the Wizarding World theme park as highly active and highly immersive.

![Experience Realms Diagram](image)

**Figure 17 – Experience Realms (Pines and Gilmore, 2011)**

Each unique part of the Harry Potter universe draws on the shared wealth of existing material in the films and books, extrapolating or interpolating further information for their own means, and they all intersect in various ways, particularly in their employment of existing or original musics which play important roles in the absorption and immersion of the guest, as well as in their active or passive engagement. The findings below are taken from numerous interviews with the designers and composers involved in each of the attractions, as well as from my own visits to them between March 2016 and May 2017. Analysis thus draws on both primary and secondary data in each of the case studies, looking at the experiences from the points of view of both the consumer and the producer.

**CineConcerts - The Harry Potter Film Concert Series (‘Entertainment’)**

*Harry Potter* is synonymous with excitement around the entire world and we hope that by performing this incredible music with the full movie, audiences will enjoy
returning to this world, and to the many wonderful characters and adventures that inhabit it. – Brady Beaubien, Concert Producer (‘The Show’, n.d.)

The practice of projecting Hollywood blockbuster films with a live orchestral underscore has become a popular concert format, as well as a way for professional orchestras to recruit larger and more inclusive audiences. Jon Burlingame traces the ‘live to picture’ format back to a performance of Prokofiev’s score to ‘Alexander Nevsky’ by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in 1987, which also served as a reconstruction of the lost manuscript by John Goberman. But it is only recently, with the development of new technologies, that live cinematic concert performances have taken off (Burlingame, 2013 and 2015). The Lord of the Rings scores have all been performed with live orchestra and chorus since the FOTR premiere in Lucerne in 2008 (King, 2011), the same year as the first BBC ‘Dr Who Prom’ (a similarly interactive concert featuring live music to film projection). However, it is only since June 2016 that Harry Potter fans have been able to experience the films with live music, courtesy of American company CineConcerts and their ‘Harry Potter Film Concert Series’. Starting with Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone (the American name for Philosopher’s Stone) CineConcerts are adapting and performing all eight films in the series; at the time of writing, Sorcerer’s Stone has toured the world, while the second and third films are touring the United States and coming to Europe in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This particular film-watching experience provides a new way for fans and audiences to access the fantasy world of Harry Potter, and draws explicitly on music in these processes.

Firstly, the Film Concert Series provides a collective experience, as opposed to a more individualised one. Touring large venues and arenas with capacities in the thousands (Manchester Arena’s concert capacity is 18,000), the concert gathers much larger audiences than any conventional cinema in the world. The act of watching and responding to a film with thousands of other people serves to amplify emotional or demonstrative responses among audience members through a phenomenon known as ‘emotional contagion’ (see Hatfield et al, 1994; McConachie, 2008). Thus, involuntary responses such as laughter, gasping or jumping in fright ripple around the auditorium. Furthermore, an announcement made by the conductor before the beginning of the concert encourages guests not to be a ‘well-behaved audience’ but to ‘whoop and cheer for your favourite
characters,’ and to ‘boo and hiss for the bad guys.’ These voluntary responses also spread rapidly across the auditorium as the audience are invited to interact with the film – although in truth they are interacting with each other as the cheers and boos form collective responses that unite the audience and tacitly invite everyone to join in. The concerts also enable the collective inhabitation of the wizarding world in the sense that many concertgoers arrive in their official Hogwarts robes (or indeed they purchase some from the many merchandise stalls), with wands and even stuffed owls. A form of cosplay, this inhabitation (or perhaps cohabitation of wizards and muggles alike) is further encouraged by the conductor who asks ‘are there any Gryffindors in the house tonight?!’ and goes through all four houses in turn, prompting varying degrees of whooping and cheering. Voluntary and involuntary responses to the film in audiences of such large scale, combined with cosplay and other acts of collective imagining, serve to unify the audience and draw everybody into a collective experience.32

Music predictably has a much greater prominence here than in an ordinary film-watching experience. Both the large screen and the large orchestra seated directly beneath it take up roughly the same amount of space in the audience’s field of vision. This allows and even encourages a dual mode of viewing, alternating between watching the film and watching the creation of its underscore (see Stevens, 2009: 72). In terms of inhabitation this proffers the possibility of a dual inhabitation in the sense that viewers can inhabit the world of the film and the world of the music simultaneously – or perhaps in a state of oscillation. The concertgoer’s attention need not necessarily be divided, however: one can be engrossed in the film-world and remain aware of the live aspects of the film score, or indeed one can focus on the musicians at work without losing track of the film narrative.

Access to the world of the music is further enhanced by supplementary materials: a documentary feature about the music of the film plays as the audience take their seats in

31 Andrew P. Alderete, publicist for CineConcerts, confirmed in an interview that these announcements take place at every concert (2017).
32 There is a mixing of worlds that takes place at the concerts. Alongside audience cheers for the appearance of certain characters, there is also applause for the orchestra after the prologue, after the first half, and other more distinct movements – a musical convention that serves momentarily to refocus attention on the hardworking orchestra rather than the images behind them. Other audience reactions convey a knowledge or understanding from outside the wizarding world. Applause for the appearance of wandmaker Garrick Ollivander, played by John Hurt, might seem disproportionately loud for such a minor role, were it not for the fact that Hurt died in early 2017. In a similar vein, the loudest cheers at the Manchester concert I attended went to the late Alan Rickman’s character, Severus Snape, despite the fact that throughout this film he is depicted as the villain. This shows not only a great love and respect for the actor who died in 2016, but also an awareness of Snape’s true allegiance to Harry and his sacrificial role in the grander narrative.
the 20 minutes before the film starts, and a programme is available for purchase which includes further information and detail relating to motifs, themes and instruments, as well as a cue-by-cue listing of the concert that enables viewers to follow the track names like symphonic movements. These materials encourage a more direct engagement with the music and provide non-musical viewers with access to the finer details of the music’s composition, recording and performance. The level of interplay between film and score helps to create a unified experience of the visual and audible domains. The distinct visual separation between screen and orchestra is blurred by the music’s synchronisation with the image and its emotive agency as an integral part of the film world – image, sound and dialogue alone would have significantly less emotional impact. As critic Matthew J. Palm (2017) writes of CineConcerts, ‘live music makes Harry Potter even more magical’, and there is much truth to this statement. For many, there is magic in the music – that is, music creates a sense of wonder not only through its affect but also through the mysteries of its production. Many attendees may not be regular concertgoers, or may have little understanding about how orchestras (and indeed their constituent parts and players) create music, and thus the experience of watching and listening to the orchestra may be no less ‘magical’ than watching the film. Indeed, the magic of one world strengthens that of the other, bringing them together to create a more holistic and wonder-filled experience of the film-world. As one audience member wrote, ‘the conductor picked up his non-magical wand, signalled the musicians to play, and then I was home’ (Jaworksi, 2016).

Warner Bros. Studio Tour London - The Making of Harry Potter (‘Educational’)

Opening to the public in March 2012 less than a year after the release of the final film, ‘The Making of Harry Potter’ Studio Tour in Leavesden, UK offers fans a completely different experience of the wizarding world. Still very much related primarily to the film series, the studio tour allows fans to visit the sets and soundstages used in filming, alongside countless props, costumes, models and vehicles. The attraction can host up to 5,000 visitors per day and is predominantly self-guided, allowing guests to move freely between exhibits and even stop off for some lunch or a Butterbeer (a popular wizarding beverage) in the back lot (Sabbagh, 2012). It was designed and delivered in conjunction with Warner Bros. by the Los Angeles-based Thinkwell Group.

Music plays a strong role in tailoring the visitor’s experience of the exhibits. From the moment a guest enters the building (and even in the car park outside the main entrance)
the familiar strains of Hedwig’s Theme and other recognisable motifs drift overhead, underscoring the fan’s excitement and beginning the visitor’s transition into the world of Harry Potter at the earliest possible moment. The large entrance hall (including ticket offices, gift shop and a Starbucks) is filled with music, though less clearly audible above the animated humdrum of those queuing to enter the exhibits. The music has not simply been chosen at random, however, nor is it all the same – a great deal of time and thought went into designing, creating and mixing the sonic aspects of the exhibition, as carried out by sound designers Vikram Kirby, Kari Rae Seekins and Colbert Davis.

In an interview Kari Rae Seekins detailed the process of choosing and mixing music for each of the exhibits, and she points to the importance of choosing tracks with a sense of wonder.

We had this wealth available to us and that’s what the fans would expect to hear – the music from the soundtracks. The first step was to go through all of them and actually figure out which music cues could act as background music because a lot of the music, especially as you move into the later soundtracks, is really dark, really dark and doesn’t have the same sense of uplifting wonder that the first soundtracks have. For most of the exhibit, almost all of the exhibit, that’s the sense that you want the guests to feel, it’s that sense of walking into the Great Hall for the first time or discovering the world of magic for the first time. (Seekins, 2016).

It is notable that Seekins chose cues not only for their suitability as background music, but for the sense of wonder they contain or create. Seekins and the team selected different cues from all eight soundtracks, making sure no particular themes or tracks were overused, and that each room would have a mixture of cues that suited each location and a long enough loop that guests would not hear the same tracks twice. To this end, the Great Hall (the first room entered on the tour and the only place to which a guest cannot return once they have moved on) was expected to be the place guests would spend the most time, and has a background music (BGM) loop of 70-90 minutes. As Seekins suggests, the earlier soundtracks proved more favourable in creating a positive and ‘wonder-ful’ atmosphere, and the positive associations of this music are due in no small part to Williams’ prominent use of melody and motif.

Seekins also went to great lengths to match up certain soundtrack cues and motifs with features of the exhibit with which they were already filmically related, in the hopes of stimulating audiovisual memories for the guests and strengthening the link between the artefacts and guests’ memories of them in the films. In this sense music forms a nostalgic bridge, enabling visitors to more easily recollect specific scenes from the 20 hours of film that make up the eight-part series. It is not surprising that Seekins chose a number of tracks
from the first of John Williams’ *Harry Potter* soundtracks – just as those cues accompanied Harry’s (and our) first experience of Hogwarts and the wizarding world, so they continue to underscore the first glimpse of many locations for guests at the studio tour. For example, at the tour’s first sight of the Hogwarts Great Hall (which follows an introductory video on a screen that then rises up to reveal the Great Hall doors), the music playing at this point is ‘Entry Into The Great Hall And The Banquet’ from *Philosopher’s Stone*, a cue which also accompanied Harry, Ron and Hermione’s first glimpse of the very same room (or, more accurately, our first glimpse of the Hall, as the cue was entirely non-diegetic – part of the world-of rather than the world-in the film – and thus not heard by Harry et al.). Similarly, one of the more prominent cues in the BGM loop at Diagon Alley is ‘Diagon Alley and the Gringotts Vault’, also from *Philosopher’s Stone*. Although these cues feature motifs that return only infrequently in *Chamber of Secrets*, the attention to detail here is likely to reward the most ardent fans with what could be described as the most accurate or ‘authentic’ experience of these reconstructed locales.

Sound designer Colbert Davis chose a slightly different method when selecting BGM for the ‘Platform 9¾’ section of the exhibit – a separate room between the main Sound Stage (J) and the back lot courtyard, which includes a specialist gift shop, several props and a full-size Hogwarts Express train engine and carriage to explore. In collating music for this exhibit, Davis began by taking music from the two longest scenes that take place on the platform: Harry’s first visit to it in film one, and the epilogue of film eight that sees Harry returning with his own son. Davis then selected further cues by focussing on the nature of Platform 9¾: ‘this is generally speaking a place that’s rooted in the muggle world and so I expanded my search to any of the music that I thought was adjacent to the muggle world, or that had something to do with travel’ (Davis, 2016). The BGM loop for this room thus includes music from eleven tracks including ‘The Flying Car’ from *CoS* and ‘A Journey To Hogwarts’ from *OotP*, and in fact Davis uses music from every film except *HBP*. The effect of this is perhaps more subliminal, again conjuring memories of travelling scenes from the films, six of which feature the Hogwarts Express and five of which do not (see Table 12).
Table 12 – BGM cues in Platform 9¾ and their filmic links to the Hogwarts Express

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Hogwarts Express?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>‘Platform 9¾ and the Journey to Hogwarts’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>‘Visit to the Zoo and Letters from Hogwarts’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoS</td>
<td>‘The Flying Car’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PoA</td>
<td>‘Apparition on the Train’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoF</td>
<td>‘Another Year Ends’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OotP</td>
<td>‘A Journey to Hogwarts’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp1</td>
<td>‘Obliviate’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp1</td>
<td>‘Snape to Malfoy Manor’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp1</td>
<td>‘Sky Battle’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp1</td>
<td>‘Hermione’s Parents’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHp2</td>
<td>‘Epilogue: Nineteen Years Later’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The climactic focal point of the tour and arguably the most effective use of music occurs at the tour’s final exhibit, which features a 1:24 scale model of Hogwarts castle used in the production of all eight films. Nearly 50 feet in diameter, the model is in the centre of a darkened room, drawing the eye from every angle of the ramped walkway which surrounds it and which causes visitors to slow down – to stop and marvel at this impressive feat of film craft (see Figure 18).
Even the moment a guest first lays eyes on the model of the franchise’s primary homspace is perfectly orchestrated, instilling a sense of awe as their eyes adjust to the darkness and focus on the immensity and detail of the only lit object before them. One visitor described this moment and its musical accompaniment thus:

There was music playing everywhere in the studios but it was never intrusive and in fact very often well chosen. I thought I’d find it annoying eventually but it really wasn’t. It reached a soaring crescendo though when we entered the next room and I became really weepy as we all moved en masse towards the giant (and I mean GIANT) model of Hogwarts Castle. I mean, come on, IT’S HOGWARTS. (Clegg, 2012).

The music described here by Melanie Clegg consists of a loop of two tracks, also put together by Kari Rae Seekins. The two tracks both come from Patrick Doyle’s soundtrack from *GoF*: ‘Harry in Winter’ and ‘Hogwarts Hymn’, and were edited by Seekins in order that whatever point a guest hears on first entrance to the exhibit may have a strong emotional effect.

The Hogwarts model, this was definitely about getting the right moment, and wanting people to have a strong emotional moment […] I remember having to edit the music so that whenever someone steps into this music it can’t be at a point in the track where it’s not an emotional moment, it has to always be at the point where people feel a strong emotional reaction, so I believe there was some cutting and condensing to make sure it was always on the high notes of the music. (Seekins, 2016).
Notably, the two cues (which change in time with the alternation of day/night light effects) appear only in the fourth film, and though ‘Harry in Winter’ accompanies a snowy scene featuring Harry and Cho Chang, ‘Hogwarts Hymn’ is heard only over the film’s credits. Rather than being chosen specifically for their extra-musical connotations or encoded meanings, these cues are used wholly for their emotionally affective nature. Furthermore, it is arguable that this emotional climax and centrepiece of the tour is so powerful precisely because of Hogwarts’ nature as a (surrogate) home to wizards, witches, film viewers and fans alike.

*The Making of Harry Potter* is a unique attraction because of the way it invites fans into the world of the films, but also into the world behind it, to see how the fantasy world was constructed: the trickery and artifice behind the movie magic. Michael S. Eddy alludes to this dual inhabitation, ‘[the tour] brings guests into the experience of making the movies as well as enjoying the fantasy of standing in the middle of the actual Great Hall’ (Eddy, 2012). One particular element of the tour brings these two worlds and the inhabitation of them together. Guests are given the opportunity to ride a broomstick in front of a green screen and to watch themselves afterwards on a monitor, now magically zooming through the streets of London with images taken from similar scenes in the films. The consequent personalised film clip is accompanied by assorted recognisable cues, as well as whooshing broom sounds lifted directly from the films’ sound design, in the hopes of creating an ‘authentic’ experience (Seekins, 2016). Here, as in the rest of the exhibit, music and sound form a bridge between, in theatrical terms, onstage and offstage; between the seen and the unseen – linking the created world with the world of its creation and bringing audiences into both of them simultaneously – or even, again, in a state of oscillation. Hearing a cue from the flying car scene in *CoS* while standing in front of the very car that appears in that scene draws on musical memory, creating a nostalgic and even uncanny experience – taking ‘uncanny’ in the Todorovian sense to mean the supernatural explained through mechanical means, music conjures the memory of the car’s flight while guests are confronted with the truth that it is just, in fact, an ordinary car. Reusing the cue also permanently links the original filmic memory with the new memory of seeing the car up close. Music thus can be seen once again to be suturing tour visitors into the fantasy world by constantly insisting upon its continued existence, even while the world’s constructed nature is made apparent. Music stands on the side of the fantastic, turning an attraction that risks the resultant disappointment of seeing the artifice of the world laid bare into an immersive opportunity to see and experience the world as the characters (or actors) did,
and further enhancing the emotional impact of standing in the Great Hall or in Dumbledore’s office by making it sound just as it does (to us) in the films.

**Universal Orlando Resort – The Wizarding World of Harry Potter (‘Escapist’)**

Perhaps the most extensive and immersive opportunity to inhabit the wizarding world can be found in the form of a theme park, or indeed several theme parks around the world. Having acquired the licensing rights for *Harry Potter* themed amusement parks from Warner Bros in May 2007, Universal Parks and Resorts have since opened ‘The Wizarding World of Harry Potter’ parks in four locations around the world – first at Universal Studios in Orlando, FL, and consequently at Universal Islands of Adventure (also in Orlando) as well as Universal Studios in Hollywood, CA and in Osaka, Japan. Where the Leavesden studio tour offered fans a look at how the filmic world of *Harry Potter* was created, the Universal attractions bring this world to life. Visitors are given a chance to walk the wizarding world’s (reconstructed) streets, to (buy and) wear wizarding clothes, eat and drink at wizarding establishments, witness performances by famous wizarding musicians, purchase a vast array of wizarding books, sweets and artefacts, and even (with the help of a $50 ‘interactive wand’) do some wizarding of their own by performing magical spells on (some of) their surroundings. As the later additions share many of the same installations, rides and experiences, I will be focussing on the two theme parks in Orlando as a case study, comprising the Diagon Alley area of Universal Studios and the Hogsmeade area in Islands of Adventure, the two parks being ingeniously linked by the operative transportation ride ‘The Hogwarts Express’ (for those with a park-to-park ticket).

In a similar way to the creators of the studio tour, Universal Creative have drawn on music as a key worldbuilding tool in the construction and presentation of their wizarding locations, and as such music from the films is heard on every street, in every shop and on every ride. Music is piped through inconspicuous loudspeakers at ground level or overhead, and the BGM loops include music from all eight films, though the music of the earlier films is once again favoured over that of the later ones – perhaps because the darkening nature of the later soundtracks, as noted above by Kari Rae Seekins, is at odds with the joyful, uplifting ambience intended by the park’s designers. To give an example, the Diagon Alley area at Universal Studios contains at least five (though probably more) distinct music loops in different areas: the London street (including Kings Cross Station, 12 Grimmauld Place and the Knight Bus), Diagon Alley itself (in the street and in most
shops), Knockturn Alley, inside the Leaky Cauldron pub, and inside Gringotts bank. These loops feature very little crossover of cues between them and have been conscientiously chosen for their specific locations: the street in London features part of Nicholas Hooper’s *OotP* theme for Dumbledore’s Army, an exciting major theme with a lively semiquaver string ostinato that makes it suitable as one of the first cues heard by those about to enter Diagon Alley. Another excerpt in this location is ‘Wizard Wheezes’, a big band piece also by Hooper that not only sits well within the muggle world of London but also corresponds to John Williams’ jazz-inflected accompaniment to the Knight Bus (which is found on the London street) in *PoA*. Once inside Diagon Alley, a longer list of cues includes many of the most recognisable motifs more commonly associated with the wizarding world and Harry’s experience of it (‘Harry’s Wondrous World’, ‘Fireworks’, the Love/Reflection theme and of course Hedwig’s Theme). The importance of the motif comes to the fore again here. These motifs are powerful not only through their associations but also through their sonic audibility: when approaching a new area of a theme park, the first musical element that can be heard in the air is not the backing or the texture, but the melody.

There is one section of the Diagon Alley area that makes use of darker and more sinister cues from the later films, and that is Knockturn Alley: an adjoining street to Diagon Alley that includes ‘Borgin and Burkes’ and other shops renowned for selling objects of dark magic. This street is predictably much darker and more foreboding than its bright and cheery surroundings, and features cues such as Hooper’s ‘Dumbledore’s Farewell’ (*HBP*) and Alexandre Desplat’s ‘Severus and Lily’ (*DHp1*). These tracks are in minor keys with chains of leaning suspensions and are more heavily string-dominated in terms of orchestration. Further cues such as ‘Harry and Hermione’ and ‘Snape and the Unbreakable Vow’ (both from *HBP*) create suspense with long tonic pedals on cellos and basses, violin tremolos, and repeated ostinati on harp or celeste, again in minor keys with some more chromatic suspensions. There is no crossover between the BGM at Knockturn Alley and the rest of the attractions, and the darker music seems to have been chosen for aesthetic reasons rather than conceptual or associative ones. Neither of the cues from the Knockturn Alley scenes in *CoS* and *HBP* are used, and instead designers have chosen cues with dark/sombre moods but without any suggestions of threat or danger, and thus aesthetic potency seems to overrule conceptual association. The cues clearly evoke memory and emotion, but on a more affective level than a semiotic or leitmotivic one. Thus, memories of Snape making the unbreakable vow, of the revelation of Snape’s enduring love for Lily, or indeed of Dumbledore’s death, may invade an informed guest’s
experience of the space, but rather than causing any cognitive dissonance would more likely add subtle detail to the melancholic, dark yet unthreatening atmosphere. Knockturn Alley is visibly and musically differentiated from its neighbouring street, and in this way the music helps to create a micro-world or ‘world within a world’, motivically related to Diagon Alley and yet aurally distinct and separate.

The sound designers behind Diagon Alley (and Hogsmeade at Islands of Adventure) relied not only on music’s inherent affect in building these distinct worlds, but also on the established links between the music and the world in (‘world-in’) the films – which is on the whole the world that the park designers have attempted to recreate (as opposed to the world in the books). For example, the loop that plays through the streets of Hogsmeade includes the following cues: ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ (PS), ‘Harry’s Wondrous World’ (CoS), ‘Hagrid the Professor’ (PoA), ‘Potter Waltz’ and ‘Harry in Winter’ (both GoF). All of these cues have established connections with Hogwarts in some way, which is apt because the village of Hogsmeade at Islands of Adventure sits in the shadow of a large model of Hogwarts Castle, a full-scale building that houses the ride ‘Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey’ (see Figure 19). The first two of these cues feature heavy use of the second half of Hedwig’s Theme (H2), established in Chapter Three as the primary motif for Hogwarts in the earlier films through its repeated use with aerial or establishing shots of the castle. The second two cues are related to Hogwarts through location – both are used exclusively within the Hogwarts building and grounds. Lastly, ‘Harry in Winter’ is used not only for establishing shots of Hogwarts in GoF, but is also one of two cues used in the Hogwarts exhibit at the Leavesden studio tour, as mentioned above. This cue and the ‘Potter Waltz’ both relate filmically to images of snow and ice, finding a further point of comparison in the snow-topped roofs of Hogsmeade. Thus, the BGM tracks within Hogsmeade are well-chosen, each serving to add to the atmosphere not only in purely aesthetic ways but by drawing on cinematic memories of filmic shots of Hogwarts, or even on memories of seeing the Leavesden model of the castle in the case of the more committed Harry Potter tourists.\footnote{In the case of my own research trips, I had visited the Studio Tour in Leavesden just prior to visiting the Wizarding World in Orlando, and the use of ‘Harry in Winter’ in the Hogsmeade area of the theme park did remind me of my previous experience of seeing the Hogwarts model up close, creating a powerfully nostalgic experience.} This web of interrelated musical cues and filmic memories, as with the Knockturn Alley music, draws fans into the worldbuilding process,
enabling subjective identifications and creating an individualised experience that increases with a fan’s knowledge and awareness of the musical world(s) of the films.

Figure 19 – Snowy Hogsmeade and Hogwarts Castle at Universal Studios, Orlando FL

Each of the immersive rollercoasters in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter provides further evidence of the reliance on music’s links to filmic events or franchise-specific conventions. The two Orlando parks each include one indoor rollercoaster or ‘motion-based dark ride’ which acts as the primary attraction (‘Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey’ and ‘Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts’) as well as the Hogwarts Express which doubles as a people-mover and attraction, linking Kings Cross station at Universal Studios with Hogsmeade station at Islands of Adventure. All three of these rides feature the use of music and specially recorded films alongside movement to create a new, immersive experience, with the two rides also including physical sets, wraparound projection, pyrotechnics, and (on ‘Escape from Gringotts’) 3D visual technology. Soundtracks for the rides are continuous from start to finish, drawing on recognisable musical motifs from the films as well as matching sound design for spells, broom effects, the Gringotts intruder alarm, and so on.34 Shorter, simpler motifs lend themselves well to the intense nature and quick pace of the rides, and thus one key theme used in both ride soundtracks is one of John Williams’ motifs for evil. The simplest of

34 Voice likeness actors and archive material were also used to portray Harry and Hermione in the ride films, as Daniel Radcliffe and Emma Watson were unavailable at the time of filming (‘Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts’, 2014).
Williams’ three themes for evil and mystery, this chromatic three-note outline is referred to by Jamie Lynn Webster as the ‘Something’s Odd’ motif but is used plentifully throughout the first two films to allude to the presence of evil or darkness. Its use in the rides acts as a form of musical shorthand for threat and danger, and its simplicity paired with the earlier films’ more childish nature gives the threat of the rides a less serious, more caricature-like tone.

A similarly simple and effective trope is employed to provide the musical finale to both rollercoasters. As identified in Chapter Two, the first two films (PS and Cos) each finish with a rousing rendition of the Love/Reflection theme, with a bit of Hedwig’s Theme thrown in for good measure. The extended version of this finale from CoS is used to finish both ‘Escape from Gringotts’ and ‘Forbidden Journey’, each signalling the end of the ride as the cars return to the safety of the station by drawing on the cue’s cinematic codification. This also draws on the desuturing power of the music as identified above, using repeated perfect cadences and drawn-out ritardandos to inform guests of the impending end of the ride, just as the same cue informed us of the films’ endings, tying up the narrative while guests physically detach themselves from the ride apparatus.

The Hogwarts Express ride not only allows guests to be transported from park to park in a full-scale replica of the train, complete with six-person compartments, but also provides ride-style entertainment via video screens at the windows on both sides of the carriage and in-built surround-sound systems. The ride tracks the journey from London to Hogsmeade (or indeed the return journey), encountering various characters and locations from the films along the way, and lasts approximately four minutes. The musical soundtrack, as was the case for ‘Escape from Gringotts’, features music from several of the films, specially re-arranged by a team of composers (Jerome Leroy, William Ross and Alex Kovacs) and recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra at Abbey Road studios, the same personnel and setting as the original soundtracks. This music is taken exclusively from John Williams’ scores, with one exception – the use of Hooper’s ‘Fireworks’ cue to accompany the broom-riding Weasley twins and their business-promoting firework display. Again, Williams’ music here represents the essence of the original, wondrous and more childlike world of Harry Potter, and it is notable that William Ross has a great deal of experience working with John Williams’ music, particularly having arranged much of his music for the Chamber of Secrets score. Great care and detail has gone into matching musical cues to their visual counterparts: the flying car, the spiders, the Knight Bus, Hagrid and Buckbeak are all accompanied by their respective themes; similarly the appearance of
Hogwarts is once again supported by the tropified use of the second part of Hedwig’s Theme, as an ardent fan would expect. Moreover, Leroy and Ross extrapolate further material from the musical world by altering and adapting numerous Williams motifs, either to flow more smoothly into each other or to reflect the ride narrative – all in keeping with Williams’ established compositional style and vernacular. For example, the ‘Christmas at Hogwarts’ music that plays as the train follows Hedwig through the streets of London is repeated and transposed into the tonic minor key, coinciding with the moment that death eaters appear in the sky and Harry says ‘it’s getting dark out there’ (see Example 29). The extension and extrapolation of musical material from this world shows both a respect for the composer and the sound world he created, and a dedication to the world’s musico-logical and audio-visual coherence.

**Example 29 – ‘Christmas at Hogwarts’ and its minor transformation on Hogwarts Express**

Besides all the music that appears on the streets and rides of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, there are also several live performances that take place in each of the parks, providing a more ‘diegetic’ way into the inhabitation of the wizarding world through the performance of its music by ‘real’ witches and wizards. Two of these performances, the ‘Triwizard Spirit Rally’ and the ‘Tales of Beedle the Bard’, involve storytelling or dancing to pre-recorded music, but two others, the ‘Hogwarts Frog Choir’ and ‘Celestina Warbeck
and the Banshees’, feature live singing. The first of these takes its inspiration from a scene in PoA that depicts a Hogwarts School Choir performing the John Williams song ‘Double Trouble’, complete with several instrumentalists and a chorus of giant singing frogs whose tuned croaks and belches provide an unusual bassline. The Wizarding World version of the choir features four singers, one presenter and conductor, and between two and four singing frogs held and puppeteered by the singers. Performances last around ten minutes, and include the aforementioned ‘Double Trouble’ as well as a cappella renditions of the more well-known film themes (‘Fireworks’ and ‘Hedwig’s Theme’). Although the musical material is mostly drawn from the film music, a few other original (and even comedy) compositions feature, and the singing style is closer to that of the contemporary a cappella group Pentatonix, the TV show ‘Glee’ (2009-2015) or the singing style of the Pitch Perfect films (2012, 2015, 2017). Here, the concept from the film world of a Hogwarts school choir is extrapolated and mixed with other aspects of contemporary pop culture to create something new, which relates both to the world of Harry Potter and to the musical tastes of many of the park’s visitors. The alteration of recognisable Potter music into a more contemporary style, performed by ‘Hogwarts’ students in school robes, is an interesting example of musical worldbuilding within the park. If High School Musical were set at Hogwarts, it might sound something like this.

The motown-inspired performance of Celestina Warbeck and the Banshees is interesting in that the concept is drawn from J.K. Rowling’s books rather than the films. First mentioned in the Chamber of Secrets book, the name of the ‘popular singing sorceress’ (Rowling, 1998: 35) was heard by Harry in an announcement on the Weasley’s radio, and she is mentioned several more times throughout the novels as one of the most popular magical musicians within the wizarding community. That being said, she is neither seen, heard nor mentioned in any of the films, and thus her inclusion in the Wizarding World at Diagon Alley points not to a simple recreation of the world-in-the films but to a manifestation of the world-of-the franchise, drawing on all available information from the canon. Some of this information comes through canonic mentions of the singing sorceress, but much more detail regarding Celestina’s appearance, musical style and even lyrical content was provided by J.K. Rowling through her online web outlet, Pottermore (Rowling, n.d.). On this website, Rowling states that she ‘always imagined [Celestina] to resemble Shirley Bassey in both looks and style’, and thus the Universal park designers have followed these suggestions (see Figure 20). Lyrically, the four songs in Celestina’s set describe life, love and loss from the perspective of a showbiz witch, and though
musically unrelated to the ‘non-diegetic’ scores heard throughout Diagon Alley, the songs, with lyrics written by Rowling herself, represent an ‘authentic’ musical expression of the wizarding world.

Figure 20 – Celestina Warbeck and the Banshees at Diagon Alley, Universal Studios Orlando

The notion of authenticity is problematic when it comes to the recreation of a fantasy world that is predominantly film-inspired but existent in other media, particularly when it comes to sound and music. In the NBC documentary ‘Harry Potter: The Making Of Diagon Alley’ which details the two-year process of building the park, the word authenticity comes up several times: ‘we are authentically recreating what was seen in the films and what was described in J.K. Rowling’s fiction’ (Alan Gilmore Art Director); ‘the goal is authenticity, and the bar is set very high’ (Meredith Vieira, presenter) (NBC-News, 2014). What does it mean, then, to create an authentic experience of Rowling’s wizarding world that doubles as an amusement park, and how is this authenticity achieved? Clearly park designers have drawn on both diegetic and non-diegetic forms of music in order to flood guest’s ears with the recognisable sounds of the film world – those sounds being both diegetic and non-diegetic in the films themselves. Thierry Coup, Senior Vice President of
Universal Creative, best sums up the desired resultant experience in the aforementioned documentary: ‘music brings emotions together – even if you close your eyes and you just hear the music of John Williams from the *Harry Potter* movies you start visualising and you start experiencing and feeling these moments that Harry Potter lived’ (ibid.). Thus, the use of music throughout the streets, shops and rides of the park aims not only to enable fans to inhabit this fantasy world and experience its magic, but also to engender identifications with Harry and his friends.

This highlights a subtle yet important distinction: the Wizarding World of Harry Potter does not aim to create a fully coherent fantasy world, but a film-world. In other words, to return to Daniel Yacavone’s bifurcation, Universal have for the most part attempted to create the world-*in* the films, rather than the world-*of* the films. The experience is not one of complete autonomous freedom in exploring the expansive world-*of* the films, but rather one of experiencing the more familiar world-*in* the films: the guest simultaneously directs and stars in their own *Harry Potter* production within the confines of the (re)created filmic spaces. Although some fans will do all they can to create for themselves as authentic an experience of the wizarding world as possible, by dressing in wizarding garb, learning the spells and buying the drinks, there will always be some creative limitations: the interactive wands can only cast certain spells in certain places, and the shops still trade in US dollars rather than Galleons, Sickles and Knuts (wizarding currency). Guests are therefore guided towards the things they can do by the enchanting Hamelin-esque music that is piped in to lead the way. Music is one of the only elements of the cinematic ‘world-*of*’ that is present in the park’s recreated ‘world-*in*’, and thus it plays a highly narratological and directional role, simultaneously showing us the wonders of the world and making us feel wonderful. Experiences such as choosing a wand (or having a wand ‘choose you’ at Ollivander’s wand shop), drinking a butterbeer or flying on a broomstick – all reinforced by joyful and enchanting cues from the films’ soundtracks – reduce every guest to their eleven-year-old selves, being introduced as Harry was to the wizarding world for what feels like the very first time; and yet finding it familiar, inviting, and perhaps even homely.

*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* – West-End Play (‘Esthetic’)

The most recent addition to the Harry Potter canon is the *Cursed Child* play, which opened at the Palace Theatre in London’s West-End in July 2016. The plot was conceived by J.K.
Rowling, John Tiffany and Jack Thorne, with a script written by Thorne, and tells the story of an older Harry and his friends whose children are now at Hogwarts, in an adventure that sees the familiar characters facing threats both old and new. Although the play is not a musical, music and sound both play a very strong role in building and portraying the world of the play and, in contrast to the other three case studies in this section, *Cursed Child* marks a significant departure from the reliance on pre-existing film music. The musical score for the play was written by pop musician Imogen Heap and arranged and compiled in collaboration with the play’s music supervisor Martin Lowe. Although mostly unrelated to the existent film scores, music and sound (designed by Gareth Fry) both build a cohesive world for the play in ways that are not dissimilar to the films’ music and sound design.

The play is divided into two parts, each lasting around two and a half hours (with interval) and often viewed on consecutive nights or on the same day in matinee and evening performances. The length of the play and its division into four acts puts an added weight on the recognisability and coherence of the play’s aural (and visual) world. In other words, the transitions an audience makes in repeatedly departing and re-entering the world of the play must be facilitated and quickened in any way possible, to aid the recollection of the narrative and indeed the cohesion and effectiveness of the play as an immersive dramatic experience. As a collective experience, emotional contagion is also at play here as audiences gasp at the magical trickery they witness or shriek at the dementors that invade the auditorium. These audible reactions enable and increase a spectator’s immersion in the play-world by engendering, authenticating and affirming equivalent responses. Much of the ‘magic’ of the play is found in the special effects that make the day-to-day sorcery of the play-world seem so real, and the audible astonishment of the audience renders this magic at once more real and more impossible. We saw it happen, but we do not know how it was done – the supernatural unexplained, the definition of the fantastic. Lastly, where film is rigid and unresponsive to the viewer, theatre as a medium allows for a degree of interaction between the viewer and the play, where audience reaction and emotion can affect the rhythms and pace of the actors. All of this adds to the immersive nature of the performance.

Sound is used significantly at the start of each act as pre-recorded announcements by four different characters signal the beginning of each half before the house lights are dimmed and the play continues. These announcements are made *from* the play-world and in character: the Act I opening takes the form of a train station announcement (in keeping with the suitcase/trolley-laden mise-en-scène), instructing spectators that their ‘journey is
about to start’ and reminding them to switch off their phones as they are seated in the ‘quiet zone’. Similarly, Act III is introduced by the voice of Professor Umbridge, who again urges spectators to switch off their phones or ‘face painful consequences’, all the while ushering the audience back into the sinister alternative present in which Act II finished (where Harry is dead, death-eaters reign and Umbridge is Hogwarts’ headmistress). These announcements represent sonic bridges that reach out from the world of the play into the theatre auditorium and draw the audience in, through both narrative content and the recognisable timbre of each voice (which, in the case of Professor Umbridge, takes inspiration from Imelda Staunton’s filmic portrayal of the character).

Music plays a strong role in defining and characterising the world of the play, featuring primarily under all scene changes, transitions and important narrative moments, as well as scenes with minimal dialogue. The score itself includes some original material, but is mainly compiled from instrumental versions of songs in Imogen Heap’s back catalogue, which have been adapted and rearranged by Heap and Martin Lowe. The musical aesthetic bears little resemblance to any of the film soundtracks, creating a very different sound-world: largely diatonic, featuring electronic instruments, pads and drum machines, and with a strong, quasi-minimalist rhythmic drive. That being said, it is not too difficult a stretch to see Heap and Lowe’s score as an extrapolation of the journey of Harry Potter soundtracks from Williams to Desplat, the latter of which do feature greater use of rhythmic ostinati and are much more diatonic when compared to Williams, Doyle and Hooper. This point of conjecture is reinforced by one further similarity that provides the strongest link between the two musical worlds: the use of wordless female voice.

Alexandre Desplat’s introduction of Lily’s theme in DHp2, as outlined in Chapter Two, is the first and only instance of a Harry Potter composer using solo voice. The minor diatonic theme, which comes to represent not only Harry’s mother’s love for him but also Severus Snape’s love for Lily, is sung on an ‘ah’ sound by the pure, childlike voice of Japanese singer Mai Fujisawa. Most of the Cursed Child score features Heap’s voice in a melodic capacity, the vast majority being wordless with ‘ah’ or ‘ooh’ sounds. This link is strongest during a scene in which Snape conjures a Patronus charm (a protective spell with the appearance of a ghost-like guardian animal) that takes the shape of a doe – understood by fans to be the same as Lily’s, also depicted in DHp2. This whole scene is underscored by female voices, shrouded in reverb, singing in the Aeolian mode - the same as Lily’s theme. These similarities, even if accidental, provide a strong musical link for spectators to draw
between Desplat’s world and Heap’s, a link strengthened by the fact that the play temporally follows DHp2’s ‘Nineteen Years Later’ epilogue.

With regards to sound, the Cursed Child sound design differs in many ways from that of the films, but in a similar way to the music, one or two similarities form potential sonic bridges for the audience to draw the film and play worlds together, or more specifically, to bring memories of the former into their experience of the latter. One of these is the voice of Voldemort (whose name, incidentally, is pronounced without the final ‘t’ in the play – another subtle difference from the films), which whispers ‘Harrryyy Potttterrr’ several times throughout the play. At these moments, the sound is dispersed from all around the auditorium, thus creating the effect of a disembodied voice: a theatrical acousmêtre. Firstly, the strained vocal quality, duration and reverb of these utterances are identical to those that Harry hears in the last four films of the franchise as Voldemort establishes and exploits the psychological connection between them. Secondly, an audience that is undoubtedly familiar with this filmic trope will not only recognise the threatening voice of Voldemort instantly, but will also fail to locate the source of the sound, with the voice coming at them from every direction – as close as the sound designers could get to placing a voice inside the audience’s heads. This particular meta-diegetic sound is clearly heard by Harry but not by other on-stage cast members. In this way the audience may form stronger subjective identifications with Harry through the shared experience of his psychological turmoil.

The stark differences between the music and sound design of the Cursed Child play and the franchise films were clearly intentional, the play putting together something new and original in these respects, yet still considering itself to be part of the same narrative universe. The decision to bring Imogen Heap into the project as a composer was made primarily by movement director Steven Hoggett, who had used her music in previous productions and who used her existing instrumental tracks during rehearsals of Cursed Child sequences (Lowe, 2016). In an interview, Martin Lowe explained some of the rationale behind creating a distinct, unrelated musical world for the plays:

I thought whatever happens first up in the play will be the world that we give the audience, and of course they’re all standing outside the theatre singing John Williams’ themes, so it was very clear that our opening musical gestures better be a million miles removed from the movies […] We were so bold with the opening, in that it didn’t sound like the movie, it was a whole different aural palate, and there was no apology for it at all. Also it wasn’t like we’d made a film, they were in a totally different environment, they weren’t in a theme park and they weren’t in a movie, they’d gone to the theatre (2016).
For Lowe, and indeed the rest of the creative team, the highest priority was to create a piece of theatre in its own right, and thereby a world that is tailor-made and specifically designed to house and portray the play’s narrative in the most effective way possible. Gareth Fry describes ‘wanting to create a show that was unique to itself, that didn’t draw off aspects of the films’, and thus took a different direction in creating sounds for spells, cloaks and staircases. In his words, the film sounds ‘wouldn’t have been right for our world. We have a different sort of magic. And a different language for telling the story […] generally we’re quite abstract and stylised in how we tell the story, and that requires a completely different language of sound from the films’ (2017). Both Lowe and Fry see the break from the sound world of the films as a necessity, not only due to the difference in medium and the conceptual and practical implications of this, but also for the articulation and integrity of the distinct play-world. In terms of authenticity, the play need only be authentic to itself and to Rowling’s primary canon: the narrative as told in the novels.

Returning to Imogen Heap’s score for the play and its articulation of a supposedly new musical world in the Harry Potter universe, it is interesting to note that the score features only one new composition, with the rest of the music being taken from Heap’s extensive back catalogue (Lowe, 2016). Moments of the score bear little resemblance to the songs from which they are derived. In fact, one of the more climactic moments features music taken from a two-bar backing vocal buried in one of Heap’s tracks that Lowe found and extended into a full piece. However, there are other moments where the song is barely altered, and indeed one instance where the lyrics are retained. One particular scene sees the two protagonists Albus and Scorpius travelling back in time to the Hogwarts of their fathers (Harry and Draco respectively), in order to change events at the Triwizard Tournament and hopefully prevent Cedric Diggory from being killed. Arriving into the Forbidden Forest and trying to remain unseen as they approach the castle, the song ‘Hide and Seek’ begins to play—a choral arrangement, and the only instance of lyrical accompaniment. The first words heard are ‘hide and seek, trains and sewing machines, all those years, they were here first.’ Considering the temporal shift to a time when their fathers were at their school and the duo’s need to remain undetected, these lyrics are very apt. Furthermore, the song is perhaps Heap’s most famous, having featured in numerous popular television programmes including a memorable killing scene in The O.C. and thence having been fashioned into an early internet meme. The song continues with the chorus: ‘mmm what you say? Mmm that you only meant well, well – course you did’, perhaps prophesying or predestining the mess that the boys make, though well-intentioned.
The recognisable nature of the song here presents a conflation of two worlds – the world of *Harry Potter* and the world of popular music culture, and many of the audience will be familiar with both. This is not necessarily problematic in terms of worldbuilding, but does produce some interesting effects. Many audience members, in recognition of the song, are bound to draw memories and thoughts about the song into their experience of the scene, and this compounds a multiplicity of interpretations by drawing on external, non-franchise influences.

Pre-existing pop music has appeared in the Harry Potter films, in the form of Jarvis Cocker or Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, but has never formed a part of the non-diegetic scoring. One final example from the end of the play highlights ways in which an awareness of Imogen Heap’s music gives viewers a deeper understanding of the play’s narrative structure. The final few minutes of Act IV are accompanied by a positive, upbeat piece of music with various interweaving melodies and countermelodies, including Imogen’s trademark ‘ohh’ vocal. To the unaware, this just sounds like continuation music for the various scene changes and emotional exchanges as the characters part ways. However, those who recognise the song’s chorus (and title) as ‘[say] Goodnight and Go’ will perhaps be more aware of the play’s impending closure, once again bringing the song’s unheard but culturally remembered lyrics into the audience’s understanding of the scene as a whole, as was my experience.

Imogen Heap herself was aware that her work on this project would constitute the coming together of two distinct realms: in an interview regarding her work on *Cursed Child* she stated ‘it feels like a meeting of two worlds. I feel very lucky’ (Izundu, 2016). Whether or not the play’s music is recognised is perhaps unimportant when compared to its effectiveness in creating a coherent world for the play to take place in. It smoothes over scene changes, articulates temporal shifts, and informs the audience in much the same way as a film score: both creating a world and simultaneously suturing the audience into it, here by means of surround sound as well as musical signposting and evocative sound design. The fact that the musical and sonic worlds of *Cursed Child* are at most tangentially (if accidentally) related to the sound worlds of the films means that *Cursed Child* is only related to (and thus authentic to) the book-world – a fact strengthened by the choice of a black actor to play Hermione, as well as the aforementioned differences in pronunciation. However, the success of the play is found partly in its ability to convince audiences that these differences, musical and otherwise, do not matter. As Lowe identifies:
if you’re really engaged in a show, you don’t sit there thinking ‘I wish we got Hedwig’s Theme’ […] you do hear people saying ‘it’s just a shame Daniel Radcliffe isn’t doing it’ but then the show starts and it says ‘this is Harry’ and you go ‘OK, it’s Harry.’ (Lowe, 2016).

**Conclusion**

Within these four tourist experiences music operates in a large variety of ways to enable different forms of inhabitation of the world of *Harry Potter*. The two more absorptive experiences (the CineConcerts tour and the Warner Bros tour) both feature music as a way of involving the guest and heightening their experience by drawing on memory and nostalgia, invoking wonder either by foregrounding music or by sensitively pairing music with visual cues and set pieces. The more immersive experiences (the *Cursed Child* play and the Wizarding World attractions) both use music for its immersive qualities to great and numerous effects, most notably by building coherent worlds that give structure and form to the experiences for their duration. As detailed above, the active or passive engagement of the guest varies in each attraction from the spectatorial modes of the concert and the play to the more autonomous modes of the theme park and the studio tour, and the extent to which the experiences may be thought of as interactive also varies. Viewers whoop and cheer for their favourite characters at the *Philosopher’s Stone* concerts, ride brooms at the *Studio Tour*, do ‘magic’ at Universal Orlando, and even the audience’s laughter or applause can dictate or influence the actors’ pace in *Cursed Child*. Although they all feature degrees of interaction between consumer and product, this interaction is clearly limited by various factors, most often the limits of the experience apparatus itself.

A fan in search of a more realistic or naturalistic experience might balk at the pervasive presence of ‘non-diegetic’ music in the Wizarding World theme parks, but I would argue that its use creates a more film-like experience where spectatorial limits are more readily accepted. Rather than inciting a sense of disbelief, music in fact enables disbelief’s suspension, or pretence’s activation; guests are sutured into the micro-worlds of Diagon Alley and Hogsmeade in much the same way as was found in Chapter Two. A comparative experience from our other franchise case study provides a stark contrast to this pervasive use of music. The *LOTR* set of Hobbiton in Matamata, New Zealand opened for tours in 2002, offering visitors a chance to explore the bucolic landscape of the Shire, complete with hobbit holes, mills and the Green Dragon Inn. Here, the only music to be heard on the whole set is the traditional Irish folk music played in the Green Dragon Inn,
the rest of the set being filled only with naturally occurring soundscapes, resulting in a more naturalistic experience. Visitor Simon Clayton (2017) states that the Inn’s ‘handcrafted round doors, Gaelic music and an open fire all sent us straight back to the films’, pointing to a different kind of worldbuilding at play here – one which seeks to create a realistic manifestation of the world-of the films, rather than a more cinematic iteration of the world-in the films. Though this creates a subtly different experience, the guest is still limited as to how much of the Shire he can explore, which hobbit holes he can enter, and how long he can spend drinking in the Green Dragon.

Several limitations link all of the above attractions, the most prominent being the fact that they all come at a cost. ‘Home’ comes with a price tag, and that price can be a significant one, particularly when attending as groups or family: a one-day Park-to-Park ticket to Universal Studios in Orlando currently costs $179 for an adult and $174 for a child. Similarly, since its opening in 2016 tickets for the Cursed Child play have been very difficult to come by due to overwhelming demand. Limited accessibility leads to another limitation to all of the above attractions: guests can only stay so long before they must leave the fantasy worlds and return to their own homes. The following chapter analyses one of the many ways in which a fan may overcome these limitations by bringing fantasy worlds into their daily lives, looking at fan listening practices and the consumption of soundtracks.
Chapter Five: Music to Escape – Soundtracks and their Consumption

Introduction

They transport me to this magnificent world I sometimes escape to, and they make me realize things about our actual world and stuff. I feel melancholy and courage and a bizarre sort of inner strength like I could achieve anything on my own. This music helps me in my life, and it inspires me for the things I love to do. I feel really elvish and found a place through it where I can be both in the real world and still live my dreams.

The above statement was made in response to a question about why one might listen to the soundtracks of Peter Jackson’s Lord of the Rings films, and how they make the listener feel. These few sentences abound with notions of escapism, self-expansion, social awareness, subjective identification, emotional association and dual inhabitation, and highlight the personal importance of such music to this particular respondent. Soundtrack listening forms a key part of the worldbuilding/inhabitation processes, and this chapter draws on and builds upon notions of worldbuilding in order to bridge the gap between film music and fandom, focussing on soundtracks and listening practices, and ascertaining the various roles that music and its consumption have to play in the inhabitation of fantasy worlds. The chapter focuses on the music of the Middle-earth franchises and the views and practices of those who listen to it, because of the notable and perhaps unique level of committed fandom that this music has garnered, as depicted by the above quotation and the many others below. To return to the opening passage, the following investigation seeks to understand exactly how film soundtracks can transport us to magnificent worlds and teach us about our own, fill us with strength and courage, help us, inspire us, make us feel elvish or enable us to live our dreams.

When music is isolated or separated from other filmic components through active or passive modes of listening it is able to maintain its role as both a narrative agent and an agent of worldbuilding through the ways in which it is heard, listened to, accessed and consumed. A fan’s motivation for listening to the music from their favourite film franchise may be similar to their motivations for visiting any of the tourist experiences in the previous chapter, and could easily be compared to those identified by Sue Beeton among film tourists: ‘visitors were coming to film sites to re-live an experience (or even emotion) encountered in the film, reinforce myth, storytelling or fantasies’ (2010: 2). The re-living of experience and reinforcing of myth as motivations for listening to and aurally inhabiting
familiar musical spaces may be figured as deliberate acts of worldbuilding – that is, soundtrack consumption can be seen as the active pursuit of memories and emotions tied up in the films or other franchise experiences, and the desire to relive them. If these memories and emotions have been so closely tied to the concept and feeling of ‘home’ then it follows that soundtrack listening motivations may also be oriented towards the recreation of a sense of home, of being home, or at least being somewhere familiar.

On the notion of home in film fandom, Katherine Fowkes adapts Rick Altman’s concept of constellated communities, highlighting his suggestion that such communities can ‘function as virtual homes, as viewers locate personal memories in the context of favoured viewing experiences’ (2010: 11). Here, Fowkes shows that for film viewers (and, arguably, soundtrack listeners) homes can be found in both the experience and enjoyment of a film (and its music), and in the community of fans with whom that experience or enjoyment may be shared. These homes, in the form of personal memories and viewing experiences, will of course be entirely unique to each viewer or listener, and yet the trends that can be found among motivations for soundtrack consumption will reveal more accurately what is happening among fans and non-fans alike that brings them back to the music of these films time and again, and what it is about these musical homes that makes them desirable enough to merit repeated or habitual inhabitation.

Questions of inhabitation and fandom find analogues in the study of music consumption where Philip Trocchia, Melissa Apps and Sarah McNish (2002) have adapted Douglas Holt’s (1995) typology of consumption practices to provide a useful framework for locating and understanding consumer motivations. Acts of consuming are categorised as either object or interpersonal actions (engaging with music or engaging with others) and as either autotelic or instrumental actions (ends within themselves or means to further ends), and thus arranged into a grid, each quadrant containing three or four specific examples (see Table 13).
This framework is extremely useful both in evaluating and interpreting data, and in focusing and informing the questionnaire which follows. Although instances of the two ‘interpersonal actions’ cited by Trocchia et al (socializing and bonding) are evident among the constellated communities of LOTR fandom, this chapter focuses on the two individualised motivations, or ‘object actions,’ referred to as experiencing and goal attainment (the more corporate or collective motivations for music consumption are analysed in Chapter Six). It is telling that one example given of experiencing is ‘fantasy’, a phenomenon which ‘allows individuals to use music as a catalyst for escaping from the reality of their lives’ (2002:11). By ascertaining how the consumption of fantasy film music helps to build worlds and homes in the minds of its listeners, it will become apparent whether the above concepts of escaping or leaving reality may be understood in such simple terms, or if these activities and impulses are in fact much more complex.

Howard Shore’s music for Peter Jackson’s two trilogies has expanded from the first released soundtracks into a sizeable musical home, including limited edition Complete Recordings (which include all the music from the Extended Edition films as well as unused cues), rare archived recordings, symphonic concerts and live cinematic performances, articles, websites, blogs and books, all devoted to the sound of Jackson’s Middle-earth. How are these musical materials and experiences consumed by fans and non-fans alike, and how do they feel about LOTR-inspired music by other composers? What are people’s motivations for consuming this music, and what can we understand about notions of home and inhabitation within these contexts? The Shore soundtracks are owned and consumed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Object actions (engaging with object)</th>
<th>Interpersonal actions (with other people)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autotelic actions</td>
<td>‘Experiencing’</td>
<td>‘Socializing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ends within themselves)</td>
<td>• Accounting</td>
<td>• Ambiance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Auditory stimulation</td>
<td>• Discussion Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fantasy</td>
<td>• Event Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Memory trigger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental actions</td>
<td>‘Goal Attainment’</td>
<td>‘Bonding’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(means to further ends)</td>
<td>• Identification</td>
<td>• Communing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Inspiration</td>
<td>• Gaining Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional Development</td>
<td>• Exerting Dominance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 – Typology of music consumption practices (Trocchia et al., 2002)
by millions worldwide,\(^{35}\) and the investigation presented below addresses how and why fans are engaging with the music of Middle-earth, examining both their listening practices and their feelings towards non-canonical contributions to the place they call home.

The Questionnaire

As mentioned in the Introduction, this chapter relies predominantly on web ethnography in the form of an online questionnaire that was disseminated in various ways (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire). Firstly, respondents were recruited through posts made on several online fan-fora, including those at TheOneRing.net, LordotRings.com, LOTRplaza.com, AgeOfTheRing.com, CouncilofElrond.com and Musicoflotr.com, all of which were found to be particularly active (the post on TheOneRing.net was viewed 487 times while the questionnaire was open). Invitations to participate were also made on various fan groups on Facebook, several Reddit pages devoted to LOTR, and the fora on the IMDb (Internet Movie Database) pages for each of the films, which are also reasonably active.\(^{36}\) In order to gain responses from a wide range of fans with differing enthusiasms and commitment levels the questionnaire was also posted on my own personal social media profiles on Facebook and Twitter. These posts were shared and retweeted, disseminating the survey to a wider audience, and Doug Adams (highly regarded by fans as the main authority on Howard Shore’s scores for the Jackson films) also aided the propagation of the questionnaire by retweeting my post on Twitter, broadcasting it to his followers and garnering more completions – the retweet was seen 1,841 times, and 18 of these viewers clicked the link to the survey. Questionnaire respondents were invited to give their name, age, gender, nationality and occupation, though these responses were all optional. Such details were sought in order to give a clearer picture of demographic trends among the respondents.

The varying levels of fandom among participants made it necessary for them to self-categorise as part of the questionnaire, to enable comparisons between trends of more

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\(^{35}\) At time of writing, the main theme on the Fellowship of the Ring soundtrack ‘Concerning Hobbits’ had been played 27,494,177 times on the online streaming service Spotify, and Enya’s ‘May It Be’ that features over the end credits had been played 28,798,295 times.

\(^{36}\) Throughout preliminary searches it became apparent that the message board at TheOneRing.net (affectionately known as TORn by users) is by far the most popular, a fact corroborated by Maggie Parke’s chapter focusing on this particular community, ‘The Lord of the Rings: One Digital Fandom to Initiate Them All’ (2015). The fora at IMDb for each film may receive an average of two to three posts per day, compared to those at TORn which receive up to ten posts per day; however, both sites sustain continued discussions and regular activity.
or less ardent fans, and a question was created to this effect.\(^\text{37}\) In answering the first question ‘how much of a *Lord of the Rings* fan would you say you are?’ participants chose a point on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being labelled ‘extreme fan’ and 5 ‘not at all’. I chose to ask about *LOTR* fandom rather than more specifically about the Jackson films or their music so as not to influence the answers to the subsequent question about which piece of music best expresses Middle-earth. Although these self-categorisations remain subjective both in variance of interpretation and in how extreme a fan may consider themselves, it was deemed preferable to keep the question simple rather than to adopt other pre-existing scales of fandom.\(^\text{38}\) This allowed participants to make a quicker choice, and any potential variance in the concept of extremeness was accounted for in analysis and interpretation by comparing trends among and between fan sets.

The questionnaire was open for 21 days and received 229 responses. Among these responses 85 self-identified as the most extreme fan category (named F1), 85 as F2, 33 as F3, 15 as F4 and 10 in the ‘not at all’ category, F5. Although skewed towards the stronger side of the fandom spectrum there is a reasonable representation of each fan set (which is not to say that this is representative of the Tolkien fandom or audience[s]). These self-classifications are corroborated by other trends such as the ownership of soundtracks in more extreme fans. Question 7 of the questionnaire asked respondents to divulge which soundtracks they owned out of the standard soundtracks and complete recordings for each of Jackson’s film trilogy, as well as ‘The Rarities Archive’. The results can be seen in Table 14. Responses have been categorised from F1 to F5, and the trends here clearly show that the average number of different *LOTR* soundtracks owned increases with fandom, and that the majority of Complete Recordings are owned by more committed fans, in line with the fact that the limited press of these recordings has made them much rarer and more expensive.

\(^{37}\) Measuring fandom here serves an analytical purpose in the interpretation of responses. Further examples of and discussions on measuring fandom can be found in Wakefield and Barnes (1996) and Gierzynki and Eddy (2013).

\(^{38}\) These include scales such as that of Abercrombie and Longhurst (consumer, fan, cultist, enthusiast, petty producer, 1998:141), Tulloch and Jenkins (followers and fans, 1995:23) or Brooker and Brooker (admirers, fans, cult fans, 1996:141).
**Table 14 – LOTR soundtrack ownership among different fan-sets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fan set (no. respondents)</th>
<th>Extreme ←-----------------------------→ Not at all.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1 (85)</td>
<td>F2 (85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOTR</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTT</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROTK</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOTR-CR</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTT-CR</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROTK-CR</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average number owned.</strong></td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Set F5 represents something of an anomaly and may appear problematic, but it is arguable that the data for this set is less reliable partly due to the small population size of only 10 respondents, and partly as it is possible that some respondents misunderstood the question on fandom and self-categorised as F5 rather than F1. Although a subgroup surely exists where respondents identify as fans of Shore but not Tolkien, this is not likely to be the case here as five out of ten in F5 have read the novel, and some rated the films as ‘fantastic’ in Question 5 (where the trilogy was rated between ‘fantastic’ and ‘terrible’ on a ten-point scale). It is therefore arguable that some of the responses in F5 have been miscategorised, and due to the small nature of this set it will be omitted from further analysis to avoid potential skew. Tom Phillips (2011) identifies some of the problems that fan self-identification and categorisation can entail, one of them being disparity or variation between how extreme each fan may consider themselves.39

**Quantitative Results**

Focusing firstly on quantitative data, there are several trends that highlight commonalities within each fan set. Some of the primary indicators of the use of music in the inhabitation of Middle-earth are the frequency of listening, the settings in which soundtracks are

39 There may well be a set of people for whom listening to this music does not constitute fandom in any way, but, rather, represents a specialised listening practice; in other words, a purely musical enjoyment of Howard Shore’s soundtracks without reference to, or knowledge of, the films or the world.
consumed and the proclaimed reasons for this: the basic questions of why, where and how often fans choose to listen to Shore’s music. Regarding listening frequency, respondents were asked to choose one option from the list shown in Table 15, and the proportional distribution of each set is shown in percentages and portrayed visually in Figure 21.

Table 15 – LOTR soundtrack listening frequency by fan-set

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Several times a day</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a week</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every few weeks</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a year</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21 – Soundtrack listening frequency by fan-set, shown proportionally

As can be seen above, over 43% of the most avid fans listen to the LOTR soundtracks at least once a week, compared to just under 7% of F4 fans, and the proportions diminish/augment fairly evenly from set to set. The fact that the strongest fans listen to the music so often highlights not only the importance of the soundtracks, but of extending their own music libraries: 38% of F1 fans own their own copies of the Complete Recordings and 22% own the Rarities Archive, which is only available when purchased with Doug Adams’s book. This would suggest that increased listening frequency requires more material, or more ‘complete’ musical resources.
A similar trend can be seen in the responses to a question that listed several non-Shore-soundtrack musical contributions to the world of Middle-earth, and asked respondents to indicate whether they had never heard of them, heard of them, heard/seen them once, or heard/seen them multiple times. These musics are listed below, and the responses for each can be seen in Figure 22.

- The Lord of the Rings Musical (Toronto 2006, West End 2007)
- Symphony No. 1 "The Lord of the Rings" - Johan de Meij (1988)
- The Lord of the Rings Symphony - Howard Shore (2011)
- Middle Earth on Rhapsody for Horn and Orchestra - Craig Russell (2003)
- The Lord of the Rings, concept album - Bo Hansson (1970)
- The Lord of the Rings, animated film - Ralph Bakshi (1978)
- Any Lord of the Rings "filk"

![Figure 22 – Comparative awareness of non-Shore LOTR music](image)

When the results are stratified into fan sets a similar trend to listening emerges, in that more extreme fans are not only more aware of non-Shore manifestations of musical Middle-earth, but tend to consume them more than less committed fans. The mean responses for all eight musics were found for each set, and are shown in Figure 23 which displays this increased awareness and consumption for more ardent fans.
Regarding listening practices, respondents were simply asked ‘where and when do you listen to [the LOTR soundtracks]? Give as much detail as you like.’ Although each respondent had complete descriptive freedom and was unprompted in their answer, several trends emerged among the most common responses, displayed with a tally of occurrences in Table 16. Although many of these responses could be easily identified as some of the most common settings for the consumption of music of whatever kind (such as commuting, studying or relaxing) there are nevertheless important trends to note.

**Table 16 – Responses to ‘where and when’ question on soundtrack consumption**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Place / Reason</th>
<th>Number of occurrences.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travelling/commuting</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Home</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working / at work</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying / revising</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘When I feel like it’</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping / going to sleep</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming / video-gaming</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing the music themselves</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the more unusual yet recurrent pastimes that people choose to accompany with Middle-earth music is gaming, with video/computer games being mentioned most often. One respondent, a British musical director, described his practice of muting the ‘bad music’ of whatever game he is playing and listening to LOTR music instead, also pointing
out that the *LOTR* games either use the film soundtracks or have ‘good music’ themselves. Gaming has grown to become a significant part of many fantasy franchises and the ways imaginary worlds may be inhabited, providing immersive and interactive experiences in a variety of contexts, many of which will be investigated in Chapter Six. It is interesting to note that the music of *LOTR* is being used to accompany fantasy worlds other than Middle-earth, chosen either for its (often referred to as ‘epic’) musical qualities or for the subjective connection between music and gamer.

It is perhaps not unusual that so many people mentioned ‘home’ as the place they choose to listen to this music most often; the home is instrumental in the manifestation of subjectivity as the primary private space. Brian O’Neill locates music listening ‘within the material culture of the home and [identifies it] as a cultural practice providing a central element in the constitution of subjectivity for music listeners’ (2004:3). However, the private and home-based consumption of the soundtracks of fantasy films bears a deeper level of significance when viewed as a deliberate act of worldbuilding. Katherine Fowkes elaborates on the different roles of fantasy compared to horror and science fiction through the underlying myth of home: ‘[w]hereas the house becomes the locus of haunting and repressed evil in Gothic horror, in fantasy it more likely serves as the repository of childhood memories and as a site of safety and nostalgia’ (2010: 12). As argued above, fantasy franchises such as *LOTR* rely more heavily on a concept of home as a lasting comfort or action-driving impetus that exists throughout a grand epic narrative. Fantasy homes like Middle-earth or the Shire thus become inherently familiar and tied to feelings of comfort and nostalgia through their repeatedly idyllic visual and musical depiction, and hence it is fitting that such private spaces would become the loci for the sonic escape of fans into alternative homes.

If, to quote Michael Walsh, ‘[m]usical listening is one means by which the self becomes framed – because such practices symbolise the private self within the home’ (2010: 306) – then the private consumption of film music may represent, explicitly or implicitly, the framing of oneself as a citizen of Middle-earth. This sonically achieved subjective framing is exemplified in many responses such as the following from one British male participant:

> I’ve always wanted to be a Hobbit, but it’s too late now. Listening to the soundtrack takes me to Middle-earth, takes me to a landscape without urbanisation […] and then suddenly a recurring motif happens, it hits you like the thought of home when travelling – a feeling of nostalgia. I suppose that’s it, they make me feel nostalgic – for home, for the countryside, for a world that doesn’t exist but has formed me as a person. (Oliver Bishop, United Kingdom).
This personal forming, alongside desires expressed (figuratively or not) ‘to be a Hobbit’ or ‘to live in Middle-earth’, is evidence of film music consumption’s role in self-framing and enabling a kind of Middle-earth citizenship. As well as being a clear example of Trocchia et al.’s ‘fantasy’ motivation for listening (2002:11), this self-framing is also an important aspect of subjective worldbuilding, or of building the fantasy world into one’s own life (and perhaps vice versa). However, the theme of home is so central to this particular response (and to many others) that it requires a shift in our understanding of worldbuilding, to see it more accurately, in these cases, as homebuilding. A closer investigation of the more qualitative results will provide a deeper understanding of homebuilding in the following section.

Qualitative Results

Several commonalities emerge among responses to the more open-ended parts of the survey. The second question, ‘give an example of a piece of music that best expresses Middle-earth for you,’ was asked at the very start of the questionnaire in order to avoid any bias towards Howard Shore. Naturally many responded with particular Shore cues, but others chose from off the beaten track. Sibelius was mentioned four times (Tapiola or Finlandia), Holst three times (Mars or Jupiter) and Johan de Meij’s 1988 The Lord of the Rings symphony five times, with Mozart, Grieg, Vivaldi, Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams and Carl Orff also being put forward. Led Zeppelin and their LOTR-inspired songs were suggested, as was the artist Enya (‘anything by Enya!’). Out of the 183 responses to this question (answers were not required), 26% cited a piece of music outside of the Shore repertory – proof that although the film composer’s music is popular, he does not have a monopoly on Middle-earth, and many listeners find their ideal Middle-earth music elsewhere. In terms of canonicity, this strongly reinforces a view of Shore’s music as part of a secondary canon alongside the other works listed above, such a canon being necessarily more fluid and subjective, and constructed by fans and consumers themselves. Feeling at home in Middle-earth, then, does not always require Howard Shore’s music.40

Among participants who did choose a Shore piece to ‘best express Middle-earth’, the most popular cue by far was ‘Concerning Hobbits’ which was mentioned 30 times (the next popular being the Annie Lennox song ‘Into The West’ with only six mentions). This

40 Further avenues for research might include a comparison of the works and composers listed here, perhaps looking to trace any similarities in the ‘epic’ qualities that they might be seen to hold.
particular cue comes from *The Fellowship of the Ring* soundtrack, and consists of various settings of the Shire theme (including both ‘Pensive’ and ‘Rural’ settings) on Irish flute and fiddle, occurring (as described in Chapter Two) near the start of the film as the bucolic setting of the Shire is established and explored. It is not surprising then, that as J.R.R. Tolkien intended for the Shire to represent a ‘re-enchanted, legitimating mythology for England’ (Saler, 2012), fans’ favourite musical cues might be the ones depicting the Shire, the very embodiment of home and familiarity in a vast and varied world of foreign races and cultures.

It is worth pointing out the dissonance here between Tolkien’s purposefully English mythology and Shore’s appropriation of Celtic musics into his ‘Shire’ culture, and what this may mean in terms of notions of national identity. There is not room here for a full discussion of the intersections of nationalism, fantasy and music consumption, but it is interesting to note that the three main nationalities to cite ‘Concerning Hobbits’ or any other Shire music as best expressing Middle-earth were British, American and Norwegian. Further to this, 12% of Norwegians responded with Shire music, compared to 16% of British respondents, and 35% of American participants. Such a large proportion of Americans compared to Europeans may point towards a more romanticised postcolonial view of the Shire (read Britain/England) as an idyllic motherland or locus of heritage, as well as a potentially increased conflation of Celtic and English cultures and traditions. This begs the more ideological question of whom this home (the Shire) is intended for, which is further complicated by the fact that both trilogies were filmed exclusively in New Zealand.

The notion of home, then, is complicated by variance in global audience traditions and viewpoints, and it is notable that a scoring of an ‘English’ setting in a New Zealand location with ‘Celtic’ music by a Canadian composer might lead a significant proportion of Americans to identify it as the best expression of Middle-earth and thus arguably the most representative sound of their fantasy home. Not only does home sound different to everyone, but there are elements of colonialism and eurocentrism tied up in these musical articulations of home, as identified in Chapter Three.

Although the choice of ‘Concerning Hobbits’ exemplifies homebuilding in the sense that for so many it ‘perfectly captures the feel of the Shire’ as an aural expression of Middle-earth, other respondents have adopted cues such as these and built them into their own worlds and lives. One striking example of this active worldbuilding can be found in the following response from an American male:
I have a mental condition that makes it difficult for me to express what I feel, so I listen to music and play it for other people to do this. For instance, I couldn’t have told you how I felt when my dog died, but I could have played you Gandalf’s Fall, and you’d have understood. Or how I felt when I held my newborn niece, the very beginning of Concerning Hobbits. I have pieces of music for all my emotional states and experiences, many of which are from the Middle-earth collection.

Here, the use and consumption of film music no longer represents an act of fantasy or escapism but operates on a social and interpersonal level, such motivations being located on the other side of Trocchia et al.’s interpretational axis and defined as interpersonal rather than object actions, further highlighting the multiplicity of ways in which this music is employed and built into the homes of those who consume it.

Some of the other cues often suggested to encapsulate Middle-earth were ‘The Return of the King’ (from ROTK, referred to as ‘The Fellowship Reunited’ on the Complete Recordings), often chosen as its length of over ten minutes includes many of the trilogy’s primary themes including those for the Shire, Gondor and Rohan, as well as Viggo Mortensen singing Aragorn’s coronation song, ‘Elessar’s Oath’. Rohan’s themes also proved very popular, as did the prologue from FOTR, referred to as ‘The Prophecy’ on the soundtrack and as ‘Prologue: One Ring To Rule Them All’ on the Complete Recordings. This particular cue, being the very first music heard in the entire franchise, acts to transport the viewer from their subjective surroundings across mythic and spatiotemporal boundaries into the world of the film, as identified in Chapter Two. Just as this cue and the ethereal voices at its start guide us across the liminal boundary between primary and secondary worlds at the film’s first viewing, so they continue to act in soundtrack consumption, drawing listeners into an imaginary world along a familiar path that becomes increasingly well-travelled. Lastly, the English language credit songs feature heavily in response to this question, particularly Enya’s ‘May It Be’ and Annie Lennox’s ‘Into The West’ (from FOTR and ROTK respectively). These credit songs transport a viewer back to the world they have come from through the use of English vocal music. The songs also bear a nuanced yet important difference from the rest of the soundtracks in that they enable listeners to engage on another level by learning the words and singing along, drawing them into a collaborative worldbuilding experience which is not possible (or much harder) with the rest of the soundtracks.

Turning to motivations for soundtrack listening, the following questions invited a variety of responses: ‘Why do you choose to listen to them? How do they make you feel?’ Again, there are some interesting trends among the responses that point to common reasons and motivations for listening to this music so often. Firstly, the word ‘epic’ was used to
describe the music 30 times, and for many consumers this was all they could muster to describe their experience – both that the music is epic, and that it makes them feel epic. This concept of ‘epicness’ is comparable to the sense of ‘completeness’ identified by Martin Barker among interviewees in the international LOTR audience project. As Barker (2006) notes, it is this sense of completeness – both a complete world to inhabit and a complete (audiovisual) experience – that attracts so many to continually return to Middle-earth in whatever way they can, be that through a trip to the cinema, as for Barker’s interviewees, or through the continued consumption of the music, as for my own. Epicness and completeness may also be exemplified by the sheer size and scale of the available musical repertory of Shore’s Middle-earth music – the complete runtime for The Hobbit Deluxe Editions, LOTR Complete Recordings and the Rarities Archive together amounts to 17 hours and 23 minutes of music. However, I would argue that the form of epicness more often identified by listeners is an affective state imbued in the musical qualities of the score. Claudia Gorbman identifies film music’s ability to ‘trigger a response of “epic feeling”’ (1987:81), and though there is not room for a full exposition on epicness here, there are surely identifiable musical and sonic qualities, such as wide ranges in pitch or dynamic or large degrees of variation between Shore’s musical cultures and races, that may give rise to this response.

Tying in with responses above about the consumption of music while working/studying, a significant proportion stated increased productivity as a primary reason for choosing the soundtracks as ‘work music.’ Among the 67 references to listening while working or studying we find motivations such as ‘helps me stay focused’, ‘lack of words means it isn’t distracting; epicness spurs work on’, ‘they can inspire one to productivity’, and ‘they help me concentrate and really drive me to get work done.’ Thus, a pattern can be identified in the highly functional use of Shore’s music being employed to accompany mundane tasks such as commuting, studying, working and cleaning and to make them more ‘epic’, pointing to a desire to escape from the real world into a world of fantasy. However, and perhaps most importantly here, these potentially escapist acts do not lead to a complete psychosocial absence from the real world, but rather to a dual inhabitation of both worlds, allowing listeners to complete earthly tasks with a heightened sense of energy, urgency and courage that they find in and draw from Middle-earth. This evidence of dual inhabitation is akin to Michael Saler’s ‘ironic imagination’ (2012), and is at odds with Trocchia et al.’s more simplistic approach to listening as ‘fantasy’ in that it may be seen as partial-escapism, but certainly not as an attempt to ‘leave their present
existence behind’ (2002:11). Indeed, what we find is a combination of elements from different parts of their typology – elements of fantasy and memory trigger, auditory stimulation and inspiration combined in a complex web of interrelated motivations.

Besides the practical reasons of increased energy and productivity, listeners also turn to the LOTR soundtracks for personal comfort or emotional solace. Several respondents mentioned choosing to listen to them to put them in a better mood, or to help them deal with their emotions or personal circumstances, as indicated in the following examples:

- ‘Uplifting when you're in a bad mood - it has an air of hopefulness’,
- ‘The themes and motifs […] can become personal to me in reflecting upon certain emotions and moods I might be feeling’,
- ‘It puts my own problems in perspective (i.e. it lets me de-stress and manage any issues im [sic] having)’,
- ‘It’s good as an anti-anger or anti-real-life’,
- ‘Happy, brave, and ready for any battles we face in life.’

These responses indicate not only a heightened emotional connection with the music, and even with particular themes and cues, but also an emotional dependence on the music and its therapeutic power to uplift, encourage and inspire. The intricate relationship between music and emotion in film music has been well explicated by writers such as Annabel J. Cohen (2011 and 2014), and, following Cohen’s findings, it is arguable that the emotional power and weight of film music can be found both within the music itself and within the combination of sound and image. In other words, listeners may find themselves moved both by the music and its emotional qualities, and by the memories of scenes in the films represented and triggered by the music. One respondent, a British photographer and sociologist, made reference to the music providing a form of emotional catharsis: ‘they put into sound what I feel and likewise make me feel’, sentiments that are echoed in phrases such as ‘they move me’, ‘they make me feel joyful’ and ‘help me express my emotions’.

Put simply, music listening acts as a bridge between the consumer and the music’s emotional content or quality. Thus, a listener is able to deposit personal memories or subjective identifications on the other side of the bridge, to ascribe them to specific musical moments or cues, and subsequently to re-experience or relive them upon future listenings. These liminal exchanges and crossed borders lie at the core of subjective worldbuilding, and many responses to the questionnaire illustrate just how important music can be to fans through these processes.

There are many more examples of identifications or bridges made independently by the viewer/listener between LOTR cues and other non-filmic scenarios or emotional
stimuli. One English male between 26 and 40 responded thus: ‘Frodo’s Song to the Fellowship was read at my Dad’s funeral a few weeks ago.’ Clearly the deeply personal use of Tolkien literature has coloured the world of Middle-earth with strong emotional significance for this respondent, and this is not a unique position. Others made reference to personal links and uses of the music, such as this Irish student: ‘certain songs that make me feel kind of sad, after losing my dad and uncle especially [...] it was my dad and uncle who got me listening to these’, and this American PhD student; ‘it’s also a movie series that I saw with my dad when I was 13-16 and I don’t have many good memories of him from that time.’ There are also examples of more positive associations, such as one respondent who used the cue ‘Concerning Hobbits’ in their wedding ceremony, and another for whom the music reminds them of a ‘happy and carefree period in life.’ Thus, many people’s reasons for listening and re-listening to this music are not only practical or emotional, but also deeply personal and often tied to intensely intimate memories, family relationships or feelings of nostalgia. Middle-earth, for them, is somewhat larger than it may appear to others, and, more importantly, it is large enough and accommodating enough to provide a home for their grief or their joy, accessible through the mechanisms of music listening that allow them to travel to this imagined world.

The therapeutic and often habitual consumption of these particular soundtracks has for some become something of a devotional or even religious act. Some respondents struggled to explain or describe their feelings towards the music, such as in the following two examples (both incidentally from the F1 set of extreme fans):

- ‘I still listen to parts of this soundtrack daily as it’s become a part of me (if you know what I mean)’ (British education manager),
- ‘I can’t describe the spiritual connection. I just acknowledge and honour it. And consider myself blessed for finding it’ (American graphic designer).

The use of such religious vocabulary points to a sincere spiritual relationship felt by some devotees to the music, and signposts to other supernatural senses abound in comments such as ‘I always feel a bit magical while listening’ and ‘I feel enchanted.’ Although such sentiments are of course subjective and unique to each fan, the reality of being part of a larger congregation who all love and value the same imaginary world and its multifaceted

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41 The fact that each of these examples mentions a paternal figure is coincidental, and yet it is noteworthy that this music and its consumption should become tied up with the relationships between fathers and sons, not only because of the films’ content (the depiction of Gandalf as a father figure and the repeated patronymic ‘son-of’ in character introductions), but also because the consumption of these films may have become a father-son tradition for many film-viewers, myself included.
manifestations is an important and affirmative quality of such fandom, as highlighted in the following quotation from one female respondent aged 61+:

I got caught up in an ecstasy of Tolkien in the summer of 2002. The movie (FOTR) and the books [...] and the community I found of other people caught in the throes of Tolkien devotion and the soundtrack ... it was all caught up together. It all fit. It was all perfect. It was all transformative.

For this particular fan, as for many, the sense of belonging to what Rick Altman describes as a ‘constellated community’ (2003: 161), that is, being joined together via online message boards, is an important part of their personal expression of fandom and provides a sense of home as mentioned above. Indeed, this involvement heightens the respondent’s experience of the films and the music through the collaborative sharing of knowledge, speculation, debate and discussion that make up the fabric of online fan communities.

Viewing such a community through a religious lens, brought together through a shared commitment, love and experience of a particular musical canon, it is not too big a step to take to see Howard Shore as a God-like figure, with Doug Adams as something of an oracle; a font of knowledge who is greatly respected for his work, insight and access to Shore himself.

Concepts of home, nostalgia, listening practices, emotion and spiritual connection all come together in the following two quotations which sum up the feelings expressed by many of the more committed respondents. The first is from an American religious worker on how the LOTR soundtracks make her feel:

They are like my heart is ‘coming home’, they evoke such feelings of hope and triumph, joy, peace ... Sometimes excitement – nobility ... This music has become a part of my heart and soul. I’m sure it will be with me throughout my life and into deep old age... It is a very deep, precious and heartfelt consolation in my life.

The second quote, which likewise illustrates this spiritual connection, is taken from a section of Marilynn Miller’s website ‘A Magpie’s Nest’ that draws together her own findings on LOTR music (Miller, n.d., emphasis my own):

I listen to some part of them daily. And I mean daily. I don’t always have the opportunity to listen to all three, but I always find a way to listen to at least one of them. I can’t tell you how much this music means to me. I am completely satisfied by it emotionally and spiritually. I even used the soundtracks to relax me while I was having [surgery]. I can’t tell you how much they helped. I hear this music and it’s like coming home.

For both these respondents, the music of the Lord of the Rings films provides a sense of homecoming that is found nowhere else. This is evidence of more than just an extreme fandom, but of a deep and genuine love for music that provides comfort, joy and hope – this is what it means to be the music of home.
Conclusion

The findings of this questionnaire require an adjustment in the way we currently understand worldbuilding – or more specifically, the role that music plays within worldbuilding and the extent to which a shared or virtual world exists within each inhabitant’s imagination – and move towards a more accurate understanding of *homebuilding*. How do we make an imagined world our own? That is, how do we move into it, access it or find ways to call it home? The fact that for so many this particular musical canon has come to represent or signify *home* in some way is indicative not only of the music’s popularity and emotional influence but also of its powerful role in enabling vicarious experiences of Middle-earth, wherever a listener may be and from/in whatever situation they are choosing to escape in some sense. One recurring theme throughout the descriptions of people’s experience of Middle-earth music is the concept of being *transported* from one world to another. Vocabulary such as ‘taken away’, ‘taken back’ and ‘carried away’ is extremely common throughout responses, as in comments such as ‘takes me back to the world of Middle-earth’, ‘makes me feel as though I’m part of the adventure’, ‘closing my eyes and allowing the music to carry me away to Middle-Earth is an ethereal experience.’ Importantly, this liminal transportation seems to be experienced by fans of all strata (examples of ‘takes me back’ language can be found in all five sets F1-F5), highlighting this particular musical property as attractive to fans and non-fans alike, who dip in and out of Middle-earth and use music as a bridge to cross the border. Hence, the uses of this music may range from motivational background music to a sincere effort to become fluent in various forms of Elvish, yet all signify different forms of inhabitation, and in all instances music is used to build a *home* of some form or another that may be returned to time and again.

As fantasy worlds have proven themselves to be socially, culturally and often politically committed to contemporary society as loci for imagination, speculation and commentary, it seems only fitting that the music of these worlds might play a vital role in the transferral and transportation of minds and imaginations between reality and fantasy. To return to and extend Tolkien’s analogy of the ‘Escape of the Prisoner’, if a student finds himself a prisoner of boredom or low productivity, he may find in this music focus, motivation and energy. If an artist finds herself a prisoner of discouragement (or writer’s block), this music may provide her with determination or creative inspiration. If a person finds themselves a prisoner of loneliness or depression, the musical inhabitation of a
fantasy world may indeed help to bring them comfort, emotional stability and even companionship and community. This chapter and the questionnaire responses within it illustrate that the music of a fantasy world provides a home for its listeners by enabling the dual inhabitation of primary and secondary worlds and positively enhancing many aspects of life by creating a space where listeners can dwell or escape.

Although Howard Shore’s Middle-earth music (and particularly his music for *The Lord of the Rings*) has been proven very popular, a quarter of respondents voiced an opinion that their Middle-earth sounds like something else. In this way, Shore may more accurately be described, not as a God-like creator, but as a subcreator, imagining and transcribing (to return to Anthony Boucher’s ‘transcriber of the Myth’) Middle-earth music alongside other transcribers whose contributions are equally valid and important parts of the sonic fabric of the secondary world. As noted above, Tolkien’s plans for his legendarium were not that he would remain the sole creator or contributor to the world and the narratives within it. The invitation to join with Tolkien in the subcreation of Middle-earth is one that has been taken up by countless writers, filmmakers and composers, all building and adding to this virtual world, this virtual *home*, and many additional manifestations of and contributions to these worlds are analysed in the following chapter.
Chapter Six: Audiovisual and Interactive Fan Practices – Gaming and the Internet

Introduction

Although tourist experiences and soundtrack consumption both provide avenues for the imaginative inhabitation of the worlds of *Harry Potter* and *LOTR*, these worlds have also expanded transmedially as fans have sought and created new ways of moving into them and making them home. These practices often lead to expressions that can be categorised as audible, visual or audiovisual, such as fan musics, cosplay or fan films, many of which are facilitated in no small part by the Internet and in particular by YouTube, which functions as a meeting place for many communities of fans. This chapter provides a survey of the ever-expanding nature of these transmedial worlds and the multiplicitous ways in which fans are able to inhabit them, following breadcrumb trails to the far reaches of the Internet to uncover fan film soundtracks, wizard rock, ocarina-playing elves, fantasy soundscapes, and many more ways in which music enables the imaginative and creative inhabitation of fantasy worlds.

Perhaps the most notable form of audiovisual engagement between *Harry Potter* or *LOTR* fans and these worlds – indeed, one of the largest and hitherto undiscussed windows into them – can be found in one particular technologically facilitated arena: videogame. As a specialised fan practice, gaming creates and connects whole new communities of fans, either through a shared interest in the games of particular franchises, or through a greater level of interaction facilitated by games played with or against others, such as MMORPGs (massively multiplayer online role-playing games). In the cases of *Harry Potter* and *LOTR*, gaming is an important locus of engagement between fans and the objects of their fandom, and indeed a further point of contact between consumers and producers. For most franchise games the producers are solely and exclusively the conglomerates that own the film and game studios, but in some cases fans take on the role of producer, either by creating their own games or by ‘modding’ – creating ‘mods’ or modifications of previously unrelated games that make them into new ways of entering familiar fantasy worlds. Thus, the producer/consumer model is sometimes conflated into a model of *prosumption*, which enables another level of interaction between fans when seen as *prosumers*. The examples
of prosumption within this chapter are in stark contrast with the experiences in Chapter Four, which all followed a stricter separation of producer and consumer.

As well as a clear expression of fandom, gaming can also be understood as another method of inhabiting a created world. Philip D. Deen (2011) draws on the work of philosopher John Dewey and points to interaction as the basis for the inhabitation of game worlds:

Inhabitation or embodiment is an element of interactivity. Within Dewey’s naturalist philosophy, there is no breach between self and world. “The world we have experienced becomes an integral part of the self that acts and is acted upon in further experience […] Through habits formed in intercourse with the world, we also inhabit the world. It becomes a home and the home is always part of our every experience” (Dewey 1934, 109).

There are several salient points here. Firstly, Deen uses the intrinsic interrelation of the self and the created world to argue that the more a player is able to interact with a game-world, the more immersive the world is, and through this intercourse a player inhabits the world with which they interact. This is useful as a way of linking the various forms of interaction we find in gaming – spatial, embodied (haptic or kinesic), sonic and so on – with an understanding of the imaginative inhabitation of fantasy spaces. The more forms of interaction, the more immersive, and hence the more inhabitable, a space becomes.

Secondly, Dewey takes things one step further by stating that these interactions or habits make the experienced world into a home, and thus it is arguable that a world can only become a home through its inhabitation. Mary Douglas puts it a different way: ‘[home] survives only so long as it attends to the needs of its members’ (1991: 307) – in other words, a home is only really a home as long as it is needed and used.

For a house to become a home, particularly in gaming, it must attract inhabitants or instil in them the desire to inhabit it. In an article on what makes a house a home in games such as the post-apocalyptic Fallout 4 (2015), Jon Morcom comments ‘I’m sure I’m not the only person who’s ever wanted to jump inside the screen and inhabit a game world, or at least one comfortable little corner of it’ (2015). Ria Jenkins (2015) argues that ‘the Fallout series shows a central fear present in all post-apocalyptic fiction: the loss of the home’, and thus a significant part of these particular games is the establishment of a base or dwelling which one can return to for safety and to store collected items. This game draws on the desire for a home by making homebuilding into a ludic task. In a wider sense, although certain homespaces may be more or less prominent within a game, the gameworld as a whole can function as a home for the player; this notion is strengthened when a game becomes the locus for an online community. The following sections analyse music firstly
in different game settings, from franchise-affiliated games to mods and role-play servers, and then in wider fan practices, fan products and communities, examining the various ways in which these expansive, transmedial worlds become homes to countless fans through their committed and continued inhabitation.

Specialised Fan Practices: Gaming

Videogames represent a significant source of revenue for each of the franchise conglomerates, and given the episodic nature of both *Harry Potter* and *LOTR/The Hobbit*, these games are an important way to keep fans engaged with the franchises during the yearlong wait for the next instalment. There are at least fifteen official *Harry Potter* games of different kinds and on various consoles, as well as 35 official *LOTR* games – 25 of which were released after Jackson’s films (the earlier ones being based on Tolkien’s writings). Music plays a vital worldbuilding role in many of these games, and the way music renders game-worlds both interactive and immersive is different in many ways from the filmic worldbuilding that was analysed in Chapters Two and Three. A closer look at the immersive and interactive roles of music and sound will allow us to understand their role in our inhabitation of these game-worlds, but first we need to understand what music is doing in gameplay and how.

Isabella van Elferen (2016) identifies a lack of scholarship on the immersive nature of game music, and provides a useful model with which to categorise music’s various agencies in these processes. Her ‘ALI Model’ divides aspects of game musical immersion into musical affect, musical literacy and musical interaction, and sets up a framework where these three components may overlap (34). Van Elferen defines affect as ‘the personal investment in a given situation through memory, emotion and identification’ (ibid.), and thus it pertains to the emotional connotations, subject identifications and personal or collective meanings attributed to a game’s soundtrack. Affect is closely tied to literacy, which van Elferen defines as ‘the fluency in hearing and interpreting [game] music through the fact of our frequent exposure to [it] and, subsequently, our ability to interpret [its] communications.’ She also draws on José Zagal’s concept of ‘ludoliteracy’ as a cultural understanding of gaming conventions and practices, to produce a more precise concept of game musical literacy: ‘game soundtracks deploy player literacy for their immersive effect: it is because gamers recognize certain composing styles that they are able to interpret gaming events and feel involved in gameplay, game worlds and game
plots’ (36). Lastly, musical interaction describes any link between player actions and the game’s soundtrack, most notably through adaptive scores that adjust to match a gameplay’s progress, location, action or state within a game-world. It is this connection between player and soundtrack that van Elferen identifies as most effectively contributing to gaming immersion (39), which also falls very much in line with Phillip Deen’s assertion that interactivity enables immersion and inhabitation. Furthermore, it is arguable that all three components of the ALI model illustrate music’s worldbuilding abilities: affect gives the world substance, literacy makes the world understandable, and interaction makes it accessible and changeable, the three working together to bring the world to life and make it inhabitable. A player is likely to be most involved or immersed at the convergence of all three elements, and I will use these elements to analyse game scores here.

Looking firstly at the presence of affect in game scores, a group of titles by Vivendi Universal Games provides a helpful case study. In a problematic division of licensing rights, Vivendi obtained the rights to release videogames inspired by Tolkien’s writings, whereas Electronic Arts bought the rights to create games based on the New Line Cinema (Jackson) films (Corriea, 2014). Thus, although the first Vivendi game, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2002) was released less than a year after the first New Line film of the same name, there could be no obvious relation between the two interpretations.42 However, this game and the other three Vivendi games (*The Hobbit* [2003], *The Lord of the Rings: War of the Ring* [2003] and *The Lord of the Rings Online* [2007]) feature a shared audio-visual aesthetic that includes a large amount of musical crossover. Composer Chance Thomas created a ‘Tolkien Music Style Guide’, drawing on five years of research into musical elements in Tolkien’s writings and extrapolating ideas about how the music for the various races of Middle-earth should sound (Thomas, 2003). The guide includes voice types and ranges that should be adhered to for each race, as well as instruments that should or should not be used, and a vast array of motifs and themes for major characters and settings. This guide was then distributed to the other composers working on each of the games. Lennie Moore, composer for *War of the Ring*, notes how he mixed Thomas’s work with his own: ‘I wrote several themes specific to *War of the Ring* such as a Good vs. Evil Theme and blended them as leitmotifs along with Chance's themes throughout the score’ (Moore, 2017). The degree of thought that went into creating this

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42 Electronic Arts in fact decided not to release a game based on the *FOTR* film, instead incorporating *FOTR* material into the *TTT* game released in conjunction with the second film.
specific soundworld for the game series illustrates Thomas’s desire that each piece of music for the games should sound like Tolkien’s descriptions of Middle-earth, and the following quotation highlights this aspiration for an affective, ‘authentic’ music, as well as Thomas’s creative control:

Composers Rod Abernethy and Dave Adams had been creating a wonderful collection of music to underscore Bilbo's adventures in Hobbiton. Almost everything was in complete harmony with the Tolkien Music Style Guide. But one piece of music seemed a little out of character. The arrangement was laced with marimba, a very cool instrument but decidedly out of place. Referencing the style guide I told the composers, "You see, there are no marimbas in The Shire!" There was a brief moment of silence, after which we all broke into laughter. The moment was comical in its self-importance, but the composers did make the change, and our adherence to the style guide successfully preserved a higher degree of authenticity in the score (Thomas, 2003).

For Chance Thomas, then, the success of the music’s affective nature depended on its adherence to a set of rules to ensure its aesthetic and logical coherence. Thomas’s desire to maintain a rigorous sense of authenticity points to a strong desire to get things just right, to minimise cognitive dissonance and create the perfect home. This is more than just worldbuilding; this is homebuilding.

Another group of game titles was released by Warner Bros Interactive Entertainment that similarly make no use of Howard Shore’s music, but that draw more clearly on his established world and musical aesthetic. The Lord of the Rings: Shadow of Mordor (2014) features music by Garry Schyman and Nathan Grigg, and even the opening prologue section features several similarities with Howard Shore’s Middle-earth. An ascending French horn melody accompanies the narrated mention of Gondor; dissonant upper brass and choir clusters feature above pounding drums as the action moves to Mordor; chanting black speech and metallic percussion in an irregular time signature continue to mimic Shore’s music for Isengard. It is remarkable then, that Schyman claims not to have been influenced by Shore’s work, having only seen one of the Jackson films several years before starting work on Shadow of Mordor (Schyman, 2017). Thus, these similarities are either mere coincidence, or indeed evidence of a generalised fantasy film music sound that has pervaded films and games of the genre since 2001. The intertextual nature of this music is a good example of the ‘cross-temporal affective virtuality’ that van Elferen finds to be the result of immersion in game music (2016: 35) – music’s affective agency here draws not only on subjective experience in the moment of play, but also on memories of games and films with similar music to provide a more immediate understanding of the music’s emotional content. Here we find the overlapping area
between affect and literacy. Schyman’s use of martial, choral and instrumentational devices shows how affective musical styles can become tropified and thus enter into a semiotic system whose decoding requires a certain literacy from the player.

A similar literacy is required for players to recognise the temporal difference between two worlds depicted in the game’s prologue section: one before the protagonist Talion’s death, and one after. The former is given solo violins and flutes, harp, string pizzicatos and wooden percussion, while the latter is predominantly accompanied by low brass, string section clusters and tremolos, and metallic percussion. As the cutscenes and gameplay alternate between these two temporalities, music becomes the primary signpost in communicating these shifts in time, often preceding the visual shift in image and colouring, thus requiring a learned familiarity with these two aural worlds. An element of ludoliteracy is also in play here: in his YouTube walkthrough, gamer Fightin Cowboy makes the comment ‘back in time!’ at the first of these temporal shifts, displaying an awareness of the connotations of the shift in musical style, synchronised with the lightening of the image and deepening of the colour (FightinCowboy, 2014, 3:18). To clarify: a learned musical literacy is required to recognise temporal shifts in gameplay and thus to enable comprehension of the game narrative.

It is arguable that game music from (primarily) filmic franchises might require two distinct forms of music literacy: van Elferen’s ‘game musical literacy’, paired with a film musical literacy, which recognises not only musical material taken directly from film scores but also imitations or resemblances of this material. Composer James Hannigan’s scores for the latter four Harry Potter titles in the Electronic Arts series of games-of-the-films provide good examples of drawing on both film and game music literacy. Although EA possessed the rights to the films and therefore the music, Hannigan was brought in to create new scores for the games (Jeremy Soule having done the same for the first four games), and thus was able to create music which related directly to the film music, and yet maintained some originality. In his words:

> with Order of the Phoenix, a greater effort was made to tie in the musical style of the film series at that time (or up until the previous instalment). Mostly, of course, that identity related to Hedwig’s Theme […] which, after the first few films, screamed ‘Harry Potter’. Only a small percentage of the game’s music referred to existing Harry Potter music, which enabled me to inject my own musical ideas into the project as well (Hannigan, 2017).

Listening to the gameplay music, the three parts of Hedwig’s Theme return time and again in Hannigan’s earlier scores (OotP and HBP), often being altered, reharmonised or elaborated as in Example 28. Here, Williams’ two eight-bar phrases are turned into two
four-bar phrases followed by an eight-bar answering phrase, melodic contours are altered along with the harmony, but the chromatic motif remains clearly recognisable. Hannigan also adopts segments of Williams material into his own melodies, as illustrated in Example 29.

Example 30 – Comparison of a Hannigan theme from *OotP* (game) with Williams’ H2 theme

![Example 30](image)

Example 31 – Comparison of Williams’ ‘Friendship’ theme with Hannigan theme from *OotP*

![Example 31](image)

It is interesting to note that the music for each of the latter *Harry Potter* games was created prior to the release of their corresponding films, and indeed often before each film’s music had even been written (Hannigan, 2017). James Hannigan was only able to follow compositional trends up to the *preceding* film, extrapolating from them where the tone of the next film might be heading. He points out that the final two films ‘had “darkened” considerably, and it became a little less clear what was now “Harry Potter-ish” in terms of music’ (ibid.). It follows, then, that music relating to Alexandre Desplat, who scored the final two films, would only be found in Hannigan’s score for the final game, *DHp2* – and indeed, several moments of this score are clearly inspired by Desplat’s music for *DHp1*. One example of this is heard when the player escapes from the Gringotts cavern. The music features a repetitive string ostinato of repeated pairs of semiquavers in thirds, with a minor horn melody over the top – all components shared by the Desplat cue.
‘Obliviate’ from the opening sequence of DHp1. All of these examples point to a game score’s immersive capabilities drawing on a literacy of existent franchise film music. For Hannigan, it was important to create similar musical worlds to the films in order that they might sound familiar to filmgoers, and through this familiarity to imbue them with a nostalgic sense of being home.

Further examples of film music literacy enabling greater levels of immersion in games can be found amongst the games that make direct use of existing film music in their scores. In these cases, the sound of home is directly transplanted into a game, filling the game-world with a pre-established homeliness from the opening cue of the game’s introduction or menu page. In the EA LOTR games (EA having rights to the New Line film materials) Howard Shore’s music is employed conscientiously and logically. Female choirs sing the Lothlórien theme alongside cutscene mentions of the elves, orcs entering gameplay and attacking the player’s avatar are accompanied by the ‘Evil of the Ring’ theme, and when the Gondorian protagonist wins a battle, victory is announced with a triumphant fanfare playing the end of Shore’s ‘Gondor in Ascension’ theme – a motif from ROTK that both accompanies and encapsulates Gondor’s victory at Minas Tirith. Each of these examples draws on the film music literacy of the player to enhance the game experience: awareness of the music of the elves makes cutscenes more affective; recognition of orc motifs pairs with ludoliteracy to prepare the gamer for battle; victory music (also evidence of musical interaction) imbued with cinematic memory links the player’s successes with those of the film’s protagonists. As van Elferen notes, ‘[b]ecause of gaming interactivity [gamers] are their own epic heroes, who fight Sauron’s evil together with Boromir, Gandalf and Frodo: it is their own interactive heroism that is underlined by such sweeping music’ (2016: 37). This sense of musical interaction strengthens the player’s immersion in both the game and the wider world of Middle-earth as a character in their own right, enabling a stronger sense of inhabitation and of belonging or being at home within the game and the fantasy world writ large.

Musical literacy may also be instilled or imparted by a game in the rare case that a consumer might play a game before seeing its corresponding film. One particular example shows the use of a film’s music in a game released before the film. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Motorbike Escape is a web-based minigame released by Warner Bros as part of the publicity campaign in the lead up to DHp1, and was launched two weeks before the film’s release (Aron, 2010). While waiting for the game to load players can learn the controls and are treated to a full rendition of Hedwig’s Theme (from PS) – but once it
starts, the gameplay is accompanied by a looping excerpt from one of Alexandre Desplat’s new cues for the film. This cue, named ‘Sky Battle’, is used in the film to accompany the journey made from 4 Privet Drive to The Burrow (from Harry’s aunt and uncle’s house to the home of the Weasleys) by a team of wizards all disguised as Harry who are attacked by a group of broom-mounted ‘death eaters’, and it is this scene that the game recreates.

Playing as Harry in the sidecar of Hagrid’s flying motorbike, the player must cast spells to shoot advancing death eaters out of the sky while dodging their attacks, and use various powerups and health-restorers to last as long as possible while racking up a high score. Although the looping music is scarcely interactive besides its finishing at the point of the protagonist’s death, players are given a chance to experience and interact with a key scene from the film before seeing it, and indeed to hear some of Desplat’s music even before the soundtrack release. This game and its use of a cue from the film it promotes are likely to enhance the player’s experience of the film, having already gained some literacy in what the music represents and thus knowing what to expect once the cue is first heard. This literacy in turn may make the film and game more immersive through increased familiarity, thus enabling greater levels of inhabitation.

Turning lastly to the interaction component of van Elferen’s ALI model, combat music provides a good example of the interactive nature of game music and is prevalent throughout many LOTR and HP games. As confirmed by their composers Garry Schyman (2017) and James Hannigan (2017), Middle-earth: Shadow of Mordor (2014) and The Lord of the Rings: Aragorn’s Quest (2010) both build their combat music in layers so the music can quickly respond to the player’s involvement in combat by cross-fading to more/less threatening versions of the same cue, varying from ambient to high intensity. Similarly, the music can instantly shift up in intensity to warn the player of an immanent threat that may not yet be visible. Thus, a cycle of interactivity emerges wherein the player induces a shift in the music, which then (drawing on affect and literacy) informs the player of their surroundings and the gravity and proximity of the threat. This causes the player to respond, bringing about perhaps another shift in music, and the cycle continues until the battle has been won or lost – producing a final shift to music of either congratulation or commiseration, and a return to neutrality as the player’s quest continues. As much as a player perceives himself to be interacting with in-game characters and foes, he is in fact

43 Motorbike Escape was released on or before 5th November 2010, with the soundtrack released on the 16th and the film on the 19th of that month.
interacting with an audiovisual world that through its very adaptability becomes more responsive and thus more immersive.

More heavily interactive ludomusical experiences are found in the world of *Harry Potter* through various technological gaming advances: namely the Microsoft Kinect for Xbox One and the PlayStation 3 Wonderbook. *Harry Potter for Kinect* (2012), *Wonderbook: Book of Spells* (2012) and *Wonderbook: Book of Potions* (2013) all require a greater level of physical, embodied interaction from the player through the use of motion capture technology.\(^{44}\) One particular example is found in year two of *HP for Kinect*, in an activity in Herbology class that has the player and their classmates re-potting mandrakes – magical plants with root systems in the shape of ugly babies whose screams can knock a person out for several hours. During this minigame, although the player must put earmuffs on their avatar through physical hand actions before commencing, the mandrakes’ screams are still heard by the player, and they grow louder when the player has pulled them out of their pots (see Figure 24). The high-pitched wailing sound of the mandrake’s cry is – in reality – extremely annoying, and thus sonic interaction is in play here: the sound produced by the player’s first action of uprooting a mandrake is abrasive enough to convince the player to (literally) move quickly towards another pot, in order to make the sound stop. Not only does player action induce sound; this sound provides a very strong impetus for the player to take a subsequent action. The wizarding world is not always a pleasant-sounding place.\(^{45}\)

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\(^{44}\) Numerous scholars have written on the emerging field of embodied interaction in gaming (Farrow and Iacovides, 2012; Sommerseth, 2007).

\(^{45}\) It is worth pointing out the fact that the home already plays a key role in videogame processes, as the vast majority of gaming takes place within the home (although the significant rise in mobile gaming and portable devices like the Nintendo Switch is shifting the balance – see Emily Crews, 2017). Motion sensing technology (and any game that utilises it) often requires a greater amount of space for gameplay in the home and thus gives games a sense of situatedness through the use of this space. Harnessing the player’s physical movements and adding forms of sonic interaction to this gives the player a greater sense of inhabiting the game-world – that is – of *being there*. The fact that such games are most often played in the home creates a kind of home-within-a-home, amplifying the sense of freedom and empowerment felt through gameplay.
Finally, although all three components of van Elferen’s ALI model can be found to varying degrees in all these games, *The Lord of the Rings Online* (*LOTRO*) provides an excellent example of the three of them working together to create an immersive gaming experience. The game is a MMORPG, and since the release of *Volume I: Shadows of Angmar* in 2007, three further volumes (comprising six expansion packs) have been released, with minor updates released approximately every two months. The game therefore constitutes an expansive and ever-expanding online world in which numerous quests can be completed. Because of the continually developing nature of the game-world there are several composers who have contributed material, working with Chance Thomas’s ‘Tolkien Music Style Guide’ (Aihoshi, 2007). Composers created aurally distinctive sound worlds for different races and locations, each with a range of styles and affects from ambient to intense. For example, Thomas notes of his dwarvish music:

> we know that Dwarves play 3-4 foot viols, clarinets and round-toned flutes. These translate in our world to Cello, Bass and Bb Clarinet, and Bass Flute. We know that Dwarves use a wire-strung harp, rather than the gut-strung pedal harps of a classical orchestra. There is a profound solemnity and melancholy in the Dwarven culture which finds its best resonance in a home key of D minor, with an orchestral grounding in bass trombone and gran casa drums. And so on. (Ithilethiel, 2007).

The affective power of this ‘profoundly solemn and melancholic’ music joins with a gamer’s acquired literacy in the sounds and even tonal keys of each race and region to bring a coherence to the musical world of the game, enabling a player to recognise the world’s areas and characters by sound, and even to travel to certain regions just to hear their music. One player on the LOTRO.com forum states that ‘going back to the Shire and...’
Bree and hearing the music adds a total nostalgia factor’ (Rabbitses, 2014). Using specific ‘home’ keys for distinct places also helps players to experience a sense of return or homecoming when those keys are re-established, though this effect is arguably stronger when coupled with recognisable themes or motifs.  

The interactive elements of music in LOTRO continue further than any other game in these franchises. Not only can a player adjust the levels of music and sound effects, as well as furnishing their in-game virtual homes with music of their choice available from the store, but players can also engage in individual and corporate acts of online music making. Twelve different instruments (including the clarinet, lute, harp, bagpipes and cowbell) are available to purchase (from a Bard for two silver coins) and to learn (being taught by a Minstrel if the instrument requires it), and can then be played using two different systems of note input. These systems allow a player to either pre-programme their compositions and reproduce them on demand (the ‘ABC’ system), or to perform them live by assigning the keys of their keyboard to certain notes (known as ‘freestyling’ – see Cheng, 2012: 35). Players are thus capable of giving solo performances of their own compositions or covers of popular songs, forming bands of dwarves, elves or hobbits and holding concerts, battles-of-the-bands, and even, in one example identified by William Cheng, memorials for real-life cancer victims (33). The culmination of all this music making is ‘Weatherstock’, an annual ‘Woodstock’-style music festival that takes place at Weathertop (a hill between Bree and Rivendell), which features performances by some of LOTRO’s most celebrated bands, and where (virtual) dancing and drinking last well into the night (see Figure 25). Now in its ninth year, Weatherstock sits at the extremity of van Elferen’s ‘interactive’ component for game immersion: a place where music is no longer altered or induced but created by the player. Within the bounds of cyber-social convention (players can still choose to mute those whose music proves a nuisance), anything goes.

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46 Further evidence of an acquired literacy regarding Chance Thomas’s LOTRO music is found in the division of fan reactions towards Thomas’s score for the Riders of Rohan (RoR) (2012) expansion pack, and Stephen DiGregorio’s music for the Helm’s Deep (HD) addition (2013). The announcement that Thomas would be returning to score RoR was met with much jubilation from fans, and indeed this soundtrack was very well received (Olivetti, 2012). However, several threads on the LOTRO.com fora feature fans complaining about the Helm’s Deep soundtrack, with some typical comments being ‘I feel very let-down by this HD soundtrack’, ‘it’s very poorly produced’ and ‘I cannot believe music in this state is being released for a Middle-earth IP!’ (Frieja, 2013).
The Lord of the Rings Online not only represents a truly immersive form of interactive game music, but also houses several expressions of fandom including festivals like Weatherstock, Shirefest and Hobnanigans. Role-playing (RP) is popular among many LOTRO users, and lotro-wiki.com lists over 100 active guilds or ‘kinships’ on the dedicated English-language RP server ‘Laurelin’, many of which include between ten and 150 members (‘Social: Kinships of Laurelin’, n.d.). Role-playing is taken very seriously, and role-players are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the ‘Complete Guide to Role Play, Immersion and the Lore’, published on the LOTRO forum by a member known as ‘Erennor’. This includes guidelines concerning music in RP, which encourages role-players only to play traditional, folk or classical music rather than recognisable modern tunes that would cause players to ‘[break] away from the immersion; for this type of music will quickly take our thought to famous singers of our world’ (Erennor, 2015). Thus, strict role-players within the LOTRO universe choose to limit themselves and the music they make in accordance with established Tolkien-derived lore, in the hopes of building a more immersive and authentic world, distinct from our own.

Roleplay is particularly popular within the worlds of Harry Potter and LOTR, and as a highly specialised fan practice it has expanded into other online games where players have built their own manifestations of these two worlds. Second Life is an online virtual world with over a million regular users (or ‘residents’) who create avatars and live out life-like scenarios and interactions with other residents, travelling the ‘world’ and developing friendships and even ‘intimate’ relationships. What is most notable here is that a vast
amount of *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* roleplay takes place on *Second Life*, which even has specific regions dedicated to themed RP, such as ‘Mischief Managed’, which features a painstakingly recreated Hogwarts Castle as the locus for *Harry Potter* roleplay.

*Civilization IV* is a turn-based strategy game in which a player aims to build a civilisation from limited resources. As mentioned above, several mods (modifications) exist that digitally alter gameplay and transport it to Middle-earth, allowing players to build the Kingdom of Gondor and fight off the orcs of Mordor. Remarkably, these mods import *LOTR* music to the game, doing away with the pre-existing *Civilization* music in favour of that borrowed from *Battle for Middle-earth*, echoing the practice identified in Chapter Five of fans muting game music and replacing it with the more ‘epic’ *LOTR* film music.

Most notable here, though, is the fact that these worlds and mods are *created by fans*. Although studio-released games do their best to provide stimulating and immersive experiences of fantasy worlds (and *LOTRO* went further than any other in enabling interaction between users) fans have continued to create their own online spaces, taking the workload upon themselves to build homes which can be shared with others. Thus, home can also be understood as a product of fan labour, created collaboratively and even democratically, and shared by all, rather than exclusively as built by the producer and inhabited by the consumer. A good example of this model of prosumption is the music making that occurs on *LOTRO* where everyone is free to participate and collaborate, to produce and consume, as typified by the Weatherstock festival. Further examples of fan labour include YouTuber ‘Hatsy’ who builds fantasy homes such as Hogwarts Castle or the Burrow in *The Sims 4* and posts popular tutorial videos of how to build them on YouTube. Here Hatsy builds the dream homes of many fans, but also shows them that with the Sims 4 and a few dozen hours of (virtual) work they could build them for themselves. Garry Crawford (2012: 120) recognises these forms of gamer activity as examples of John Fiske’s ‘textual productivity’, the third element of his tripartite model of fan production (see Fiske, 1992). To return to Tolkien’s goal for his created world; that ‘the cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama,’ today’s fans wield computer keyboards, videocameras and maybe even Microsoft Paint as they engage in creative acts of fandom and textual production. The following sections look more closely at these products of fan labour and the role that music plays within them.
Specialised Fan Practices: Fan Films

Fan films are an important form of fan labour that Henry Jenkins identifies as being able to exist in the space between the purely commercial and the purely alternative extremes of film ‘as part of a grassroots dialogue with mass culture’ (2003: 309). Several fan films have been created in both *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* worlds, of varying lengths and with varying budgets. As Miguel Pérez-Gómez (2015) notes, *LOTR* fan films draw on a double canon of Tolkien’s literature and Jackson’s films to create a tertiary canon or ‘fanon’, and *Harry Potter* fan films can be seen to be relating to the transmedial franchise in a similar way – that is, drawing on the books, the films, or indeed both texts and others. If we are to understand fan films as fan-made texts and part of a fan’s textual productivity (see also Hills, 2013) then we must also be aware of how these texts interact with canonic texts or act paratextually – that is, how they condition a consumer’s entry to or reading of other texts. Put plainly, the franchise films will heavily influence what is expected from a fan film. The majority of these fan films mimic the aesthetic style of the franchise films in colouring, costume, production and setting, and their musical scores are no exception.

The composition of music for fan films can be seen as another specialised expression of fandom. *Mischief Managed* (Shepherd, 2017) is a fan film created by students at Oxford University and features a score by Harry Brokensha. In his words, the whimsical sound and orchestration of my score basically fed from John Williams’ neo-romantic take on the *Harry Potter* sound world. That meant using lots of lush string textures, sweeping themes and horn and woodwind writing. I also couldn’t resist using the iconic celeste which is now so reminiscent of the franchise! (2017).

It is notable that Brokensha’s take on the ‘*Harry Potter* sound’ is entirely Williams-centric, yet it is fitting that the film should mimic the earlier films’ scores because *Mischief Managed* is a prequel, featuring Harry’s parents in their school days and thus taking place temporally before the main films. Other fan films including *The Greater Good* (Zagri, 2013), *Severus Snape and the Marauders* (Zagri, 2016) and the trailer for *Voldemort: Origins of the Heir* (Rossi, forthcoming) also feature the celeste, rhythmic string ostinati, chromaticism, female choir and heavy bass drums, all of which may be linked to the existing musical world of *Harry Potter*. Narratively these prequels, midquels and paraquels draw on the primary canon of existing literature (including the novels and Rowling’s official online outlet *Pottermore*), but musically they relate themselves entirely to the secondary canon – the existing films. Although licensing rights prohibit composers from directly quoting canonic material, the similarities in musical style and tone help the fan
films to inherit a sense of authenticity (in a similar way to Fantastic Beasts’ musical relation to the original series), making them more popular among other fans as more legitimised filmic routes into the fantasy world. These similarities make the films into extensions of the home that the canonic films have become, using music as an aural link to pour homeliness and familiarity into the fan products, and it is particularly notable that these links exist without borrowing themes and motifs.

Even stronger similarities can be found between the music of LOTR fan films and Howard Shore’s compositional style, perhaps due to the increased unity of this musical world in comparison to the evolving nature of the Harry Potter scores. Born of Hope (Madison, 2009) is a prequel that focuses on Aragorn’s parentage, and the score (put together by five composers and five ‘additional composers’) features a full (synthesised) orchestra with heavy use of strings and horns in the vein of Shore’s orchestrations, as well as choral singing in Elvish. Thoughtful clarinet/flute solos, chromatic mediant progressions and even a folk-style song over the end credits all mimic specific moments in Shore’s soundtracks, and the choral progression hummed over Frodo and Sam’s rescue by the eagles at the end of ROTK (chords vi – IV – I – V) features prominently in Born of Hope at a moment of divine (Elvish) intervention (04:55). The Hunt for Gollum (Bouchard, 2009) goes even further by directly quoting Shore’s motifs, opening with a rendition of the ‘Seduction of the Ring’ theme. It continues with music related to Gollum’s chord progressions, predominantly the ‘m4m’ TTPC (Cm to Em); a chromatic mediant that was shown in Chapter Two to be highly evocative of Gollum’s ambivalent corner of Shore’s musical world. Similarly, the film’s end credits quote passages of ‘Gollum’s Song’ and adopt several of its unusual harmonies. This adoption of Shore’s harmonic and melodic language is extremely conscientious, showing a high degree of consideration in applying themes and motifs only where their ‘signifieds’ (to use Saussurian terminology) appear, drawing both on the music’s affective nature and the literacy of the listener, and indeed further exemplifying the prominence and representative power of the motif. This shows an amount of care and respect for the secondary canonic material, and also a desired alignment with it: the desire to be seen (and heard) as an extension of an existing world.

Fans have taken their love and respect for Howard Shore’s musical world even further still, to a point that blurs the line between Fiske’s (1992) ‘textual’ and ‘enunciative’ forms of fan productivity, the latter of which describes expressions of fandom through speech or appearance. Some fans are of the opinion that Peter Jackson misapplied Shore’s music throughout The Hobbit films, and have taken it upon themselves to create fan-edits
of these films, ‘re-aligning’ the visuals with the music from the deluxe edition soundtracks, much of which is unused in the film releases. Forum member ‘BloodBoal’ has created alternative film segments for every cue on all three Hobbit soundtracks; such is his belief that Jackson got it wrong (BloodBoal, 2013). Doug Adams has spoken out against fan’s allegations of foulplay in defence of the filmmakers several times, and he detailed his thoughts on the situation in an interview:

the nature of collaboration means at the end of the day someone gets their way here and someone else gets their way over here. The Hobbit was interesting because everyone […] came to it with different ears. Which was fascinating to me and scary at the same time, that they wanted it to do certain things because of this new understanding they had of what the music did in the first one […] but it’s nice to see people listening more carefully, that’s a positive (Adams, 2017).

A fan’s relationship with and knowledge of a musical world, as detailed in Chapter Five, can lead them not only to contribute to or explore new areas, but also to take matters into their own hands and reject certain contributions, even from the canonic authors themselves. The concept of ‘different ears’ that Adams mentions alludes to an acquired literacy whose depth and detail poses a problem for a fan who expects one thing and perceives another, unable to accept the evolution of a world he expected to remain uniform. The following section analyses further manifestations of fan labour in musical form.

Specialised Fan Practices: Fan Music

Fan-created music takes several guises, but in these two franchises fan contributions to the world of Middle-earth generally take the form of ‘filk’, and those to the world of Harry Potter are generally referred to as ‘wizard rock’ or ‘wrock’. Wrocklopedia.com lists almost 800 active wrock bands around the world, all writing, recording or performing music inspired by the wizarding world in some way (‘Band Listings’, n.d.). Wizard rock festivals such as ‘Wrockstock’ bring wrock bands together, and some of the most prominent wrock bands are regularly invited to perform at other conventions such as PotterCon and LeakyCon. The genre’s emergence is largely attributed to the Massachusetts-based band ‘Harry and the Potters’, and a strong emphasis is placed on participation and creativity rather than on musical excellence. As Matt from ‘The Whomping Willows’ states, the beauty of Wizard Rock is that for many of the bands, it’s nothing more than a learning experience. We, as the elder statespeople of Wizard Rock, should not be encouraging young people to worry about categorization and public image. We should be encouraging them to have fun (Matt, n.d. original emphasis, as quoted in Tatum, 2009.)
Often accompanied by elements of cosplay and roleplay and in any musical style, wizard rock represents an active and interactive form of fan-based worldbuilding. Participants build the world of wrock and thus the narratives and traditions of the wizarding world into their lives by engaging in songwriting and performance. These songs vary from humorous parodies to more serious compositions dealing with death and loss. Indeed, wrock represents not only a way of dealing with and expressing these emotions but also another example of Rick Altman’s constellated communities; groups of like-minded fans who ‘cohere through repeated acts of imagination’ (Altman, 1999: 161). Here, home is found more in the community of filkers or wrockers than in the music itself, comforting though the music may be to consume.47

Fan musics also vary in their degree of relation to existing music from the franchise. Starkid Productions’ ‘A Very Potter Musical’ parodies the life and adventures of Harry Potter in a theatrical production (viewable on YouTube), and although these songs are only lyrically related, the opening features an electric guitar riffing the first seven notes of Hedwig’s Theme. Filk songs relating to either LOTR or Harry Potter tend to be mainly contrafacta: covers or parodies of existing songs with new lyrics written by the filker, some good examples of filk songs being ‘Frodo Stardust’, ‘Eye of the Dark Lord’, and ‘Sweet Home Minas Tirith.’ Although much of the world’s filk can be found online, filking events are often held in people’s homes, such events being referred to as ‘housefilk’ (see Errol, 2010). Again, filking practices such as the ‘filk circle’ focus more on participation than on the musical product, creating communities of filkers united by their shared admiration of one (or many) fantasy world(s) that they choose to inhabit together. Whether closely or only tangentially related to the existing musical worlds, these musics represent fan products that are consumed by other fans as part of a larger network of fan prosumption.

Lastly, YouTube plays host to countless other musical expressions of fantasy fandom. The six credit songs from LOTR and TH lend themselves well to fan covers and arrangements, as do John Williams’ ‘Double Trouble’ and Nicholas Hooper’s ‘In Noctem’, both of which are firm favourites with high school choirs. Fans of both LOTR and the ocarina can celebrate their fandom by watching STL Ocarina’s videos, featuring attractive women in the woods or by lakes dressed as elves, complete with pointy ears, playing everyone’s favourite LOTR tunes – on the ocarina (see Figure 26). Harp fans will prefer

47 Further sub-communities exist, such as the feminist movement ‘Yes All Witches’ which arose from the world of wizard rock, and which provides small monetary grants to support female wrockers with the help of the Harry Potter Alliance (‘Yes All Witches’, n.d.).
Camille and Kennerly Kitt, the ‘Harp Twins’ who create similar cosplay-style music videos with their harps, and singer Peter Hollens multitracks himself singing the _LOTR_ songs in an a cappella style, again dressed in Gondorian garb. Whatever your favourite instrument, the chances are you can find someone playing your favourite movie themes on it dressed as a wizard/hobbit/droid.

The prominence of cosplay within these products of fan labour alludes to a deeper desire to imaginatively inhabit these fantasy worlds in as many ways as possible. It is unlikely that an elf would ever play the ocarina (although they are depicted playing flutes, lutes and harps in _AUJ_). It is also unlikely that an elf would have heard any of Howard Shore’s music, strictly speaking. This does not stop many listeners responding in roleplay character, such as Koby Skulblaka who took on the persona of a dwarf to comment on the STL Ocarina video ‘ne'er before have me kin be so blessed as to hearken to such a fair Elf maiden play our tale-strung tune. Many thanks to ye', lass, for me and all me kin’ (Skulblaka, 2016). Even YouTube can be a home to role-players and those who wish to inhabit fantasy worlds.
One final example of YouTube being used to facilitate the aural inhabitation of fantasy spaces can be found on the channel ‘ASMR Rooms’. This channel stands at the periphery of a popular phenomenon of videos designed for the enjoyment of those who experience Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR). While this phenomenon is fascinating and remains the subject of limited scientific research to date, the ‘ASMR Rooms’ videos create something quite different to the more stereotypical ASMR videos. Featuring an illustrated tableau of a room or space, often from a popular fantasy franchise, lightly animated (akin to a cinemagraph) and accompanied by a soundscape of noises one would expect to hear, these videos enable the viewer to audiovisually (and imaginatively) inhabit the depicted space. For example, the video ‘Three Broomsticks Inn – Hogsmeade Ambience’ (see Figure 27) features the continual sound of a crackling fire, the clinking of glasses, the rustling of papers, the soft murmur of distant talking and laughing, and the occasional cat meowing and scurrying across the floor (binaurally from left to right).

ASMR is a pleasant tingling sensation in the head, spine and shoulders, said to be triggered by specific aural and visual stimuli and often accompanied by positive emotions and deep relaxation (Andersen, 2014; Barratt and Davis, 2015; Smith, Fredborg and Kornelsen, 2017). Videos specifically created to induce this sound often feature whispering voices and gentle tapping or scraping sounds (recorded binaurally), and sometimes take the form of roleplays with the ‘ASMRtist’ acting as a hairdresser, a masseuse or even a general practitioner or physician.
Videos are accompanied by descriptions that also encourage the imaginative inhabitation of the fantasy spaces, such as that for the Three Broomsticks:

The pub is a little empty at the moment, but a big wave of people will come soon from Hogwarts...Can you hear the cooks preparing dinner, or Madam Rosmerta's hearty laughs? And who is sneaking around with a travelling hood over their head? ...Maybe we should just sit tight with a nice glass of butterbeer and open a book, delicious dinner will be ready soon! (ASMR Rooms, 2016).

All the videos on the channel last an hour and can easily be set to loop, allowing the user to enjoy the ambience while working, reading or even sleeping. The use of these videos aligns with an increasing trend in the use of noise-masking sounds and devices, which have been seen to enhance concentration and cognitive function (see Loewen and Suedfeld, 1992; Hongisto, 2008). It is not surprising, then, that the most popular video on the ASMR Rooms channel with nearly a million views at the time of writing is set in Hogwarts library – an ideal, magical place to get some work done.

Of the 54 videos on the ASMR Rooms channel, 37 of them depict *Harry Potter* settings, with only four related to *LOTR* (those being the Green Dragon Inn, Rivendell, Bag End and Erebor). Among the most popular of these videos are the Common Rooms of all four Hogwarts houses, allowing fans to feel more at home in the house of their choosing (or indeed the house they have been officially ‘sorted’ into on *Pottermore*). Other popular videos with over 200,000 views depict the Burrow, Diagon Alley and Hagrid’s Hut, each of which represents a secondary homespace within the narrative and thus a more desirable space for fans to imaginatively inhabit. Lastly, the comments sections of these videos abound with fans’ gratitude to their creator, as well as remarks on how they intend to use them – one typical example being ‘I'm actually excited to go to work in my dull cubicle so I can listen to these in the background and imagine I'm working somewhere mystical’. These findings pair with those from Chapter Five, wherein motivations for *LOTR* soundtrack consumption were found to be increased productivity or the ability to focus while working, simultaneously making tedious work feel more ‘epic’ and thus leading to a dual inhabitation of the real world and the fantasy world. The same dual inhabitation is found here, not through the use of music but through descriptive soundscapes, which pair with minimally moving visuals and allow a user to complete their homework in the Hogwarts library, read a book in Dumbledore’s office or even fall asleep in a Gryffindor dormitory.

On the consumption of natural soundscapes through the *Ambience* app, Thomas Brett writes that soundscapes are kinds of virtualities that realistically reproduce the sonic patterns of physical worlds, audibly similar enough to them that they create for the listener the sensation
of being physically present in them. It is ultimately through this power of virtuality as simulation that recordings of nature soundscapes can have therapeutic effects on listeners (Brett, 2016: 469).

The ASMR Rooms soundscapes work in a similar fashion, though rather than recording or recreating soundscapes of nature, they engage in a more imaginative creation of fantasy spaces, using recognisable sounds and drawing on information from the films and indeed books (for example, the Ravenclaw common room is in a tower and thus its video features wind sounds). Moreover, the binaural nature of the fantasy soundscapes adds a further spatial dimension to their immersivity: when consumed through headphones, ‘moving’ sounds such as footsteps or birdsong can be heard to move from one ear to the other. Scholars such as Gilkey and Anderson (2014) have written on the immersive capabilities and spatial orientation of binaural sound, and although the recording technology used here is fairly basic the resulting sense of 3D sonic space is the same, thus making the soundscapes even more effective as a means of aural masking or of sonically inhabiting an imagined fantasy space. Lastly, these virtual rooms are another example of the prosumption cycle within the textual productivity of fans, with fans engaging with the creator of the videos, making requests or indeed creating their own rooms on their own channels (many of which also offer a variety of LOTR- or Potter-themed rooms).

Conclusion

The above investigations into the intersections of music and specialised fan practices or products are linked not only by ideas of immersivity and interactivity, but also by the ways in which music enables the inhabitation of fantasy worlds. Music in videogames helps to build a world that suits a more extended and immersive form of inhabitation, particularly when games might be played for hours on end. Sonic interaction also works as just one of many forms of interaction in gaming. Tony Manninen (2003) lists ‘non-verbal audio’ as one of twelve categories of interaction in multiplayer games, within which he gives examples of music, sound effects, silence and ‘paralanguage’. Importantly, though, Manninen concludes that it is a combination of these forms of communication that is most effective, just as van Elferen argued that games can be most immersive through a combination of affect, literacy and interactivity. Fan films draw on the established musical literacy of their viewers by imitating the music of the franchises in order to extend or appropriate existing musical worlds, borrowing musical or sonic devices from the canonic films to enable a smoother and quicker transition into their own. Fan musics extend and
adapt the worlds in different ways, and either draw on existing musics in order to affiliate themselves with the canon, or break away from them in order to build a separate yet related world in a shared fantasy universe.

These case studies have demonstrated the various ways in which fans creatively and musically engage with a fantasy world that has a pre-existing musical identity. Gaming is a fan practice in which gamers apply their knowledge of fantasy worlds and their accompanying musical worlds to new experiences in order to navigate ludic narratives. The composition of fan film scores is a practice that requires an understanding or literacy of established musical devices – motivic or otherwise – in order to create new spatiotemporalities within existing musical worlds. Filking is a practice in which fans produce their own music, either by writing original songs or by lyrically adapting songs to bring them into their desired fantasy world, building bridges between two worlds that no-one else may have thought to build. Imagining that one is completing one’s homework in the Hufflepuff Common Room – by surrounding oneself with the sounds of tweeting birds, roaring fires and a nearby kitchen – is a highly specialised fan practice that demonstrates the lengths that fans are willing to go to in the imaginative inhabitation of their favourite fantasy spaces. All of these are examples of fan labour, or of the consumer becoming the producer, and in this move towards prosumption we can also see the democratisation of worldbuilding; that is, the opening up of worldbuilding practices to everyone. To be clear, worldbuilding has always been a somewhat democratic practice, but the Internet has stimulated and facilitated increased acts of worldbuilding by connecting fan communities and, on the most basic level, connecting producers with consumers. We can all be hobbits/elves/wizards/witches (delete as appropriate) now.

The above fan practices are examples not only of worldbuilding, but of homebuilding. The various created worlds and spaces identified above, be they game worlds, film scores, songs or YouTube videos, are all designed to be inhabited by those who consume them: to house an experience; to comfort as well as to entertain; to provide solace and escape as well as recreation and delight; to create a space for wonder to occur. I argued above that homes only become homes through acts of inhabitation, and the many expressions of fandom here demonstrate the different methods of inhabiting the two worlds of LOTR and Harry Potter, the different routes by which they can be accessed and the different ways in which they become homes for their visitors. Notably, in contrast to the tourist experiences investigated in Chapter Four which are all of limited duration, there are no limits to the amount of time a person can spend consuming these resources (besides the
physical need for breaks). Indeed, the continued or repeated consumption of games, fan films and musics will arguably make these worlds more familiar, and if a home is a dwelling place then the longer one can dwell in it and interact with it, the more accustomed to it one might become and thus the more homely it may be.
Conclusion

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

The journey of discovery and the returning home are features of our emotional engagement with life, and whether we long for the open road, or are content to remain at home, says much about how we perceive ourselves and where we find comfort.

The work undertaken for this thesis has been an exploration in and of itself – an exploration of the ways in which film viewers and franchise fans explore the worlds created for them, and in turn make them into homes by inhabiting them. These homes, though vast and varied, are temporary. The films only last two to three hours (the LOTR Extended Editions up to four). Tourist experiences only last a day, or a few days at most. Soundtracks can only be listened to for so long, game worlds must be paused and departed if only to meet biological needs for food and sleep, and even the most diehard of fans has to go to work, go shopping or engage with the primary world on some level at some point. That being said, these homes, though transient and impermanent, are anything but redundant. As T.S. Eliot writes, at the end of our explorations we arrive where we started and ‘know the place for the first time’. When we return from our adventures, we see the world – our own world – with new eyes, and hear it with new ears. Mark Wolf identifies this effect, stating that ‘[t]he act of world-building, with the myriad decisions, intricacies, and complexities it can involve, not only leads to a greater appreciation of well-built worlds, but perhaps also to greater contemplation of the Primary World itself’ (Wolf, 2012: 283).

Fantasy worlds help us to contemplate our own lives and surroundings. They provide an arena in which we can play out our social and political anxieties, and even spaces in which we can make friends and form communities. They stimulate our senses, focus our minds and make us more productive. They provide us with consolation, facilitate our escape, and offer us ‘recovery’ – that is, seeing things anew as Wolf argues above, or as Tolkien writes; ‘seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them’ (2014: 67). They bring healing, emotional catharsis, nostalgia, relaxation, entertainment, education, comfort,
joy and hope. However, these worlds can only have these effects when we move into them; when we inhabit them and make them into *homes*, thereby allowing them to influence us.

On the inhabitation of film worlds, the bifurcation proposed by Daniel Yacavone of ‘world-in’ and ‘world-of’ the films leads us to an important conclusion. As Yacavone points out, ‘a film’s fictional-represented reality, or *world-in*, is logically and ontologically autonomous and ideational yet still schematic, heavily real-world dependent, and in itself aesthetically incomplete’ (2014: 38-39). In the truest sense the world-in the films remains inaccessible and uninhabitable through the fact that it is, in essence, fictional – it no longer exists, or indeed it never truly existed; a mere product of sets, props, actors, Foley, soundtracks and CGI. Thus, fans must settle for inhabiting the *world-of* the films, rather than being able to fully inhabit the filmic world-in, as a character does. Considering the range of experiences investigated in Part Two of the thesis, some of them get as close as possible to replicating the fictional and constructed reality of the world(s)-in the films, whereas others are content to keep a distance, focussing on building their own areas of the more accessible ‘world-of’. For example, the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios in Orlando mimics and recreates locations within the films, utilising film music in order to create as authentic an experience as possible of being in Hogwarts, Diagon Alley or Hogsmeade. In contrast, the *Cursed Child* play creates an entirely different musical world altogether, which helps to differentiate the worlds-in the films and the play, resulting in an experience which has little to do with the film canon, but exists (if distantly) within the same franchise world. The few similarities identified within sound and music between the films and the play show a small overlap in their musical worlds, and thus in the worlds-*of* each production.

Videogames and fan-made films also look to mimic, recreate or extend the world-in the films and to provide ways for fans to inhabit this world more immersively – but again fans must settle for a related world; an imitation, existing within the peripheral world-of. The high level of interaction made possible by videogames brings the player closer to a sense of autonomy within the depicted world, and those games that employ existing film music arguably create an experience that is closer to the films’ world-in. Somewhat paradoxically, the Warner Bros Studio Tour goes some way to show fans that the world-in the films does not exist, or exists only as artifice, and yet the use of film music enchants the experience by drawing on memory and evoking nostalgic impulses to create a sense of wonder, a wonder not only at the created world but also at the world’s creation. The studio tour is arguably the closest a fan can get to physically existing within the world-in the
films, being able to stand in Dumbledore’s office or ride a broomstick, and similarly, the rides and flight simulations of the Wizarding World in Orlando go furthest in enabling a fan’s imaginative inhabitation of the world; that is, the inhabitation through double consciousness and the ironic imagination. Both make the greatest use of Harry Potter film music, drawing on the widest range of cues and employing them in specific and considered settings and locations. If music can be argued as bridging the divide between the world-in and world-of the films, it follows that the more intelligent or informed use of music enables fans to get as close as possible to entering the world-in, or at least makes the window through which it is viewed as transparent as possible.

The constructed worlds of the two franchises within this thesis influence their inhabitants in numerous ways, but one of the clearest, deepest and most profound ways is through music. Correspondingly, music is one of the most effective ways in which a fan can inhabit these worlds, and thus music plays similar roles in most (if not all) transmedial entry points to these worlds – in every window through which the world is perceived. Chapter Two explored the ways in which musical worlds (or the musics of these worlds) are built, and how music acts as suture to draw us into these worlds during a film’s opening sequences while simultaneously stitching the world together around us. Music was also identified to be acting as desuture, preparing an audience to leave a film-world (or indeed the ‘world-in’ the film) through its own foregrounding and the establishment of musical tropes. Lastly, the state of continual oscillation between musical suture and desuture was established by analysing narrative breathing points within the films, and it was argued that musical foregrounding (paired with other filmic tropes such as aerial photography and very long shots) was able to reorganise a viewer’s cognitive registers and enable moments of disengagement and relaxation, structuring a film in ways akin to a chapter break. More than simply acting paratextually, suture and desuture showed music working immersively with varying levels of cognition.

Chapter Three demonstrated the ways that music is able to articulate and encapsulate or represent the various homespaces within each of the film worlds. The prominence and importance of melodic themes was further highlighted by identifying Howard Shore’s ‘Shire’ themes as representative of the primary homespace of LOTR, and by following the themes as they represent the central impulse of home and accompany the hobbits, even to the slopes of Mount Doom. The audible sound of home was tracked in Harry Potter through the iterations of Hedwig’s Theme that most often accompanied Hogwarts Castle, and also through the evolution of the representation of the wizarding community as an
imagined homeland, from John Williams’ playful chromaticism to Alexandre Desplat’s strict diatonicism. Music also served to imbue the franchises’ secondary homespaces (such as Rivendell or the Burrow) with a sense of homeliness and was shown to effectively articulate the benevolence, malevolence or ambivalence of these settings both diegetically and non-diegetically.

Chapter Four followed music into four distinct experiences related to the *Harry Potter* franchise: a concert screening of a film with live orchestra, a West End play, a studio tour of the film sets and a theme park area. The film-concert gave the music a greater prominence in a hybridised experience that offered both enchantment and inhabitation, with numerous attendees dressed in robes and cheering for their favourite characters. The *Cursed Child* play is notable in its creation of a seemingly unrelated musical world, though it can also be heard as an extension or continuation of Alexandre Desplat’s language for the film-world through the melodic use of the female voice. The designers of both the studio tour and the theme park attractions adopted and made widespread use of the eight existing film soundtracks in order to give the experiences a sense of authenticity and coherence as extensions of an existing film world, providing deeper levels of inhabitation for fans and using music to create fantastic experiences, as mentioned above. In all these experiences, music provides and facilitates a guest’s route into the imaginary inhabitation of the world of *Harry Potter*, by adding to an experience’s absorptive or immersive nature, and by encouraging the guest’s passive or active engagement.

Chapter Five looked at the ways in which film music furnishes our everyday lives by focusing on the consumption of the *LOTR* soundtracks by fans and non-fans alike, and the investigation highlighted trends in the activities we choose to accompany with specific film scores and our reasons for doing so. Questionnaire responses showed a high emotional value for Howard Shore’s scores, but also showed that for many fans Middle-earth may sound different to the films, displaying the individualised nature of listening tendencies and preferences. Music was shown to enable the dual inhabitation of the real and fantasy worlds through soundtrack consumption. Motivations for soundtrack listening included increased productivity and a highly sought-after sense of the ‘epic’, and responses exemplified the very real consolation, comfort and healing found in specific cues by many respondents, to whom the soundtracks mean a great deal personally and even spiritually. The chapter also identified highly specialised fan practices and modes of listening, such as
the replacement of existing game music with LOTR soundtracks, as well as the existence of fan communities devoted to specific iterations of LOTR music, Shore-derived or otherwise.

As a continuation of this investigation Chapter Six further surveyed many of these fan communities to analyse the ways that music enables the cultural inhabitation of fantasy worlds through more specialised fan practices, looking at music in videogames, fan films, fan musics and other products of fan labour facilitated by the Internet. Videogames were seen to provide more interactive experiences of fantasy worlds, and either adopt and adapt the existing musical worlds directly, or relate to them indirectly through timbral, harmonic or aesthetic relationships and commonalities. Musical expressions of fandom demonstrate a more direct engagement with and ownership of the musical worlds of the franchises, as fans contribute their own sounds of the fantasy world that may or may not be related to the existing canonic soundtracks. These contributions may come from fan film scores or franchise-inspired bands and musics of any genre, and in many cases create sub-cultures and specific fandoms around these musics and musical practices. In these examples music restated its ability to create immersive and interactive experiences of fantasy worlds, but was also revealed as a powerful tool for fans to build their own contributions to the worlds, and to find and build their own homes and share them with others.

Notions of worldbuilding and inhabitation have drawn much of this thesis together as the two main functions of musical suture both within and without film, but arguably the most important concept running throughout the thesis is that of home. The five analytical chapters consecutively investigate the ways in which homes are built, found, explored, inhabited and expanded, though many of these of course cross over into other chapters. In Chapter Two we discovered how film-worlds are cinematically built and how we are brought into them, effectively making them our home for a film’s duration. Chapter Three went on to discuss how we find these worlds to be homely, and how music reinforces the hospitality and warmth we find in the film’s various homespaces, using Hamid Naficy’s trifurcation of house, home and homeland. Chapter Four then explored further iterations of these musical homes elsewhere in the franchise, travelling to tour sites around the world and tracking the ways music enables interaction with these homes. The extra-filmic inhabitation of these musical homes was introduced and explored in Chapter Five, which gave voice to the individual and unique ways that fans and listeners call Middle-earth home, and Chapter Six continued this investigation by looking at ways these homes are expanded, exported and adapted into game worlds, as well as the ways a sense of home can be found in fandom communities surrounding specific musical genres and expressions (see
This all points, as I stated in Chapter Five, to a more accurate replacement of the term ‘worldbuilding’ with *homebuilding* to describe the activities of composers, sound designers, gamers and soundtrack consumers alike, as it is the inhabitation of these worlds that makes them into homes.

The transmedial expansion of these homes is showing no signs of stopping, and additional windows into these two fantasy worlds continue to appear. In April 2018 Warner Bros released a role-playing videogame created by game studio Jam City called *Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery*. The game is designed for Android and iOS mobile devices, and allows the player to create and customise their own character before embarking on their journey as a first-year student at Hogwarts. Most notably, and perhaps predictably, the game’s music pastiches existing cues from the films, and in most cases the harmony and instrumentation are maintained while the melody is changed slightly. The most prominent music in the game is a looped imitation of the John Williams cue ‘Harry’s Wondrous World’, which retains the mediant harmony but alters the melody in several ways (see Example 32).

**Example 32 – Comparison of ‘Harry’s Wondrous World’ with music from *A Hogwarts Mystery***

It is notable here that the cue Jam City chose to mimic in their game is the same cue that was pastiched by composer James Hannigan in Example 29 above; that the cue was written by John Williams, the creator of the musical world of *Harry Potter*; and indeed that it has been named the ‘Friendship’ theme by Jamie Lynn Webster (2009: 234, 371) and others. Although the melody has been slightly altered the cue retains its connotations of the love and friendship experienced by Harry and his friends at Hogwarts, and brings these connotations to the informed gameplayer.

Further media developments are also in the pipeline for both franchises. In late 2017 Amazon acquired the rights to turn *The Lord of the Rings* into a multi-season
television series with the potential for further spin-offs (Sweney, 2017). Around the same time, Niantic Labs (the creators of popular app-based game Pokémon Go) announced their next game to be *Harry Potter: Wizards Unite*, in which the ‘augmented reality’ format will allow players to travel their own neighbourhoods, learning spells and defeating beasts – as the press release claims, ‘with *Harry Potter: Wizards Unite*, players that have been dreaming of becoming real life Wizards will finally get the chance to experience J.K. Rowling’s Wizarding World’ (Hanke, 2017). These two franchise extensions will likely model themselves in some way on the existing styles and aesthetics of their respective film series, and it will be interesting to hear how the musical accompaniments for these new media relate to the existing musical worlds explored here.

The popularity of the fantasy genre within film, television, literature and videogame does not look to be waning; if anything, fantasy texts are gaining popularity, and as the *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* universes continue to expand, so to do those of *Jurassic Park, Star Wars, Game of Thrones, Grey’s Anatomy, The Sims, Fallout, 50 Shades of Grey* and so on. It is more important than ever that we understand why people are turning to fantasy and what their motivations are, how fantasy texts are providing surrogate homes for people in an age of cultural homelessness, and what kind of consolation people are finding in these virtual worlds. Within this thesis I have thoroughly investigated music’s roles within and without film, and offered important findings on soundtrack consumption and expressions of fandom. I have also proffered adjustments in the ways we understand worldbuilding and transmedial franchising, both of which are processes under significant global expansion and engagement. The social and political mood of the first decades of the 21st century paved the way for fantasy texts offering escape, recovery, consolation, healing, and most of all an antidote to cultural homelessness in an age of uncertainty. If people are finding home within these franchises they are more than likely moving into other worlds and finding home elsewhere, and at a time of continued political and economic instability it is of paramount importance that we investigate these wider sociocultural trends. If the many fantastic worlds to which we have travelled on this journey have become homes, then music is both the cornerstone of these homes and the doorway by which we enter them. Music makes these fantasy homes accessible and portable, enchanting our senses, stimulating our imaginations and facilitating our escape, and yet it always returns us to our own world – not deluded, but delighted by the places it has taken us, with eyes and ears to see and hear it anew.


Filmography

Primary Case Studies


*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002). Dir. Chris Columbus. Warner Bros. UK/USA.


Other Films


*Alice in Wonderland* (2010). Dir. Tim Burton. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.


*Beauty and the Beast* (2017). Dir. Bill Condon. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.

*Big Hero 6* (2014). Dir. Don Hall & Chris Williams. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.


Doctor Strange (2016). Dir. Scott Derrickson. Marvel Studios. USA.
Home Alone (1990). Dir. Chris Columbus. Hughes Entertainment. USA.
Inside Out (2013). Dir. Pete Docter. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.
King Kong (1933). Dir. Merian C. Cooper & Ernest B. Schoedsack. Radio Pictures. USA.
La La Land (2016). Dir. Damien Chazelle. Summit Entertainment. USA.
North by Northwest (1959). Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. MGM. USA.
The Hunger Games (2012). Dir. Gary Ross. Lionsgate Films. USA.
The Jungle Book (2016). Dir. Jon Favreau. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.
Up (2009). Dir. Pete Docter. Walt Disney Pictures. USA.
List of Interviews

The following people were interviewed in the writing of this thesis. Transcripts of the interviews can be found in Appendix B.

Fry, Gareth (2017). Email correspondence on 13/1/17.
Grigg, Nathan (2017). Email correspondence on 20/7/17.
Appendix A – Questionnaire from Chapter Five

Lord Of The Rings Music Questionnaire

Researching music's role in Tolkien's world.
* Required

1. How much of a Lord of the Rings fan would you say you are? *
Select a point on the scale
Extreme fan 1 2 3 4 5 Not at all

2. Give an example of a piece of music that best expresses Middle-earth for you.

3. Have you read the novel? * (The Lord of the Rings)
   • Yes
   • No
   • Partially

4. Have you seen Peter Jackson's LOTR trilogy? * Select the most accurate response:
   • Yes, I've seen all the Extended Editions
   • Yes, I've seen the cinematic releases
   • Yes, but only some of them
   • No

5. If so, how do you feel about them?
I think Jackson's trilogy is:
Fantastic 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Terrible

6. How do you feel about Howard Shore's music for the films? *
   • I love it
   • I like it
   • I like some aspects but dislike others
   • I don't mind it
   • I don't like it
   • I hate it
   • I don't know it

7. Which of the following do you own? * Select all that apply
   • The Fellowship of the Ring soundtrack
   • The Two Towers soundtrack
   • The Return of the King soundtrack
   • The Fellowship of the Ring Complete Recordings
   • The Two Towers Complete Recordings
   • The Return of the King Complete Recordings
   • The Rarities Archive
   • None of the above
8. How often do you listen to any of the LOTR soundtracks? * Include soundtracks to The Hobbit here.
   - Several times a day
   - Daily
   - Several times a week
   - Once a week
   - Every few weeks
   - Once a month
   - A few times a year
   - Never

9. Where and when do you listen to them? Give as much detail as you like.

10. Why do you choose to listen to them? How do they make you feel? Give as much detail as you like

11. How many of the below do you know of? * Tick the most appropriate box for each (Never heard of it - Heard of it - Seen it / heard it once - Seen it / heard it multiple times).
   - The Lord of the Rings Musical (Toronto 2006, West End 2007, World Tour 2015)
   - Symphony No. 1 "The Lord of the Rings" - Johan de Meij (1988)
   - Middle Earth on Rhapsody for Horn and Orchestra - Craig Russell (2003)
   - Any Lord of the Rings "filk"
   - The Lord of the Rings Symphony - Howard Shore (2011)
   - The Lord of the Rings, concept album - Bo Hansson (1970)
   - The Lord of the Rings, animated film - Ralph Bakshi (1978)

12. If you have heard any of the above, how do you feel their music fits/doesn't fit into your idea of Middle-earth?
   Please give detail about these works and any others not mentioned, including how often you listen to them and why.

13. Lastly, a few questions about you. How old are you? *
   - 0-18
   - 19-25
   - 26-40
   - 41-60
   - 61+
   - Prefer not to disclose

14. What gender are you? *
15. What is your nationality? *
16. What is your occupation? This question is optional.

If you don't mind being referenced in a journal article, please leave your name below:
If you would like to be notified about the results of this questionnaire, leave your email address below. You will receive one email only, in May 2016.
Appendix B – Interview Transcripts

This appendix contains transcripts of all interviews undertaken during the course of this thesis either via email or on Skype. The interviews are listed alphabetically.


DW: Before I ask you anything else, what would you say about how Howard Shore goes about building a musical world for the Middle-earth, both in LOTR and in The Hobbit, what is the most prominent thing there for you?

DA: I think the comparison we made most often is, a lot of it was drawn on from operatic traditions, both in terms of the emotional pitch of it all and the structure. Emotionally we always said it was Italian opera and constructionally it’s German opera. So it’s sort of that weird hybrid. Obviously he went into The Hobbit with more of a template but I think working on LOTR a lot of it was just shining light into various corners and building the world as it grew narratively. By the time of ROTK he certainly had most of his material although not all of it, but I think especially in Fellowship he just began in the middle and as he moved around, realised that, you know they didn’t go in with that leitmotivic approach necessarily it just sort of developed as the storytelling developed so it was more of a clarifying device through almost necessity, such a complex story - such a wide-reaching story. To make sense of it all the music had to do certain types of things.

DW: One of the things that comes out listening to the scores is the culture-based nature of the themes etc. It seems to me moving from LOTR into The Hobbit, particularly the leitmotifs and themes that come out of The Hobbit it seems that they are much more themes for specific characters and individuals, more than we’ve had for LOTR - for example Gandalf having his own quite prominent theme in The Hobbit compared to the LOTR scores, Tauriel is another example, Radagast, those kind of individual themes. Why would you say that came about, is there a specific thinking behind that choice?

DA: I think that’s quite right, I think it may have more to do with the storytelling than any sort of grand scheme. LOTR was very much an additive form of storytelling. Every chapter of that story took them further into the world of Middle-earth and you’re always discovering new cultures and new aspects to the existing cultures. The Hobbit, most of the cultures were laid out fairly early, so there’s not that same sense of adding to the catalogue as time goes by, so I think it’s more of a character-based score in that way you’re absolutely right, because it's more the character development that’s really carrying the musical narrative more than discovery or addition. So yeah you have, look at the dwarf music – dwarves are maybe not the best example but in LOTR there’s maybe one or two or three motifs associated with the dwarves. In The Hobbit you have numerous character themes and historic themes and object themes that sort of relate to the dwarves. Elves, the same thing you have a motif for Tauriel you have a motif for the woodland realm, a motif for the king - there’s sort of a more individualised sense of leitmotivic usage I think.

DW: One of the other things I wanted to ask you about is I was looking for – you pointed me towards Dol Guldur for underdeveloped motifs – are there any other interrelations that
you’ve picked out as you’ve put together the book, and any other relations where you can hear that preceding nature?

DA: It’s sort of two questions I suppose, there’s the interrelated aspect and the developmental aspect. Developmentally you’re right the Dol Guldur stuff is the most prominent in just watching it shift between major thirds and minor thirds and what sort of combinations he uses before you end up with that classic sound in _LOTR_, that’s really the most notable one to watch progress I think, although there’s a little bit of that with the Ring motif itself. The Ring motif is harmonised very differently in some sections of _The Hobbit_, they don’t use it very often of course, but where it does show up there’s a couple of unique harmonisations in there that make it sound very different from anything that happens in _LOTR_, a more profound understanding of what that Ring represents. There’s also the opening passage in the first _Hobbit_ film, opening here meaning where they actually get to the title card. Which is, I think a different way to reverse-engineer material, but if you listen there it’s sort of a quote of the passage from Fellowship where they go to Bilbo’s birthday party, um there’s that little rising motif as you segue into the party, the party music, the hobbit band, the plan 9 tune and all that, but in the first _Hobbit_ film the way they use that is over the title card which is also accompanied by that ring of smoke that is blown over it. So that rising motif suddenly takes on a slightly different tenor because it seems to represent something Ring-related, a sort of appoggiatura there that seemed very innocent before, matched with that new imagery, takes on a different meaning or a different hint perhaps.

DW: That Lydian sound?

DA: Exactly, and it doesn’t seem to suggest anything particularly Ring-oriented, it's just a resolution in _Fellowship_, but when you stick it over that in _AUJ_ it feels slightly, I don’t want to say more dangerous, but more suggestive I think. So that’s a kind of a cool one. In terms of interrelated themes I think that’s something that he did quite a bit in _The Hobbit_ scores, even more, or at least in a different way than he did in _LOTR_. There’s more sort of cross-cultural, I can’t get into it too much but there’s more cross-cultural material, or interrelated motifs within – certain intervallic relationships that exist in more than one culture. In _The Hobbit_ the cultures aren’t maybe quite as separated as they are in _LOTR_, just due to the nature of the storytelling I think, it’s a different time and it’s not completely, despite the title, not completely shown through a hobbit’s eyes – you get a little bit of mankind’s take on the world and certainly the dwarves’ take on the world, and the fact that these cultures do sort of have trade together and live sort of in similar areas and that sort of thing, so there’s a lot more interrelated material whereas in _LOTR_ the cultures are pretty separate musically and even orchestrally, the orchestration is different for everything.

DW: I’m imagining the coming together of the woodland realm motifs and the dwarvish motifs, with the Tauriel and Kili theme kind of linking them together in a sense.

DA: Yes, very much, that’s a great example of having dwarvish and elvish elements, which seems like it should never work musically but it comes together quite naturally.

DW: I’m writing a section at the minute which is based around the Shire and the various motifs and settings. How those motifs are established at the start of the Fellowship – for example when Sam and Frodo are on the slopes of Mount Doom – and then reading that into _The Hobbit_ and where they can be heard. In _AUJ_ we are appeased in a sense, here’s
the pensive setting and here’s the rural setting, everything that you were hoping for in a way is here, but there’s other Shire-ish and Bilbo-ish motifs. In the liner notes to *AUJ* you alluded to a two-part motif regarding Bilbo, and I wondered if you could clarify that for me?

DA: Is that the one that we sort of have begun to refer to as the fussy motif? It’s a melodic line and then that sort of stop and start accompaniment that sort of goes with it as well. You can almost imagine that… I don’t know where you would think of it chronologically if the hobbit stuff is very rural this seems to come from some sort of classical or baroque period within the hobbit culture – which may or may not have existed outside of Bilbo’s mind, I’m not sure – but it sort of plays to his persnickety nature and the fact that he’s not really made for adventure until the end of the story where you see he’s got a taste for it. And that shows up quite a bit – maybe throughout the *Hobbit* scores it may be the Shire- or hobbit-based motif that shows up most often I think.

DW: There’s also one that is another extension which you first hear on Irish whistle, an extension of the pensive setting of the Shire theme, on the tracks ‘the world is ahead’ and in ‘a very respectable hobbit’. How have you gone about naming it? That particular theme, is that something which you’ve got a name for?

DA: If I’m thinking of the one you’re thinking of I believe we’ve referred to it as ‘Bilbo’s Adventure’, or something along those lines, I’m looking for my notes as we speak. It’s funny because all this writing I did on it was done in this wild period right after the last film, and then of course, because this is the way things always work for us we’re just back into a holding pattern so, it was this furious creative activity and now we’re all coming away like ‘what did we write?’ Let’s see. Yes, we have one that we’ve referred to as Bilbo’s Adventure which is probably the one, I’m looking at a piccolo version of it so it’s probably that.

DW: Something which I do think is really cool is how all the elf themes relate to one another by all focusing on the minor 6th.

DA: Yeah there’s a nice common gesture in the woodland realm themes too, that little turn at the end of the woodland realm that becomes Tauriel’s theme.

DW: and even in Mirkwood that kind of – all around the minor 6th to the 5th. I think it’s really fun.

DA: Yes it is!

DW: One of the questions on the Gandalf theme, which in my mind I’d really want it to relate in – it’s interesting because the Gandalf theme is kind of that unsure harmony, you don’t really have a third but you’ve got that kind of dorian/mixolydian sharp 6th or minor 7th thing going on.

DA: Right, it feels like it should be in E minor but it’s set over an A minor harmony.

DW: Right. But then looking through the *LOTR* themes for Gandalf you only really have anything for Gandalf the White obviously and not Gandalf the Grey – and the Gandalf the
White in nature which is harder to find and then the White Rider, which is really fun – how do you feel that there’s no real harmonic link between those two?

DA: Well I think, the Gandalf the White material is mostly drawn from the gestures from the opening of the *Fellowship*, that down and back figure. Because he comes back as, it’s really a different character – to him it’s been enormous amounts of time between appearances so to speak, so I think it’s OK to sort of bring him back with a completely different purpose. I do wonder if they’d made things in a strictly linear fashion if at some point in the early 'Gandalf the Grey' material in *Fellowship* if you’d have heard that nice little turning theme, but I think it’s OK. I mean the stories have very different palates I suppose both musically and just in terms of the filmmaking and the storytelling and I think Tolkien did that as well, the writing in the Hobbit is quite different to the writing in *LOTR*. So I think it’s fair play, you know.

DW: I could talk about the music all day, I don’t want to waste your time, but that’s most of the questions I had about the music. I’m pretty interested in fandom and how people are listening to and consuming the music. So many people for whom it is a very deep and quasi-religious experience. I find it really interesting that you’ve found yourself as this kind of oracle and font of knowledge in a way, with access to things that some of these fans would dream of, but it’s funny just watching on the fora, on 'TORn' or the John Williams fan fora, and waiting for people to kind of hear what you have to say or for you to put an answer to a question. How do you feel about having that kind of position, and people giving you this element of authority? How do you relate to fans and particularly the more hardcore fans of the music?

DA: Sometimes it makes me nervous because it puts me in the position of being certainly the mouthpiece for Howard Shore on some of these things, and I always am cautious or concerned that perhaps I’m saying something that he would wish I would not. And maybe that just goes to my nature that I’m a worrier by nature I suppose, but I always try to make sure that I don’t overstep my bounds. Because in a sense, my analysis is my work but it’s also because I have that first-hand access to Mr. Shore, it’s supposed to be just me as a conduit for his ideas. And it’s a balancing act, because he’s not analysing it in the same way I am, he’s creating it – it’s a different part of the creative process certainly. It’s very important to me to always put these analytical things through him all the time, make sure he always understands what I’m saying and that it’s truly reflective of what he intends, although even he’ll say himself sometimes he discovers things had he done intuitively.

DW: I was going to ask actually if there’d been times when you had said ‘and it’s really cool what you do here’ and he’s like ‘oh yeah that is cool’…

DA: Hahaha! Yes that certainly does happen, and I think sometimes that led to some of his further decisions which is sort of a crazy thing, but at the same time if he tells me he disagrees with something it’s very important to me to back up and say okay, well then that’s not an accurate depiction. The 'History of the Ring' theme for example in the original text of the *LOTR* book where I analysed it, I referred to it as a bitonal theme, because he sort of has A minor layered over F minor, starts on that sharp 4 and then pulls it up and pulls it back but keeps an A natural in the melody – and he said no you know I really did not think of it as bitonal, that’s not really what I was going for there. He said the reason there’s an A natural is it’s strictly an intervallic thing, I didn’t want to create that augmented 2nd because that exists in other material, you know the 'evil of the Ring' and all
that, and he didn’t want what we think of as a stereotypical middle-eastern sound with that augmented second in there. So it wasn’t in his mind bitonal, it was just an avoidance of a specific colour associated with a specific interval. So I went back and rewrote all of that, it was important to me to make sure that although it is, theoretically, valid to analyse it that way, it’s not what he intended, so I won’t sort of go down that trail because it’s not true to him. So with the fan thing it’s the same type of thing. I’m trying to answer questions and I’m trying to sometimes drum out incorrect assumptions about things, which is tough because it is cool to see people make their own analyses of this - one of the great things of Tolkien really is that he inspired others’ creativity. The filmmakers did their own interpretation of him, composers have done their own interpretation of him, certainly fantastic artists have done their own interpretation of his work, so what I did is the same thing and there’s no reason I should have a monopoly on it. But at the same time having the access I’m fortunate enough to have, I do sometimes feel it’s important to step in and say “no no no no that’s not what the thought was here”. So it’s a fine line, and at the same time – I feel like maybe I take more credit than I deserve sometimes! I’m just really answering people’s questions and I’m shocked and thrilled that they still have so many questions and interest this far after, I mean, we’re even getting onto how many years after the last Hobbit? Several years now, right? Shocking how these things add up.

DW: Yes, and even 16 years since the first LOTR.

DA: Yes, that’s just ghastly to me…!

DW: Even off the back of that there’s a lady called Marilyn who has a website called A Magpie’s Nest, her own analysis, and she really grapples with that – I guess authority or what is right and wrong, and she's written a bit about what Howard Shore might have wanted and what Doug Adams says but then what she thinks and takes from it, and her right to interpret things her own way, and I think that’s fantastic because some people could probably get too tied down in thinking 'what was the composer’s intention' - that should only be so important, it should still be subservient to people’s appreciation I guess.

DA: It’s hard, it goes – the entire discussion these days about authentic performance practice, like do we have the right to do Bach on our modern well-tuned instruments or should we pull out the natural horns and start blasting away, and given the choice what would composers want? It’s a very unique circumstance here and that’s part of why I wanted to be involved with it is because I wanted to try to get Howard Shore’s words on the score, sort of as it’s entering its place in history. And maybe, I do still feel a certain importance of his analysis which is what I’m trying to put out there, but I feel it’s important to understand what his intentions were. Fans - it’s wonderful and very interesting to see them do their own analyses, but sometimes I do get concerned that it gets fairly far away from what the intentions were. But then I still have that internal conflict of well does it make it more or less valid? I don’t know. Musical history is filled with examples of people reading things into composer’s works and, falling in love with those ideas. Look at our interpretations of Shostakovich’s 5th or his entire body of work, based on what we think we discovered about him after his life ended. So those narratives become very important. It’s again a balancing act and I suppose I have to leave some of that open to future generations.

DW: I guess the biggest way that you’ve had to step in and right some wrongs is people’s reaction to the Hobbit scores. People kind of assuming or jumping to conclusions that there
was all this material on the soundtracks that didn’t get used, and people saying this was for this or that reason, people jumping to try and protect Howard Shore and say if he had had his way the film would’ve sounded like this, some people really getting get quite vicious about Jackson and why they made these decisions. I’ve seen you jump in a few times and say 'look guys this just isn’t true'.

DA: Right. I’m convinced, and maybe I shouldn’t say this, but at some level I think the popularity of film music is because people see it as a potentially compromised art-form and they like that struggle or that fight or what have you. They like to imagine these romanticised composers working against the clock and against the forces of the mindless producers and the tone-deaf directors and so on, but I mean music history is all that – music was never just written for musicians. We’ve never worked in a vacuum, we’ve always worked for non-musicians and because of that there will be odd constraints and odd requests. Let’s not forget there’s a couple of bars in Götterdammerung that were composed specifically because they couldn’t get a set piece to move fast enough for the premiere. So everybody dealt with that, and if Wagner dealt with it goodness knows everybody else can, cause he was not exactly the most flexible character. So yes, film music is, I suppose, compromised in a sense by its nature in that there are requests being made of it by any number of people, but that’s just how it works and that’s how everything works, and there were certainly changes in The Hobbit that people can hear the differences between the record and the film, but that was true of LOTR as well. There’s a number of different passages – we did an entire Rarities CD just to highlight some of the changes that happened along the line. It doesn’t mean that it was a calamitous relationship or anything like that, it’s just the nature of collaboration, it means at the end of the day someone gets their way here and someone else gets their way over here. Hobbit was interesting because everyone came to The Hobbit after the LOTR book was out and that sort of thing. And they came to it with different ears. Which was fascinating to me and scary I suppose at the same time, that they wanted it to do certain things because of this new understanding they had of what the music did in the first one. And you sort of have to let the creative people be creative and understand that things are going to take a slightly different shape. I’d love to go back in time and now list ‘Mithril’ as a theme in the LOTR book because it became a theme in The Hobbit, or the music for Bree, which sort of became thematic in the Hobbit score. If we ever go back and do an ultimate edition or something like that I’ll definitely do those things.

DW: A huge compendium of the two?

DA: Yeah!! Hey you never know right. If we can just get the Hobbit book out first. You don’t want to say to the composer you can’t quote the Mithril material, we already wrote that it’s not a theme. Creation is always a forward looking process. And you have to let people do what needs to be done and let things look different in a different context, and that’s OK. It’s a scary thing, but it’s OK.

DW: It’s really interesting the idea that people are coming to watch The Hobbit with different ears, with LOTR they had no idea what to expect and even years after people were still talking about LOTR scores so the expectation on the Hobbit scores is so much higher than they were for the original trilogy. People’s ears have also been trained to recognise certain motifs.
DA: Well it’s very interesting to see how the world of listening has changed after LOTR. People used to just go for the mood of these themes, and I was laughing a bit a year or so ago as people were trying to pick over the new Star Wars score and saying well I think if you listen to Rey’s theme you can clearly hear what her parentage is, this is what it’s saying, and no-one would have ever gone to that sort of intervallic discussion before! It’s interesting and it’s also kind of like you’re worried: did you really give people the tools to do this well or are they just sort of going off and getting excited about something that they don’t completely understand how it works yet? But it’s nice to see people listening more carefully, that’s a positive I think.

DW: And if they enjoy whatever analysis they’re doing, that’s fun.

DA: Although I am concerned when we finally get the Hobbit book out people will say ‘that’s not what I came up with, this can’t be right!’

DW: The last few questions – the Hobbit scores have quite a different sound to the LOTR ones in terms of production, reverb, recording techniques and so on. For me in ‘The Adventure Begins’ you can hear either guitar or dulcimer which is quite foregrounded, it’s a different soundworld to me from the more reverberant LOTR scores. For you is that something that you can hear? That it sounds different?

DA: I think some of that is, that it’s a different room and different people, so you have the bog-standard logistics of it. But I also think it was part of the attempt to give it a more specific youthful energy. The Hobbit stories are – they told a more complex and integrated version of them – but they’re very young stories written for children, more than LOTR was, and I think there was an attempt especially in the first one, to echo that different type of energy to it – it’s a little bit more playful, it has a little bit more of a rhythmic drive, certainly more contrast – there’s plenty of contrast in LOTR, but contrasting elements are set right up against one another in The Hobbit so there’s sort of that hyper-colourful sense to it in some occasions. So I think a lot of those things were taken into consideration, especially in the first one. The second two were obviously recorded somewhere else with different people, so again there’s just the logistics of a different room, even though it’s very well engineered.

DW: Lastly – outside of the Howard Shore world, there are so many other Middle-earth related or inspired musics – including the annual festivals that take place on LOTRO such as ‘Weatherstock’, where people play their own music in a Middle-earth setting. Are there any other musics you’ve come across and appreciated?

DA: I think the very first Middle-earth music I ever encountered was as a really little kid, I either played or heard there was a wind band suite – the Johann de Meij. I remember really liking that when I was young. I often had, because it was easier to reference quickly, the LOTR books on tape, but on iTunes so I could pull it up real quickly, and I like some of the folk-song type writing that was in there – which is a nice way to set some of those Tolkien lyrics. I tend to be so protective of the Howard Shore version of all these things that I don’t venture too far outside. It’s my hobbit nature, I stay in my cosy surroundings, I like them and that’s where I’ll be.

DW: Is there anything else you would want to add? Are there Complete Recordings on their way for The Hobbit?
DA: I suppose anything would be possible. I don’t think anything’s in production right now. People forget that there was quite a bit of time between *LOTR* and all those recordings and the book and everything, and I have fallen victim to that myself – there’s something about Middle-earth stuff that just takes forever, it’s never a quick or simple production. When we were delayed on the book I remember Howard saying this is just how this stuff works.


DW: 1) What is it about the CineConcerts format that you think attracts people?  
2) Are there any changes you’ve had to make to the score (or other considerations) to better suit this format and the music’s interactions with sound/dialogue/the image? (I’m assuming dialogue and sound effects are played through speakers and the orchestra is amplified?)  
3) Before and after the film, how are the audience invited into the world of the film and brought out of it again? Is there music playing in the arena before and after, and if so, what? Are there programmes or other merchandise available? Is there in intermission? Introductory speeches?  
4) Does the music continue to the very end of the credits, as in the original film? Do the audience tend to stay/do any audience members leave before the end of the credits?  
5) Are there any other things you have put in place to further aid the audience’s experience and immersion in the film and its music?  
6) Are there any notable/memorable reactions from audience members you have witnessed or heard about?  

AA: As you know, the film concert idea has been around for quite some time really ever since the silent era (Chaplin, D.W. Griffith, King Vidor, Fred Noblo, etc.), and the definition of a ciné-concert in French is a show that combines the projection of a film with a live performance of the music.  
I find that the interesting element of the current form of the ciné-concert is that people feel like they are experiencing something completely new - even if they have originally seen the film in the theater, they find the mixture of live performance with visuals is a unique blend of performance exhibition.  
What do you mean when you say the music piped into the arena before or after the main event?  
There are speeches or introductions done by the conductor where he talks about the show and actually tells the audience to be engaged, i.e. shout, clap, etc. The interesting thing is the audience reacts when their favorite character comes on screen, or their favorite motif is played. It's a pretty incredible thing to see.  
The music continues until the very last frame of the film, so yes - it plays all the way through the end credits.  
I think the noteworthy responses from audience members is saying that they have never experienced anything like it before.


DW: In what ways were you inspired by any of the existing Harry Potter soundtracks in creating your score?
AA: I think I was certainly inspired to “Go Big” from all the amazing Harry Potter scores from the past. I can’t say I drew from any particular score, but certainly you want to immerse the audience into this magic world, and hopefully music can be a part of accomplishing that end.

DW: Were there any licensing issues that prevented you from using any direct quotations, and how did you get round these?

AA: Yeah I would have liked to add the main Harry Potter theme, which is actually Hedwig’s, but we didn’t want to take a chance with the video getting pulled.

DW: How did you go about creating a musical world that aurally relates to an existing fantasy world? i.e. specific instruments, tonalities, rhythmic ostinati etc.

AA: Well I tried to pair certain instruments to characters (i.e. Snape with the Cello, Lily with Flute) but outside of that know when to change color with different families of instruments is always important part of a score. I didn’t really try to make it sound exactly like those HP scores because this has to do with the characters in the prologue of that story so it shouldn’t be exactly the same. Similar to Fantastic Beasts which certainly sounded magical and powerful, but not precisely like its predecessors. I tried to make my score a little darker and more in your face than the lighter feel that some of the earlier scores had.

DW: What kind of brief were you given?

AA: I was kind of given carte blanche as I’ve worked with the director on almost all of his projects in the past, including The Greater Good. There’s always notes and revisions, but a lot of the initial style just came from me sketching ideas. The first cue I scored with when The Marauders Unite against Snape. From there it was all just extrapolating those ideas into the rest of the score and changing the tone as it was needed.


DW: In what ways were you inspired by any of the existing Harry Potter soundtracks in creating your score?

HB: As a child the first two Harry Potter soundtracks were constantly playing in my CD player at home, so given this unique opportunity to score a Harry Potter film I had them in particular at the forefront of my mind when setting about writing the music for Mischief Managed. The whimsical sound and orchestration of my score basically fed from John Williams’ neo-romantic take on the Harry Potter sound world. That meant using lots of lush string textures, sweeping themes and horn and woodwind writing. I also couldn’t resist using the iconic celeste which is now so reminiscent of the franchise!

DW: Were there any licensing issues that prevented you from using any direct quotations, and how did you get round these?

HB: I think I did look up the legality of using existing quotes briefly before I started writing, but it was always my intention to create a fully original score for the film so I avoided using any direct quotations at all. I did however use a brief quote from the
Prologue of Chamber of Secrets at the very end of the teaser trailer and no-one has sued me yet thankfully!

DW: How did you go about creating a musical world that aurally relates to an existing fantasy world? i.e. specific instruments, tonalities, rhythmic ostinati etc.

HB: I’ve answered a bit of this in my first answer, but I’ll try and elaborate a bit more. Instrumentally, creating a ‘magical fantasy’ musical world meant employing a few orchestration techniques: using woodwind for their mystical, ancient, almost timeless timbres; favouring the warmer colours in the brass such as that of the horn; and utilising both thick textures with divisi as well as a lot of melodies in octaves for strings. Learning to orchestrate in the style of Ravel and Debussy really helped with getting to a ‘magical’ feel as their orchestrations conjure such vivid, almost cinematic images. I felt a lot freer to experiment and be more ostentatious melodically and harmonically with this film as the larger than life fantasy on screen calls for melody and harmony to match.

DW: What kind of brief were you given?

HB: I was allowed to run pretty wild with the score. A vague sense of the final sound came from initial meetings with the director Suzy - we both wanted to do an orchestral score in the style of the main film series, keep it very light hearted and stay away from a more ‘modern’ or minimal orchestral score feel. The other main task that we discussed was to capture a sense of nostalgia somehow - we wanted fans to really get a sense of childlike excitement going back to Hogwarts watching the film.


DW: Kari told me you were responsible for the background music in the Platform 9¾ section of the tour. Can you tell me a bit more about the music you chose to use here and your motivations behind those choices?

CD: ‘So I’m sure Kari probably touched on this which is that when you actually sit down and listen to the sum total of all the music that got written for the films – and that’s sort of readily available on the soundtracks – most of it’s scary! And it’s really good music, but it’s actually kind of creepy and/or scary because most of what’s actually going on in the films that it’s underscoring is sort of scary. And that’s generally not the mood you’re going for in a sort of a museum tour experience. So you sort of cull all of the scary stuff out and then you have some sort of collection of lighter cues that you can look at. And then it’s just about, how do you play those cues together in such a way that they’re not annoying or like overly repetitive or you hear ‘Hedwig’s Theme’ every 30 seconds. Something like that. So basically what I did for Platform 9¾ was, I looked at what was playing in the bookends to it, which are the sort of big room with all the sets in it and then the courtyard, and decided that well I don’t want there to be too much overlap between those adjacent spaces and the Platform because I don’t want to annoy people. The platform is actually one of the few places in the film that is sort of rooted in the Muggle world, so obviously there is – there isn’t actually that much screen time that actually happens on the Platform in the films. So the longest scene is by far the finale – the dénouement, the epilogue that’s what they call it. The epilogue is the longest scene on the platform, and basically actually the intro to the platform in film one is the other one, so I obviously picked those two cues up, as sort of a starting place. This is generally speaking a place that’s rooted in the Muggle world and so I
sort of expanded my search to any of the music that I thought was adjacent to the Muggle world. So, from film 3 track 4 ‘Apparition on the train’ sort of more travel stuff, and then film 4 track 20 “another year ends” I don’t remember I’ll have a listen to that in a little bit. And then back to film 1 track 4 which is the visit to the zoo, the letter from Hogwarts. Then from film 7 track 1 and 2 (these are the CD tracks), which is ‘Obliviate’ and ‘Snape to Malfoy Manor’. I just mostly put those in there because I really liked them as pieces of music. And we hadn’t used them anywhere else in the tour. They are both sort of a bit scary but they’re really great pieces of music. Uh and then Harry Potter 2 track 5 ‘Flying Car’, and then 7 track 4 ‘Sky Battle’ which would be another outside above thing. Film 5 track 10 ‘Journey to Hogwarts’, film 7 track 18 ‘Hermione’s Parents’ and then from film 8 there’s the final scene score. So that’s sort of the list that’s playing in the Platform, and basically that was sort of the idea – to try to have something to do with travel that was sort of a lighter music but try not to clash too much with the rest of the exhibit.

DW: I guess there was already a lot of music that had been used throughout the rest of the exhibit that you didn’t want to necessarily copy or mimic.

CD: I mean there is overlap, it’s not like everything only plays in once place. You sort of consider the guest’s dwell time in the space and think about how long will someone be here, how likely is it that they’ll hear it twice? Generally speaking since there’s mostly repeating themes of…

[accidental break in recording]

…the point of the two exhibits are different you know like Florida is really it is, you are immersing yourself in the magical world, sort of pretending like you’re in Harry Potter in the wizarding world, whereas in Leavesten we are really talking about filmmaking, the making of the films, and how that came to pass. It gets called various things but I’ve always intellectually approached it as essentially a museum. We’re educating people about the film making process, you know, with one of their favourite films.

DW: It’s like a behind the scenes experience. One thing I remember was the music particularly inside the Hogwarts Express – is the music the same throughout or are there different ones you used inside the train?

CD: It is playing all the cues – inside and outside the train are playing the same loop, the same thing at the same time. So it’s just you walked into the train at a moment where we were having down tempo music. Depending on how many people were there, we try not to deafen people with regard to volume so, there is an acceptance of the fact that when you get to full capacity of people the music becomes sometimes not audible, because the people are so noisy, there is a deliberate choice not to keep turning it up or running it so loud that it overpowers people – sometimes it’s OK if you don’t hear it, so if you were in sort of a quieter moment and then you went into the train where it’s a quieter environment and there are fewer people you might notice it there.

Fry, Gareth (2017). Email correspondence on 13/1/17.

DW: How did you go about creating the different sounds for different spells or other instances of magic/the supernatural in the plays?

GF: I first set some creative limits. We weren’t to use any whooshes or wind chime style sounds. I find applying creative limits are very useful for making you avoid the obvious
easy routes, and make you think more creatively about achieving something. Also we were wanting to create a show that was unique to itself, that didn’t draw off aspects of the films for example. With that in mind we (myself and associate Pete Malkin) went through the script and made a list of all the spells, who cast them, who they cast them upon, the effect they had and whether they were a hit or a miss. Even a simple spell then becomes unique depending on the intent with which they’re casting it, etc. That process of analysis then told us a lot about each instance of magic, and how perhaps it might sound. And many of the spells are associated with quite distinct elements or actions that “conjure” up a certain sound, whether that is fire, or wind, or a specific physical action. Some spells are quite neutral, whereas some are quite evil. So there was a lot there for us to go on to design each sound. And just as important is to match it to the energy the performer is imbuing the spell with, how fast they cast the spell, etc.

DW: Were you given free reign in the creation and use of these sounds, or were the directorial team more specific in what they wanted?

GF: Free reign, yes. Sometimes if they felt we’d made something wrong they’d ask for an alternative. I’ve been working with director John Tiffany for about 10 years, which means we’ve built up a good working relationship and understanding of how each other works. He trusts me to do my thing!

DW: Did you gain inspiration from the magical sound design in any of the films, and did you aim to create a continuity at all with those sounds or not?

GF: I tried to steer clear of the films altogether. Not because they’re bad, quite the opposite, they’ve got some extraordinarily good sound design in them. But because they just wouldn’t work in a theatrical context. If you listen to a lot of the Harry-Voldemort big long wand battles where they are fighting one long spell against each other, it is a sort of electrical sparking thing going on which very nicely matches the visual effects that are going on. But that wouldn’t have been right for our world. We have a different sort of magic. And a different language for telling the story. I find the films quite interesting actually because whilst the films tell a story of a magical world, they often tell that story quite naturalistically. It’s a very real world where magic happens to be real. And only occasionally do they step away from that naturalism, for example the animated tale of the Three Brothers in the Deathly Hallows Part One: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdSpZgE3fD4

The animation is a magical way of telling a story about magic, and I think that’s what the theatre production very successfully does. It doesn’t really attempt to be naturalistic. We have a few hints of naturalism along the way if they help tell the story or convey a certain location, but generally we’re quite abstract and stylised in how we tell the story. And that requires a completely different language of sound from the films.

DW: In what ways does the sound design interact with the musical scores for the plays (if at all)?

GF: It interacts a lot. Myself, Pete, Imogen and Martin spent a lot of time layering the music and sound together, mixing the different layers, deciding which layers to feature where and also passing sounds back and forth to each other. So I gave Imogen a bunch of
my cloak sound effects to weave into some of the Ministry of Magic movement sequences, so they became a rhythmic thing. Or we’d sync the tempo of the train sound effects to match the music. There’s a lot of interplay between the sound and music.

DW: How do you think the use of sound in the plays helps to build the fictional worlds? Do you have any favourite moments or examples?

GF: I think the sound helps to build the fictional worlds immensely. The sound brings life to so many creatures, characters and spells that would be empty and lifeless without them.

Grigg, Nathan (2017). Email correspondence on 20/7/17.

DW: What kind of briefs were you given for the music required in Shadow of Mordor, and how much creative freedom did you have?

NG: Music direction is my responsibility for all of Monolith’s titles. Our design department keeps us informed about the scope, structure, and aesthetic direction of our games via design documentation, presentations, and pre-production meetings. I work with Brian Pamintuan, our Director of Audio, and the lead designers to find the right aesthetic, mood, and adaptive music structure for every game we make. I’m given a great deal of creative freedom and I never take that for granted, especially when stepping into legendary territory like Tolkien’s Middle-Earth.

DW: With a game so closely linked to a popular franchise, how do you think your music was influenced by:

a) Howard Shore’s scores for the LOTR films?

b) fantasy film/game music of the era?

(Ie. instrumentation, harmony, rhythm, motivic relations etc?)

How did you go about creating a musical world that feels coherent and consistent for the world of Mordor (and indeed Talion’s life before his death which sounds markedly different)?

NG: I don’t consider Shadow of Mordor to be a “Fantasy Score” in the traditional sense. A lot of the material could be as much at home in a horror or a post-apocalyptic setting. That’s not a direction decision made in a vacuum. It’s influenced by the story and the atmosphere of the game. Shadow of Mordor’s protagonist is basically a corpse of a Gondorian Ranger reanimated by a wraith with amnesia. This is a very un-hobbit-like lens to view Middle-Earth through. Given that we are focusing on Mordor – and specifically Mordor soon after Sauron’s return, our game’s environment is constantly under the strain of rapid industrialization – an expanding war machine pushing against nature. For me, the focus was finding a language to interpret these forces and get players emotionally invested in the game’s universe.

Your Howard Shore question is inevitable because he earned it. The themes he wrote for Peter Jackson’s Middle-Earth films are burned into the consciousness of anyone who has experienced them, so it would be wildly inaccurate to say his work had no influence on Shadow of Mordor. I would simply say that given the unique story, pacing, and perspective of our game, we chose not to dwell on how much our music had in common stylistically with anything that had preceded it. We had a story to tell, cared about it deeply, had a great deal of fun bringing it to life, and wanted to pass that fun on to the player.
From a timbral perspective, the score is centered around a live orchestra and male choir, with a few solo instruments on specific cues. It's a mixed-media score with a lot of sound design elements and experimental processing as well. Some of the more radical departures from traditional instrumentation are inspired by the supernatural powers that Celebrimbor allows the player to wield. Reversed vocal effects, extreme pitch shifting and modulation, volatile, unnatural artefacts in the sound, convolution using human screams as impulses - this is all inspired by the wraith's presence. Sauron's war machine's expansion across the wilderness inspired the industrial effects you hear in the score - the metallic sounds, both bowed and struck, rattling chains and pulley sounds, and distortion in some of the combat themes. An array of unearthly sounds by prepared electric guitarist Bill Horist blends into some of this industrial palette. The orchestra will often push outside the traditional sweet spots of the instruments - scraping strings, low woodwind harmonics, overblown brass clusters, etc. -- to sustain that environmental tension.

Sustaining tension was a big goal in the harmonic direction of the music as well. Talion’s revenge story and the mystery behind the wraith’s origin both contributed to inspiring a sense of “unfinished business” in the music – so tidy harmonic resolution is definitely not what this score’s about. This is an action game and we didn’t want things to feel static either, so you’ll hear harmonic progression along the way, but there’s never a sense of total certainty in the destination.

Rhythmically the score shoots for an aggressive, primitive, and asymmetrical feel in the combat themes, with odd meters and polyrhythms that pull against the pulse. One of my favorite systemic dialogue lines that the orcs occasionally shout out when you’re fighting is “Keep him off balance!” because that’s what the music is designed to do. The caragor combat piece features layered looping patterns of different lengths in the staccato strings. That’s inspired by the caragors’ pack mentality and their inclination to circle their prey.

One of my stronghold themes “The Gorthaur” has a section of 21-beat phrases divided into 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 with heavy accents that get closer and closer together, so you get this kind of ratcheting tension in the rhythm while you’re fighting.

The story characters have melodic themes and motifs as well but it’s not just a 1-to-1 theme-to-character relationship. My “Gravewalker” theme for Talion is not a straightforward hero’s theme at all. This is a man violently torn from his previous life and traversing a dark path of revenge. Inspired by Troy Baker’s soft spoken performance of the character, the theme melody is played on solo viola - beautifully performed by Eyvind Kang. It has a melancholy mood, odd chromatic ornamentation, and doesn’t resolve. I admit people won’t be whistling it to themselves like a catchy jingle, but it’s the right melody for Talion. Celebrimbor also has own his origin melody, but there are other themes that unfolded during the writing process that were more about relationships between characters. Garry Schyman composed a distinctive low woodwind, low brass, and high strings theme for Gollum, but he also wrote a “Bright Master” theme for moments when Gollum is in Celebrimbor’s presence. High choral samples, celeste, bowed crotales, and disturbing sustained string textures underneath convey how Gollum is magnetically drawn to Celebrimbor.

Some of the flashback material in the game’s introduction (Talion’s time before his death) is a harmonic oasis, like my Ioreth theme with its serenading solo violin melody (also performed by Eyvind Kang). Garry Schyman wrote a playful, harmonically open orchestral
theme for Talion’s memory of sparring with his son Dirhael. I layered in some midi mandolin and oud parts that added a brighter, folkish flavor to it. Things go dark very quickly after that in our story, so taking advantage of those moments of contrast when we could help make the world feel larger. The Celebrimbor visions are another place where we deliberately went in a different direction. These I composed in the studio with almost no live orchestra--just some choral material and a lot of sound design integrated with electronically-realized music to hit the disturbing jump cuts, transitions, and wraith-like effects.

DW: Can you outline your role alongside Garry Schyman’s - were there specific tasks you took on separately or choices you made together?

NG: Monolith has always been ambitious about the scope and depth of its audio, and I handle implementation as well as composition. Composition is technically easier to outsource than implementation is, so whenever the scope of a project’s music exceeds the production calendar, I’ll select a composer to outsource some of the composition work to. During production I select which cues to outsource, review the work, and iterate where necessary until it’s ready to implement. I get it cues running in the game as quickly as possible so we can hear them in context and make any final adjustments.

I thought Garry Schyman was a perfect match for the project. I wanted a score that featured a lot of orchestral work, but didn’t want something that fit safely inside a romantic, fantasy genre. In Garry’s work for the BioShock series and Dante’s Inferno I heard expressive melodic writing, wild aleatoric material, early 20th century-inspired harmony and rhythm – which connected to the kind of “industrial war machine” sonic environment I wanted to achieve in our combat cues, masterful thematic development, and a complete confidence working with an orchestra in innovative ways. He has a distinctive style and that just made it all more fun to select pieces for him. While I was developing the themes for Talion, Celebrimbor, Ioreth, and Lithariel, I’d get Garry working on Gollum, The Tower, Marwen and Torvin. It’s really satisfying to have another voice available to expand the language of a big score like this.

DW: Anything else you might like to add regarding the creative process in creating an interactive/immersive musical world?

NG: I’d just add that that process can change significantly from title to title, and that keeps things interesting. Shadow of Mordor is Monolith’s first open world action adventure title. It’s a highly variable and intensely active environment to work in. It doesn’t offer the kind of straightforward, limited set of chokepoints to get you from one piece of material to another like a corridor shooter would give you. There’s an ever-expanding rule set you have to create and maintain as the game develops, and some features require a dedicated QA team to test. The warchief walkout presentations in Shadow of Mordor are a good example of that – where you have a huge set of variable names shouting in rhythm over multiple themes in different tempos. You can’t just reprod that once and know you’re done. The ongoing challenge is to find ways to make each moment matter like it can in a linear score.

DW: When composing scores for the *Harry Potter* and *LOTR* games, how much inspiration do you take from the film soundtracks? I can hear similarities not only in instrumentation but also in motifs, harmonic progressions etc. What do you think this does for the games?

JH: I believe it depends mostly on the goals of any particular game and where it is positioned in the marketplace. Questions I ask myself are: Is this to be a spin-off loosely related to an existing franchise or directly derived from something? Is this the ‘game of a film’, the ‘game of a book’, or neither? In the case of the *Harry Potter* games I think that – although related to the film series and tied in with the same sequence – the early games of the series were probably less reliant on the look and feel of their film counterparts than they became later. Not only musically, but in terms other content, too - audio and visuals, included. That probably has a lot to do with a) it being too early for the developer to have derived much from films (E.g. the likeness of characters, their voices, signature sound effects, etc.) and b) visually speaking, the graphics of that gaming era weren’t quite as ‘photorealistic’ as they were to become, and a more cartoon-ish or ‘gamey’ look may have been adopted. In this sense, the early HP games probably functioned more as self-contained games, connected as much with the books as with the films - but that’s only my perception as a relative outsider at the time.

By the time HP & The Order of the Phoenix came about, graphics had moved on and more effort was being made to carry off the likeness of the films in certain ways – especially on a visual basis, with character models based on the likeness of actors. I believe also that sound designers had access to WB sound effects and graphic artists were able to obtain CG models relating to various locations such as Hogwarts, used to populate the game’s environment. So, although setting out to be a viable product in its own right, it appeared to me (with my limited involvement in anything other than music) that the game was moving towards becoming very much the ‘game of the film’. Having said that, I’m sure that more was made of certain plot points in the book that made sense to include more in a gaming context than would be the case in any film adaptation (E.g. ‘potions’ as a minigame) – as the goal of a game is to involve players as a participant in the story world and not only tell them a story.

DW: How much creative freedom did you have in composing these scores? What kind of briefs were you given?

JH: In some cases, especially towards the start, I had a fair degree of freedom in how I realised music – but less so on motivating factors for it, such as where and when it would be heard and what it would signify. The audio director had mapped out where music would feature and presented me with this in the form of a cue sheet – but not without inviting me, at times, for my input on this. So, to some extent, there was a ‘joining of the dots’ aspect to creating music for the games, but probably one that was, in hindsight, necessary to meet the game’s deadlines. There was a great deal of pressure on the development team to get each instalment out in time for the corresponding film’s release.

I don’t recall there being any temp tracks used in the HP games, and the brief was more one of creating music that had a fairly predetermined function fitting the player’s ‘situation’. As with a lot of music in games, for better or for worse, a lot of the material was what I call ‘doing’ music. For example: wandering, searching, fleeing, facing an
enemy and so on. In other words, music didn’t always exist to inform players of anything they didn’t already know, but I did try to inject an extra layer of emotion in the hope of adding to the experience, rather than merely reflecting the situation on a visual basis. For instance: in one sequence, seeing Harry chase an owl in front of Cho, I argued the case for music that said a little about the embarrassing situation and of Harry’s romantic feelings towards Cho, rather than opting for ‘bird chasing’ music.

In my experience, there are few opportunities in games to comment on the ‘human condition’ or to explore deeper human emotions with music, and I’m not even sure there’s a desire among the public for that, either, as there may be with films. Especially during gameplay (as opposed to within linear cutscenes) as such music requires time to unfold, to build and release tension, and this isn’t always possible when music is being driven by the game and the player’s actions in real-time. Nor may it be appropriate to do that, if the message the player is to receive is that they in some sense occupying the game world. After all, playing a game and ‘being’ Harry Potter isn’t the same as watching Harry Potter as the passive member of an film audience. Therefore, in games, I think composers look for other motivating factors for music, other than story. For instance: the feelings of the protagonist or the atmosphere of a particular location.

A lot of the time I find that I have to resign myself to the fact that games are rather visually-led and music is very often simply motivated by action and binary ‘game states’ such as ‘combat on’ or ‘combat off’. There are, of course, many exceptions to that – but I find the point useful to make when making a comparison with scoring a film. Scoring a ‘goal oriented’ game with interactive music clearly isn’t the same process as writing music for narrative support in a film, with its ‘pre-composed’ music.

The last two entries in the HP film series had ‘darkened’ considerably and it became a little less clear what was now ‘Harry Potter-ish’ in terms of music. Changing film series composers made it difficult to predict a musical direction with each film, and all these factors led to the music being thought of rather independently of the films - on the whole.

That said, with Order of the Phoenix, a greater effort was made to tie in the musical style of the film series at that time (or up until the previous instalment). Mostly, of course, that identity related to Hedwig’s Theme, which is a theme comprising of several recognizable sections utilizing two or three well-known motifs – all of which, after the first few films, screamed ‘Harry Potter’. Only a small percentage of the game’s music referred to existing Harry Potter music though, which enabled me to inject my own musical ideas into the project as well. Had that not been possible, I don’t think I would have taken part in the projects in the first place.

Rather significantly, with each instalment of the game, music was created in isolation with no knowledge of the corresponding film instalment’s music. For various reasons, the music of the game was composed and recorded before the music of the corresponding film’s had been written, in most cases.

In summary, for the best part, my role in the games was to create my own music but to operate within the stylistic framework of the film series and of classical and ‘fantasy’ music in general. In a wider sense, I feel the music of the Harry Potter films is similarly nested within a larger framework of music in this way, too, and uses a fairly familiar musical language – and rightly so, in my opinion.
DW: How do you go about creating musical worlds for the games, and how important is it to you that these are related to the film worlds? In Aragorn’s Quest (I believe) there is a lot of use of Howard Shore’s music - how did you go about writing your score alongside this?

JH: In this instance, there was no great attempt to tie in with the existing music other than in terms of style and atmosphere. Interestingly, the music of this game was tied into a very restrictive interactive music system (of my own devising) that involved cross-fading paired versions of tracks that were perfectly synched (and harmonically and rhythmically intertwined) at all times. In that way, the music was very ‘binary’ in that it swung between the states of ‘exploration’ or ‘atmosphere’ and all-out action. But the resulting flow of music and musical transitions in-game was, I think, very seamless. Maintaining flow and musicality with interactive music I find can be very challenging, and the temptation can be to ‘dumb down’ music in order to get it to comply with an interactive music system.

DW: What for you is the most important goal when creating game music, particularly for these well-known franchises?

JH: I think one has to balance personal goals with the needs of the project and with the overall goals of the ‘product’, in order for it to feel related to the wider universe of the franchise - but to be suitably original as well.


Due to the nature of Jerome’s work and the numerous non-disclosure agreements he signed while working on the music of the rides at Universal Studios, he asked that the interview be conducted off the record, and thus no transcript can be included here.


DW: How did you come to be involved in the project? Was Imogen Heap already signed up when you joined?

ML: It’s a group of people I work with a lot – John Tiffany was directing and Stephen Hoggart was doing the movement, and we all did Once together, and I’d worked at National Theatre of Scotland, so I’d known them a long time, Once was a significant job for the three of us. And we all get on, we’re all sort of mates, so that was that. The early development of Harry Potter didn’t involve me because it was a play, but John likes to have Stephen Hoggart there present quite early, and Stephen likes to have music in the room playing, and Stephen has a long relationship with Imogen Heap, because she, and if you research this I can’t remember which play it is, they used her music for Stephen’s theatre company is “Frantic Assembly” and they used her music for one of their shows about 10 years ago, I think it was Stockholm, I can’t remember, and they’d asked her if they could use some of her stuff, because the good thing with Imogen’s stuff is she always releases instrumental versions as well as the vocal versions. So they’d done that and there was a couple of holes, so they’d gone to Imogen directly and said there are a couple of bits that we need that we haven’t got, and she got back to them very quickly and very accurately, so Stephen knew that she had a facility to sort of do it. So long before I was involved, they’d used Imogen’s music in the room. And then John had always said that he wanted me involved but we didn’t know how because we didn’t know whether there was
going to be singing whether there was going to be live music, all those things, um and that’s how it happened and then I joined the project and it was just trying to negotiate what my relationship was to the music and to Imogen and to the these guys, which was tricky and needed a bit of massaging.

DW: So they were choosing to use Imogen’s pre-existing music and particularly instrumental versions during rehearsal process to create a sense of atmosphere?

ML: Yes, and Stephen likes to create sequences you know it’s a very organic, actually that’s wrong its not, it’s a very ordered process that Stephen and John will look at a script and say we need a sequence here, that doesn’t need text but we need to tell this story, and Stephen will just have music in the room and I think he just limited himself to Imogen, to the palate of Imogen - so that was that. And then – do you want to know what happened after that, how events unfolded?

DW: Yes please!

ML: So then we went to talk to Imogen. We talked to Imogen and I explained this was how we were going to work, that we wanted to use all her stuff. And she said if you’re going to do that, let me be in the room, let me do it. And you’re not going to say no to that. Now I have quite a big history with pop stars and theatre, so I also know with that comes a lot of ‘approach carefully’. So that was the plan and we did a 4-week workshop this time last year where we had everything technical in the room and it was just for John and Stephen to work out, not workshopping the whole play, but to focus on the complicated sequences, the magic, the movement sequences, all of which touch the music department. So Imogen spent 4 weeks in the room. So that was that and then it became clear that she could then adapt her own stuff. And then we proceeded, as we went into the rehearsal room which was in February of this year for 10 weeks, then of course it became obvious that Imogen was very busy, like rockstars are, so at that point we decided the best thing to do was she handed over everything to me, everything she’d sort of ever done. In stem format in logic, so I’d got all the multitracks of all her albums, and what we decided to do – I was going to be there all the time and she was going to do a couple of days a week. So we isolated all the big exposed music sections, big sequences, and I began with asking her to concentrate on those, and I would do everything else so I would generate all the scene changes all the little transitions all the underscore out of all her existing stuff, and that was how we proceeded. As it got close then she did her work, all the sequences, there are about 15 maybe of them, and then she came back to me with what I’d done and then started to elaborate my stuff as well. So I’d sort of kept the whole thing going so I’d sort of made the palate, I made the choices on what I was going to use of hers, and I would say 90% she agreed with or liked, and then some she’s like I don’t like that let’s try this, and then she basically took what I’d done from her multitracks and made them bigger and more fantastical.

DW: So the majority – all the music, then, comes from pre-existing music which has been elaborated and added onto, rather than her doing an specific new composing of new pieces?

ML: She was always clear they definitely wanted to do one new piece, which they do late in the show, but then everything else, everyone was happy that everything else was going to come from her existing catalogue, which kind of gave me a job in a way, because had
that not been the case there wouldn’t have been anything for me to do, you don’t need two composers in the room. But also because I’ve got the multitracks I’ve basically got more tools than I knew what to do with in a way. That was fascinating, I’ve never worked like that before ever, that was fascinating. And particularly now when you go back and you look where things came from. Sometimes it was just two bars of a backing vocal of a buried track, I thought what if you take these two bars, just this stem, and we make a piece out of it, which we did at one point – one of the big, big moments comes from a two bar backing vocal.

DW: Do you think – it doesn’t seem like it was a conscious decision, but thinking about the relation of the play to the pre-existing world of the films, was it a conscious decision to steer away from any reference to the music from the previous films, in particular ‘Hedwig’s Theme’, was it that you didn’t want to use any of that or be completely separate?

ML: It was never discussed, I don’t know the legality actually of Warner Bros, I do know that Warner Bros owned so much that we didn’t have and WB aren’t a part of this, but by the time I was onboard there was no discussion of it, it was about Imogen. And from my point of view – and because Imogen has also done some orchestral stuff as well, she’s done it relatively recently in her career, in my mind – I was really clear that I had to steer away from that, certainly early in the play. I thought whatever happens first up in that play will be the world that we give the audience, and of course they’re all standing outside the theatre singing the John Williams themes etc., so I thought we were under – not pressure but I was very clear that our opening musical gestures better be a million miles removed from the movie.

DW: I guess that’s super important in establishing ‘this is the world that we’ve created and this is what it sounds like’. If we can extend that what do you think it means for people to access the narrative/story/world of the plays – do you feel like there’s a problem there or does anyone have difficulty reconciling it, thinking about it alongside other changes such as a black Hermione, what do you think that does for the fans?

ML: I don’t know because I can’t speak for fans and you should probably interview a few who’ve seen the play. In my experience of working in music in the theatre all the time, in my experience if you get it right at the beginning of the evening confidently, then that buys you the confidence of the audience. Sometimes it’s amazing you watch shows that get the first ten minutes right and they manage to fuck it up for the next two hours, but I thought we were so bold with the opening and really confident in every way, in that it didn’t sound like the movie, it was a whole different aural palate, and there was no apology of it at all, no apology at all. And also you’re doing it in a different medium, it wasn’t like we’d made a film, they were in a totally different environment, they weren’t in a theme park and they weren’t in the movie, they’d gone to the theatre. We’d made a piece of theatre, largely for people who don’t go to the theatre. And so, you sensed it on the first few previews. We did open dress rehearsals for friends and family, and you sort of knew there was a lot of things to fix, but we went oh this is totally working. I think you don’t sit there, if you’re really engaged in a show, you don’t sit there thinking ‘oh God I wish we got Hedwig’s Theme’ or, I think you do before the lights go down I think, you do hear people going “Oh it’s just a shame Daniel Radcliffe isn’t doing it” you know, but then the show starts and it says “this is Harry” you go “OK, it’s Harry”.

ML: I don’t know because I can’t speak for fans and you should probably interview a few who’ve seen the play. In my experience of working in music in the theatre all the time, in my experience if you get it right at the beginning of the evening confidently, then that buys you the confidence of the audience. Sometimes it’s amazing you watch shows that get the first ten minutes right and they manage to fuck it up for the next two hours, but I thought we were so bold with the opening and really confident in every way, in that it didn’t sound like the movie, it was a whole different aural palate, and there was no apology of it at all, no apology at all. And also you’re doing it in a different medium, it wasn’t like we’d made a film, they were in a totally different environment, they weren’t in a theme park and they weren’t in the movie, they’d gone to the theatre. We’d made a piece of theatre, largely for people who don’t go to the theatre. And so, you sensed it on the first few previews. We did open dress rehearsals for friends and family, and you sort of knew there was a lot of things to fix, but we went oh this is totally working. I think you don’t sit there, if you’re really engaged in a show, you don’t sit there thinking ‘oh God I wish we got Hedwig’s Theme’ or, I think you do before the lights go down I think, you do hear people going “Oh it’s just a shame Daniel Radcliffe isn’t doing it” you know, but then the show starts and it says “this is Harry” you go “OK, it’s Harry”.

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ML: John Tiffany, the director is known for, he tackled that head on on the first day of rehearsals. We were under huge scrutiny and huge security as well about what we were doing and making sure that nothing leaked. And so he said “forget it, bigger than Harry Potter, bigger than J K Rowling, bigger than dementors and all that, he said we’ve got an opportunity to make a really, really exciting piece of theatre for people who don’t go to the theatre. And that is the most important thing that we can try and do in the next 4 or 5 months.” And I think he did pull that off.

DW: When you working on your own and working with Imogen what were your main goals, particularly thinking about the interaction with the stage and movement, what were your main priorities in what you wanted to create or how you wanted the music to serve the play?

ML: I’m very comfortable working with John and Steve in the room and I’ve done plays with them too, so just from a logistical point of view – John is not precious about his rehearsal room. Some directors just want silence in the room. John understands that everybody is working in the room, actors, prop makers, costume makers, magic people, musicians. So I was confident with his process so I knew, we’d got these big sequences that needed music we were going to have a sequence with staircases, another with wands and magic, there was going to be a time-passing of 4 years which needed music. Those are quite, they’re tricky to get right but as a concept they’re quite easy. That was why they were very easy to give to Imogen, and say focus on these because they’re going to be really exposed, but they’re really defined. Everything else is not defined so I was sitting in the room watching them work on a scene and I would just be playing music in my headphones all the time, and I would have all her tracks up or I would try and get it down to as few tracks as I thought would work, and I would have one ear on, watch a scene and go “what if I just play the string line from this” and keep going, and eventually what John doesn’t mind you doing as you get to the end of the rehearsal, you take your headphones out and put it into the system into the room, because only then can you know. You play for yourself earlier on and you think oh this is going to work, but you don’t know that yet, and when I felt confident about it then I’d put it on in the room. And then you can have a conversation ‘oh this is good’ ‘I don’t like that’, ‘this doesn’t need anything’ and so on.

DW: And you also get a chance to see how that affects the actors

ML: Oh my God yeah, and John knows perfectly well that if you get it right it affects them in a positive way. It’s so collaborative it’s such a different way that this new vanguard of directors are working, who are all inclusive and not these guru directors, even though they have the ability they are gurus because they’re brilliant, they’re the top, they understand that it’s a collaborative form and theatre has to be more than just people talking on stage.

DW: I wondered about particularly the presence of magic and if that is given a sound? Kind of similar to the films magic and spells are always given specific physical sounds, and I wondered if that happens – or the dementors even, any magical presence, is there a kind of sonification of that?

ML: Yes so, for a play Harry Potter is unusual in that it’s got two sound mixers, for a play, I mean you don’t have that on musicals – so everybody is mic’d, so you’ve got somebody mixing the speech, and then you’ve got someone else doing all the music and all the sound. The stuff you’re talking about is largely dealt with by the sound department, who created
the aural world of the wands and the cloaks and the spells and the magic and all of that, which is different to the score element. Having said that, there’s a track of Imogen’s I think called ‘The Walk’, and if you listen to ‘The Walk’ it’s got this fantastic sample on it of I don’t know if it’s sheets or heavy sheets, but it sounds like a cloak. And it became very clear that we could use that for the wizards, the witches and wizards when they have their meeting, and we could then manipulate the cloak sounds in the track and move it so that whenever they did walk with their cloaks, we had the sound. The sound department had a cloak sound as well separately, just for that sequence we took it over, but you’ll hear cloaks throughout the show but it’s all coming from sound. So they really defined all the stuff you’re talking about, the sound department. They defined that side, the magic and the spells. And it was very specific to get the different sounds of the spells right.

DW: I think that’s everything I would want to ask about – my main interest is to think about the play as an extension of the world, and how fans access the world and the role of music and sound in creating those worlds. Anything else you’d like to add?

ML: I did think going into this project, if people are worrying about the music on these two shows, then the show won’t be working. Because I thought I am so far down the food chain on this, this is not like doing a musical, and I’m used to being front and centre you know, if the music’s not working in a musical then you’ve got a problem, I thought on this this is going to fucked by like, if the cloaks aren’t working, if the magic isn’t working, if the story isn’t working, and the truth is like all good theatre it’s a really really good play, and so from the moment it starts it just works. And that was not a given, people just go for it, they just buy into the story and the world, and so everything else just helps. I don’t know how successful as a script it’s been for people who’ve just read it and not seen it, I mean it’s hard to read a script anyway. So I don’t know what that experience is like, but I know as a day in the theatre as you know, 8 hours in the theatre, it’s just great! And it just works from the word go. And I don’t know exactly why that is but they just basically got it right so we all support that, the music, and we enhance that.

DW: One final question – Imogen did an interview, asking if she was planning on releasing the soundtrack or scores to buy – do you know if there are plans for that, would that be a good thing?

ML: Yes, there was always talk of it, the ball is in her court in a way because in the end what happened, what was great in the end that because – she was able to take everything that I’d done and take it back and reclaim it and make it Imogen and make it better, so she sort of really did own the whole score by the time we opened, it was all her, so she’s definitely making an album of it all. What will be interesting is for her fans to see the relationship of the tracks, the original tracks and how they turned into Harry Potter score, and some of them are more visible, more obvious than others. But I think that’s why it was probably helpful that it wasn’t her that did it, because it’s not my music so I didn’t have a problem going “God this cello line’s really interesting, if you turn it round and do that” and often times she would be horrified and other times she’d say that’s kind of interesting and I can do that as well, and it would start that conversation.

DW: The game takes its inspiration from the Tolkien novel rather than the Jackson films - how did you go about finding the right sound world for the game, and what inspired you in instrument choice, melody, harmony etc?

LM: This partly answered by your third question. Chance was the music Supervisor and composed the franchise themes for this series of games. His style guide was used as principal direction. Additionally, I wrote several themes specific to War of the Ring such as a Good vs. Evil Theme and blended them as leitmotifs along with Chance's themes throughout the score.

DW: Were you aware of any other Tolkien-themed musics, including Howard Shore’s scores, that influenced you in any way?

LM: I was aware of Howard Shore's material for the Lord of the Rings movies but ignored them for several reasons. One was that EA owned the franchise rights to the movies while Vivendi/Universal owned the franchise rights to the books. Therefore, we made a conscious effort to not point to anything regarding the films and chose to write our individual scores based on the style guide.

DW: Chance Thomas has written about his work on some of the other Vivendi/Sierra LOTR games, and in fact put together a ‘Tolkien Music Style Guide’ for composers to create what he sees as ‘authentic’ Middle-earth music for the games. Did you use this? If so, how strictly did you stick to its guidelines?

LM: As Chance was the music director, I was respectful of his style guide and easily worked with it while incorporating my own material.

DW: Can you describe the process for you of writing music which is interactive/responsive to elements of the game, for example combat music, exploratory music etc.

LM: Chance and I had a meeting with the development team (this is a common practice in the industry) where I worked with them on figuring out how I was going to approach the music mechanics. As the music engine could morph between exploration/building and battle music I designed the music as two arrangements of the same composition where one would work as exploration material and the other would fit the battle scenarios. There were also a few "one-shot" music events which would play in certain circumstances in the game play.

DW: Anything else you might like to add/share!

LM: If you like, I'm planning on having some of the music available for listening in an audio streaming app soon. If you like, I'll send you a link.


DW: Kari mentioned that she worked with you on editing the music for the introduction film for the tour, and I wondered if you might be able to answer a few questions? I’m interested in how you went about choosing certain cues from each of the films for the introduction video, and whether you had a very specific brief or you were more free to try
things out? I recognise it was probably quite a while ago, but any help or information you
could give me would be great.

JO: I received a picture cut with some music laid against it that had been taken from the
soundtrack CD. Initially I replicated the cut using the original score material and improved
some of the transitions using the greater flexibility I had. I then proposed some
improvements with alternate cues or different placements where I felt the music cut the
picture editor had done wasn’t quite hitting the mark. This was all done using the 5.1 mixes
from the original score archive. Once the final edit had been agreed on, I went back to the
original session multitracks (replicating the performance edits we had originally done for
the film) and rebuilt the edit so that the music could be remixed specifically for the cinema
room at Leavesden. I then helped Kari mix everything in situ at Leavesden. The big
advantage was that we could mix it knowing exactly how it was going to sound as it would
only ever be played back in the same space we were mixing it in!


DW: My first question is about worldbuilding. Creating music for a game which is so
closely linked to a film franchise, I wondered in what ways your music for Shadow of
Mordor is inspired by or influenced by Howard Shore’s music for LOTR?

GS: Well I can honestly say that there is almost zero influence, because I had not seen the
movies. Let me be accurate, I saw one of the movies but the music, I thought was quite
appropriate but it didn’t stand out as that different from any other, the style of music did
not stand out in any way as being – revolutionary or whatever , it felt like well-composed
standard film music. And it had been a few years since I had seen that movie, and I was
absolutely not listening to his scores when I was writing my music. I really didn’t want to
imitate it.

DW: So I guess then looking at what you did create, how much creative freedom did you
have in what you were writing and how specific were the briefs that you were given by the
gamemakers and producers?

GS: Well I tell a little joke: which is that I can write anything I want as long as they like it.
So I found the appropriate style pretty quickly and they were pleased and it went smoothly.
They were very specific and that’s because I am a contracted composer, Nathan Grigg is
the in-house music director for Monolith, and he wrote a lot of music as well. So he was
my main contact and he would send me very specific tasks, in game and then later on CGI
movies to score, so he was specific about it – which I really do need because they’re in the
Seattle area and I’m in LA, so yes I would get specific briefs and that was quite important
and valuable otherwise I would just be guessing.

DW: I guess within those briefs, or working with Nathan then, did one of you take more of
the gameplay and one take more cut-scenes? What were your roles in working together?

GS: I don’t have an overall analysis of what we wrote but I know that we both wrote in-
game music and both wrote CGI movies, so probably more splitting those tasks. That’s my
guess but I don’t have a breakdown specifically.
DW: Thinking more about the music itself, how would you say you go about creating a musical world that is coherent for a particular game or franchise and how important is that coherence for you?

GS: Well I mean they would send me – one of the ways obviously CGI movies are sent to me as a movie and you score it just like you would score a scene in a film. But, for gameplay, generally they would do a gameplay movie capture. So someone at Monolith would play the game in the area where I was scoring, and capture maybe 3 or 4 or 5 minutes of that gameplay. That would be saved as a movie file which was sent to me as inspiration, for the look and feel and vibe. That plus any preliminary, what happened prior to that, I needed to know because one of the things that was unique about Shadow of Mordor was that it wasn’t just a take on one of the films where it was taking the film’s story and making a game out of it – this was a completely unique storyline, and therefore it was critical for me to understand what was going on, what preceded and what would follow, so basically I was just inspired by what I was seeing and hearing and being informed, and intuitively reacting and writing music that felt right for it, obviously we had created a style which was mostly orchestral, and it was pretty dark most of the time, a lot of combat music – I mean a lot of combat music was written, I’ve gotten pretty good at doing that I think, so I mean hopefully that answers your question.

DW: How would you say even musically and with instruments that you use – for example the combat music – I heard a lot of taiko drums, big bass drums, regular or irregular rhythms and time signatures, metallic percussion, a lot of choral stuff I heard, which is interesting because there’s a similar level of use of choral work in Howard Shore’s scores, low male voices which I heard – would you say there’s specific sounds which you would go to for specific places in the game world or battle music for example?

GS: There’s lots of ways to do combat I suppose, but typically ostinati, percussion, I think that mixed both intense, fast tempi, I mean all those driving, some aleatory was used, certainly lots of complex meters, driving things along and to keep things unpredictable. Sometimes melodies, sometimes not. So all those sort of techniques that any composer may derive or use to generate combat music. I used whatever I could. And the problem is that you don’t want it all to sound the same and yet you also want it to be coherent and sound like it’s coming from one game as opposed to five different games or movies or whatever. So, certainly the combat music was dissonant, a lot of clusters, and definitely driving. We did hire a live percussion but the percussion is very much a mix of both live and samples. We did record with an orchestra, but not all of it. A decent portion of it did have an orchestral score as well.

DW: That was my next question – how much of it proportionally do you think was live sound to added?

GS: Well that’s a good question I don’t have the answer to that, I would think listening to the soundtrack though, I would think a very very high percentage of that was orchestral. Maybe, I’d have to look, again it’s been a few years, but maybe 95% of that maybe all has some orchestral content. So those were the most important cues the cues that we felt were most interesting and exciting and soundtrack-worthy. But, for instance, some of the combat music, but not all, was written in layers. Which is an interactive technique so you write the cue in its most intensive version and then you deconstruct it to get less intense versions. And even an ambient version. So that you can quickly cross-fade to those different states
based on what the character in the game is doing. So if you duck away from combat it
could get less intense and if you walk far enough away it could turn into an ambient cue.
So usually the most intense layer would have been orchestral but these other layers might
not have been. And those probably didn’t make it to the soundtrack. But I mean 2/3 of the
music would have been non-orchestral and 1/3 orchestral. But that’s on the soundtrack the
most intense orchestral version.

DW: How responsive does your music have to be in this interactive world-exploring
game? How would you go about creating different ambient sounds for different spaces?
Most of it takes place in Mordor, but in other cutscenes there are other spaces like Gondor.
The music for Talion’s family in those CGI movies is completely different. Would you say
you were consciously creating different soundworlds for different spaces?

GS: Yeah definitely because especially when you’re in a less-threatening world prior to the
horrendous battles and conflicts that occur later on, you definitely want to play that in, it’s
a different world, it’s everything prior to him essentially being killed, and everything after
it is quite different. So yes very consciously the music was different and more tonal, it still
was orchestral – we didn’t completely change the sound world but it’s like anything else,
the inspiration was all what’s going on in the game, or similarly with a film or television
score, you’re always being inspired by what’s happening in the game.

DW: Are you involved in Shadow of War?

GS: I’m actually not allowed to talk about that publically. So that might inform you…


DW: The first question I sent you
was if you had access to any material or list of cues that
was used where and when?

KS: Colbert would have access to that. I can definitely reference the tones and general
soundtracks that were used.

DW: The second question was more about rationale behind the choice of cues used in
certain places – I’m particularly interested in some of the more monumental moments in
the tour such as Hogwarts, Dumbledore’s Office, I guess anything that you want to say on
that, what choices you made and why you made them.

KS: I’ll just start with like the broad approach to finding the background music to this
project. So this one, obviously the material that we had to use was the music from all eight
soundtracks, and so we weren’t going to have original music composed because we had
this wealth available to us and that’s what the fans would expect to hear – is the music
from the soundtracks, so the first step was to go through all of them and actually figure out
which music cues could act as background music because a lot of the music, especially as
you move into the later soundtracks – is really dark, really dark and sort of not – it doesn’t
have the same sense of sort of uplifting wonder that the first soundtracks have, and for
most of the exhibit, almost all of the exhibit, that’s the sense that you want the guests to
feel, it’s that sense of like you know walking into the Great Hall for the first time or
discovering the world of magic for the first time, so – right after that about I don’t know
the exact percentage but I’d say at least 50% of the music tracks couldn’t be used as
background music because they didn’t have the right mood for the scene or the room that they were underscoring. So I went through and fished out what I thought would work and then we had – I didn’t want to have the music repeat so every time they go into each section they’re hearing the same major theme music, so it was sort of separating out which tracks would work well and it was almost kind of like just piecing and puzzling things together so we could get a long enough music cue in each room where people wouldn’t get bored by it. So for example in the first room you come in after you go through the Great Hall, that’s the first room with all the media, that’s where we estimated that people would spend the most time, and so that was the longest music loop – I think it was between 70-90 minutes, and so just finding that much material that could work together in a musical way where it is just background music, it’s not drawing attention to itself, it’s just setting a mood and setting a tone, that was a bit of a challenge on its own but we were able to piece together enough to work with. So from that I also had a guideline of working with the creative director on the project Craig Hannah, he’s one of the company owners he was the creative director on site. So there were nine music loops that we created, let’s see. So let me just walk you through some of the moods. So the first place you come into – the Café, and this could be just sort of a montage of movie emotions it didn’t have to be all the same tone, and this could also be higher energy than some of the other zones because guests aren’t, they’re not reading panels really they’re just sort of gathering and getting really excited about coming through the experience so they’re not trying to absorb other information while they’re also in this space. And then we move into the intro room where those eight screens playing that media, so that had to be just sort of not too epic just sort of a shuffling in music, something that sort of had like and anticipation, and I forget the music cue that was used there, but that one sort of had like the perfect tone for just like not getting people too excited too fast. So overall it’s thinking about scoring a movie where you have to hit the epic moments with the epic music and then, the um not so epic moments with sort of - uh – waiting music I guess. And then the same thing with right before you watch the intro film you don’t want to get people excited too fast so it’s just a walking in music. But then the big reveal is when obviously after the intro film when the screen lifts up, and you enter the Great Hall – and at that moment, whatever cue – again I think that cue might actually be called “entering the great hall” or it might have something to do with that, double check with Colbert, but that cue definitely has a strong emotional feel, and I was lucky to witness with some of the early groups, people would like immediately break down in tears when they would see that, the screen lift and they see the doors and they hear the music – a great big moment. And so that first sense of like you’re walking into the great hall, you’re walking into your first set from this movie that you love – that had to have a really sort of epic feel to is as well, so epic and grand emotional sense to it so that was the first big point. And then after you leave the great hall, like I mentioned the main room called the J stage – there was the J stage and then the K stage which is the second building, and that’s the one where people are absorbing a lot of information, they’re looking at costumes they’re reading panels, they’re watching films, so that really had to be a slightly uplifting music but that could easily blend into the background. So nothing too sweeping and if you looked at – I don’t know if in your work you’ve looked at sound waves before, but usually in cinematic musical scores there’s usually a large dynamic range – so there can be a difference of say 10-15 dB, and when you’re listening to that kind of – that much of a difference in volume range, in a background music track it can really stand out, and where people aren’t really noticing the music before all of a sudden they hear this loud swell and it can kind of throw them out of the experience, so in addition to finding the right music I also spent a lot of time on site making sure to diminish those
swells, so you just bring the volume down on them so you just hear this kind of constant murmur of background music.

DW: So would you compress some of the cues so that the dynamic range was smaller or vary the volume here and there?

KS: It was definitely a combination of using compression and varying the volume, because with cinematic music the dynamic range was so much bigger, if you just compressed it it would sound too squashed, so we had to spend a lot of time just manually bringing down the volume but also doing overall compression, to tracks. And then there was a lot of work just mixing them correctly for each room, I remember in that J room certain high frequencies really stood out beyond other frequencies, so it was a lot of work finding the right balance. And luckily I was on site for 2 months so I had a lot of time to mix the cues and make sure everything was working and the experience was flowing musically, like it should. And that was a really great luxury that this project had, because on some projects you’re super rushed and you don’t have time for that extra finessing but, in generally because there’s so much love for this franchise there was enough time and enough care to put in to make sure it was a real quality experience.

So let me just get my list, so once you move out of the J room you move into the courtyard, and this was the place where some of the darker music was more appropriate. We couldn’t go too dark, but it didn’t have to be that uplifting exploratory music. So this I was able to find a more unique soundtrack. Again I’m sorry I don’t have a list of music that was used but it was a little bit more relaxing, could be a little bit slower in mood. The creature shop – the goal here was to make a soundtrack that was sort of curious and quirky, and again the music cues that were used here were probably from the John Williams soundtracks, but they definitely had this sort of bouncy, quirky curious feel to them that worked well. And then Diagon Alley, what you said in the question about the reason for picking it, that was really spot on – that was also the one where that music is exactly used when you first see Diagon Alley in the films, so that was a really easy cue to assign to that area. Um, I think I remember this one being one of the shortest music loops as well because people are just walking through here, taking pictures, they’re not spending a whole lot of time so there wasn’t too much of a worry about making sure they wouldn’t get fatigued in this environment. And then (we’re almost done!) and then there’s the room is called I think ‘concept to creation’, it was sort of a model shop – the white room, that was a bit more – the feeling was a bit more romantic so we went for romantic cinematic scores in this area. And then the Hogwarts model, this was one where it was definitely about getting the right moment. And wanting people to again have a moment, a strong emotional moment, so this one had to be the most epic, the grandest of all the music choices and so, a lot of the most epic pieces of music that conjured up the most emotions in the film were saved for this area.

So in summary – with the exception of Diagon Alley, a lot of it was finding the right music from the films that could emotionally underscore the right moment in the exhibit. But it wasn’t always connected back to – sometimes it was – but it wasn’t always connected back to what was happening in the films at the same time you’re seeing certain experiences. So, but I think coincidentally, and I’d have to go back and look, but I think maybe some of the music when you’re first seeing the Hogwarts castle in the films might’ve been used when you’re first seeing the Hogwarts model, but I don’t quite remember off the top of my head.
DW: I think there must be some similarities, and like you said the one with Diagon Alley is an easy one to pick because it’s the first time people have seen it and then they’re seeing it in the flesh, there’s that link in people’s musical memories. I think, I’m not sure about the Hogwarts model because I’ll have to look it up, but it’s definitely that emotional experience particularly when people come round the corner to see the Hogwarts model, and its that moment of – whichever cue is playing they’re both huge, grand epic emotive sound for the people – which I found hugely effective. Also the way the tour is constructed so you spend quite a long time walking round the model and that gradual downwards ramp that makes people stay there for quite a while so I imagine people would spend longest in the Hogwarts area proportionally and also hear the two full cues while they’re going round.

KS: Yeah I think you’re right. What you said about people coming round the corner and immediately hearing music too – I do remember having to edit that music so that – and thinking about that so that whenever someone steps into this music it can’t be at a point in the track where it’s sort of not at an emotional point, it has to always be at the point where people feel a strong emotional reaction, so I believe there was some cutting and condensing to make sure it was always on the high notes of the music.

DW: I have one other question which is maybe more subjective but I think will be interesting – just more on what you feel as a sound designer and having been a part of the creation of the tour, what you feel the role of music on the tour is, and how you feel that was accomplished or what some of the most important roles of music are?

KS: Music is always going to have the strongest emotional reaction – I use that word a lot but that’s really what music does and so, it’s there’s some quote I forget who its by, but that “music is the shorthand of emotion” and that’s really what it does in films and especially in this exhibit. Aside from appropriately emotionally underscoring each moment, it’s also that form of nostalgia – because people who are coming to this exhibit have most likely seen the films, and are familiar – especially with the main theme of the music – and so when they feel that it’s going to have a strong memory effect. And when that music is coupled with whatever image they’re experiencing or information they’re reading its just going to make it that much stronger and bring it also much more to life. A lot of times, not just in this exhibit but in other projects I’ve worked on where I’m either composing or editing music loops or sound effects, music is always – for this themed entertainment or immersive experiences, its actually usually good if people don’t notice the music, if it just kind of blends perfectly at that point of making them feel something but not pulling them out of the experience. So it just adds that like rich under layer to everything. Sorry it’s a little tangential, but basically the music is carrying the emotion of the whole experience. And the memory of the film.

DW: Absolutely, because I think nostalgia and the memory of the film and people feeling like they’ve been taken back into the film or they’ve been allowed to step into the film, but really step into their memory of the film and what they remember of it. This franchise holds so much emotional weight for people etc.

DW: I just have one or two other small questions – so you were working mostly on music but I wondered if there were non-musical sound and sound design that you used, sound effects maybe used in the Burrow or other parts of the tour? Or even in the wand-waving bit and a bit where you could ride on a broomstick.
KS: Most of the sound design was in the films – so the intro film that you hear and also the films that you see on the monitors. So actually I also did all the sound design. The sound effects we were fortunate enough to be able to get the sound effects – all the stems from the films, so when we for example in the intro film which is probably where most of the sound design work was done, that was really taking the sound effects from each scene that was used, then my job was more editing everything so it would flow smoothly and then mixing it, but yeah I think probably at least 95% of the time it was the sound effects from the films that were used for sound effects in the exhibit. And when you’re riding the broomstick I believe that was also pulled, ambiences and broom sounds from the film. But yeah it was all pretty authentic.

DW: Well that in itself is fascinating – not only borrowing the music but also the sounds in the exhibit being taken from the franchise.

KS: And also for me it was fascinating to look at the work that the sound designers had done on such a close level – it was bind boggling to see all the work and all the layers – especially in the later films we would get stems for like the crowd scenes and the ambiences and the sound effects, you could hear the detail of all these original voices and murmurs that they had recorded for each thing – there was so much craft that went into that. And that echoes the amount of craft and care that went into the costumes and the props and everything like that. Most people aren’t going to see the sound design aspect but I felt very fortunate to be able to see the sort of the detail that had gone into that.

DW: I imagine there’s not many other films or franchises that would do so well in making a tour or experience like this because I guess in other films there’s not so much care and detail.

KS: I think also people knew when the movies were being made that they would be hugely popular because the books were hugely popular so they did put the extra effort in and the extra budget and time to make sure everything was crafted. One of the information videos in the exhibit is about making the Goblet of Fire, about how they carved it out of wood – out of a single trunk of wood and its actually like this beautiful relic that you could see in a museum and it’s like wow this extraordinary object. Which is why I think it’s so neat to see those props on display.

One thing I wanted to get his name before I spoke to you – we had the help of one of the music editors on the film to help us edit the music for the intro film – Jon Olive. When we had the intro film music he helped us edit the stems of the music so it would flow seamlessly – he had worked on all eight films I think on either music editing or sound effect editing. It was great to have his expertise.

KS: If you have any other questions definitely shoot them my way. Colbert was involved from the beginning mostly on the system side of it – but also Colbert and I worked, he was my second set of ears throughout the whole project. Colbert did the expansion too so I know he was also concerned with not repeating music and probably a lot of the things I mentioned about how music was selected as well, in terms of making sure it was appropriate for BGM, that it emotionally underscored the scene, and it hadn’t been used too much in other places in the exhibit.

DW: When composing the score for *War in the North*, how much inspiration did you take from the *LOTR* film soundtracks?

IZ: I was inspired by Shore’s soundtrack for the films; I also realized that I needed to take the vibe to a darker place to match the game’s heavy action style and tone. Initially I started with his soundscape, which I think was great for the world of *The Lord of the Rings* and I didn’t want to change it drastically, however I realized that this would not work for this game. It was very much battle orientated and very intense so I used different means to push the velocity, tempo and intensity of the score. I also created my own themes which I think was necessary to differentiate this specific game from the films. Overall, I think this gave the soundtrack its own signature but I definitely composed the music with a lot admiration for and inspiration from the existing scores that Howard Shore created.

DW: How much creative freedom did you have in composing this music? What kind of brief were you given?

IZ: I was briefed on the story and the mode of the game, and was sent some gameplay footage so the score was driven by the game’s story and appearance. The story unfolds with the music – motifs were employed and hinted at throughout the score and the themes develop as you progress through the story and epic battles. Whenever we encountered an orc character, or goblins or human characters, they were each assigned their own theme. Given the extensive amount of detail I was provided during the production of the game, I was able to create a continuous score that builds on how the story evolves and where.

DW: How do you go about creating a musical world for the game (i.e. specific instrumentation, tonal centres, motivic relations), and how important is it to you that this is related to the existing musical world of the films?

IZ: I usually start by establishing a soundscape for the score, you choose your palette that supports the way the game looks and the story, and from there you can start creating specific themes with this palette. Take the magical world of Rivendell, for example, one of the components of the palette that I employed was choir. So I took only choir and dedicated it to Rivendell. Writing for the choir in a cappella – and also a solo voice – worked well for the world of Rivendell. Another part of the soundscape of the score was recording primitive percussion for the orcs since they are savage and wild, so this part of the palette became the identity of the orcs. When it came to the cinematics, I compiled all the components of the soundscape: the orchestra, the choir, the primitive instruments and the rest of the elements. Every time one of the characters was the main focus of the level, I dedicated this specific component from the soundscape to this orc or elf. That is how I go about creating the score.

DW: What for you is the most important goal when creating game music, particularly for this well-known franchise?

IZ: The main goal for me is always to create a score that will 100% support the experience without drawing specific attention to itself. If the score feels like an add-on or separate entity, then no matter how great the music is, it did not achieve what I am striving for. Once the score becomes one with the story and the gameplay then I have achieved my goal.