

Film in Biography Form: The Use of Pre-Existing Classical  
Music in the Composer Biopic

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## Abstract

Kathryn Kalinak describes film music as being ‘directly composed’ to accompany motion pictures, with its function found in enhancing the emotional and narrative structures of the onscreen events, such as dialogue, screenplay, and acting. (Kalinak, 2010). An exception to this arises when a film makes use of pre-existing music as its soundtrack. Pre-existing music is composed without knowledge of a film’s emotional or narrative properties and is therefore not specifically composed for the film. Nowhere is this phenomenon seen clearer than in the composer biopic, which, due to its subject matter, often demands the use of pre-existing music. The recontextualisation of pre-existing classical music into a filmic context means that it can now be cast in a new light, intertwined with a scene’s sentiment. However, does the adoption of a filmic context mean that the use of pre-existing music should be assessed by film music criteria, such as the amplification of mood and narrative? If so, does that consequence a loss of musical integrity? Furthermore, what are the repercussions of this changing context for our understanding and interpretation of the original music?

To tackle these questions, I will evaluate the use of pre-existing classical music within *Lisztomania* (1970), *Amadeus* (1984), *Immortal Beloved* (1994), and *The Music Lovers* (1970). I will explore the use of pre-existing classical music in these films through the adoption of various technical functions, such as diegetic, nondiegetic, and metadiegetic. Furthermore, I will explore how the use of pre-existing music can shape or change an audience’s understanding of a particular scene, and through this I will demonstrate how pre-existing music is able to adopt the filmic function of intensifying the sentiment and narrative of a film. With consideration given to criticism from musicologists, such as Joseph Horowitz and Robert Craft, who advocate musical integrity in film, I will show that it is essential for

pre-existing music to be modified in order to enhance filmic properties, such as narrative and emotion. I will also consider comments from film critics, such as Roger Ebert and David Thomson, and assess the use of pre-existing music against a film music criterion, thus demonstrating music's mutability across different contexts.

## Introduction to the Biopic Genre: Definitions and Problems

In his book 'Bio/Pic,' George F. Custen drew attention to the separate genres of biography and film that merge together in the biopic genre (Custen, 1992). He made it clear that although biographies can be both fictional and non-fictional forms of entertainment, they are usually based on a historical truth with the aim to impart knowledge of the life events of historical figures through an in-depth description (ibid.). In contrast, the medium of film usually finds its function in providing its audience with an escapism through drama and entertainment<sup>1</sup> (Bingham, 2010). The merging of these two media means that the biopic genre must be understood as a *dramatised* account of the factual life events of a historical figure.

Linda Hutcheon coined the term 'historiographic metafiction', to describe the way biopics liberally fictionalise historical figures (Hutcheon, 1989). She suggests that biopics must be evaluated as a source of entertainment that is an alternative history, not a historically accurate source (ibid.). This is not to say that biopics do not portray factual information, but due to a film's commonly exaggerated emotional and narrative elements, biopics cannot be considered as historical fact. Despite Hutcheon's influential study, many musicologists, such as Joseph Horowitz and Maurice Zam, harshly criticise the composer biopic, with much condemnation aimed at the lack of historical authenticity (Joe, 2006). However, by their very nature, biographies are untrustworthy. In written form, biographies have unreliable narrators, such as friends or family, who hold bias in their writing due to an emotional connection with the biography's subject (Hanson, 2007). An example of this is Shostakovich's *Testimony* written by Solomon Volkov. The authenticity of *Testimony* is disputed due to the anti-Soviet

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<sup>1</sup> This does not imply that all films are fictional entertainment alone.

views Volkov claims were expressed by Shostakovich (Kettle, 2000). *Testimony's* unreliability means that it should not be approached as a historically accurate document, and by extension, a biography's uneasy line between fact and fiction means that it is not viable to criticise the genre for its inaccuracies. The very nature of biography is unreliable. Moreover, these inconsistencies are amplified in a filmic context due to the dramatised nature of film.

With regards to other genres of film, such as science fiction or romance, historical accuracy is not a foregrounded issue. With science fiction fabricating other worlds and imagining futuristic concepts, and romance portraying the 'unrealistic' love lives of other couples, viewers are more willing to suspend their disbelief and to not evaluate the narrative as factual (Alleyne, 2008). Biopics, then, often face criticism for their historical inaccuracies because they gain their narrative from historical sources. However, Hollywood's influence means the biopic genre readily exaggerates and elaborates upon fact, causing the spreading of misinformation (Teodorczuk, 2018). Yet, when considering Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction and Custen's assessing of the biopic genre as half-biography, half-film, it is concluded that biopics are, by their very essence, an elaborated and exaggerated account of the life events of a non-fictional figure (Hutcheon, 1989; Teodorczuk, 2018). The clear dramatisation of biopics further demonstrates that historical accuracy is not a viable criterion with which to evaluate the biopic genre by. This is because the biopic does not need to be historically accurate – through its medium of film, biopics are able to share in elements of fictionalisation that other film genres have.

In order to provide a greater understanding regarding the biopic genre as a whole, and in order to conduct a deeper investigation into the ideas presented in this introduction, my next chapter will assess *Lisztomania* (1970), a biopic about the life of Franz Liszt by Ken Russell,

in order to demonstrate that the biopic is both film and biography, thus should not be evaluated against a criterion of historical accuracy.

## Lisztomania as Historiographic Metafiction

Ken Russell's *Lisztomania* (1970) is a bizarre and provocative composer biopic that explores Franz Liszt's life and career. In a contrast with the traditional idea of classical music as a highbrow genre, this biopic depicts Liszt as a rock star figure who lives a wild, unruly and hedonistic lifestyle. As well as the large exploration given to the idea of Liszt as a sex icon, *Lisztomania* draws heavily on the unstable friendship between Liszt and Wagner. Making use of vampires, zombies, and spaceships, Russell's presentation of this narrative takes a convoluted fantasia approach which strays from, and elaborates upon, the historically documented narrative that is conventional for biography (Landy, 2001). Whilst Russell's 'cinefantastique' approach in directing this film gained praise from film critics, such as Roger Ebert, who described the film as 'demented genius,' the majority of reviews were negative, criticising the merging of biography and fantasy film, and describing the film as 'deadly dull' and a 'failure' (Care, 1978; Ebert, 1975; Adams, 2009). Joining the film critics, musicologists also disparaged the biopic's portrayal of Liszt's biography arguing that the narrative was largely historically inaccurate with extensive dramatisation of factual events (Joe, 2006).

Therefore, during this chapter I will be exploring various narrative elements of *Lisztomania*, such as Liszt's friendship with Wagner, and assessing the historical accuracy of its portrayal to demonstrate how the biopic has dramatised its subject matter. I will relate my findings with trends from the biopic genre as a whole to demonstrate that the exaggeration of historical fact often found in biopics means that the genre must not be considered as a source of unprecedented historical accuracy. The reason I have chosen *Lisztomania* to demonstrate this is because of its frequent use of fantasy to relay Liszt's life events which clearly

demonstrates the most extreme ways that biopics can be dramatised, thus deviating from historical fact.

With reference to both Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction and George F Custen's book 'Bio/Pic,' which discusses his theory regarding a biopic's dual function caused by the merging of film and biography, I will be problematising the notion of biopics as straight biography and historical fact; a notion that arises in musicologists, like Henry Lang, and their criticism towards composer biopics and their 'contradiction of recorded facts' (ibid.)<sup>2</sup>. I will do this through demonstrating that the film medium of a biopic means it is subject to dramatisation and exaggeration, thus straight biography cannot be considered a workable criterion with which to evaluate biopics by.

To begin, the contrasting natures of written biography and film must first be addressed in more detail. Written biographies are 'based on a factual reality' in which the central moments of the lives of historical figures are 'relayed in detailed description' (Bingham, 2010). *Lisztomania* gains its narrative through covering historically documented events, such as Liszt's love affair with Marie d'Agoult, his friendship with Wagner, and his journey to priesthood. However, as a biopic, these biographical events are presented in film form, and in a contrast to the factual function of biography, the traditional purpose of a film is to provide its audience with an escapism through drama and entertainment (Lovell and Sergei, 2009). This is not to say that film cannot portray historical events, or that books do not provide entertainment, but that films are likely to be subject to a higher degree of dramatisation and

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<sup>2</sup> 'Straight biography' is a term used by biographer, Michael Holroyd, to describe a biography that attempts to describe even the smallest of details of a person's life in great detail (Higgins, 2011). Straight biography has become less prevalent in recent years with biographers choosing to write only about the bigger events of a person's life (ibid.).

exaggeration than biography<sup>3</sup>. Thus, biography and film must be understood as separate mediums with differing functions.

In consequence, the biopic can be understood as a genre of film in which the true historical events of biography, and the dramatised, entertainment nature of film become affixed to each other. However, film critic David Thomson suggests that the biopic genre's film function causes the spreading of misinformation through its exaggeration of factual events (Maher, 1998). He argues that biography should only include factual information, and that the dramatisation of biography in film form is merely 'an excuse for pious lies' (ibid.). Due to a film's function in providing entertainment, a dramatised narrative would not negatively affect the outcome. In contrast, the dramatisation of biographical events can 'blur the boundary between fact and fiction,' causing viewers to be misled, and sacrificing 'factual accuracy in the creation of dramatic storytelling' (Hammond, 2010). As well as forfeiting historical accuracy, biopics commonly favour the portrayal of a wider, more exaggerated story, causing smaller details to be omitted (Maher, 1998). This further demonstrates the opposing functions of biography and film that are merged together in the biopic genre.

In 1993, film scholar George F. Custen broke down the biopic genre into separate entities of biography and film (Custen, 1992). The book draws attention to the 'spliced-together' nature of the biopic and suggests that biography and film are fundamentally incompatible, as they are two mediums of contradicting purpose (Maher, 1998). In this context, the nature of splicing means that two separate bodies of work are affixed to each other to form a new creation. Through this, Custen suggests that that duality of the biopic genre means that they can never be completely biography, nor completely film (ibid.). Whilst this does not

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<sup>3</sup> Excluding documentaries

necessarily matter, it problematises criticism that evaluates biopics by its historical accuracy alone, thus demonstrating a lack of consideration for the dramatised nature of film. By this reasoning, the biopic genre cannot be evaluated against a criterion of wholly biography, nor wholly film, but must be assessed as an amalgamation of the two mediums; a dramatisation and elaboration of biographical events.

The merging of biography's factual nature and film's exaggeration is seen clearly in Russell's *Lisztomania* with the extensive dramatisation of Liszt's life causing a frequent disassociation from reality. Despite only the bigger picture of Liszt's life being covered, the biopic does still cover historical facts. This is because of the biographical side to the biopic genre. The 'pic', or 'film' side of the genre excessively dramatises and exaggerates events. In *Lisztomania* this is seen through the parasitic portrayal of Wagner, the exorcism of Wagner as a demonic force, and the angelic, godly portrayal of Liszt saving the world on a spaceship.

Much of the criticism aimed at the *Lisztomania* biopic appears ignorant of a biopic's film function with musicologists disparaging the fantastical treatment of subject matter as 'deranged' and 'offensive' (Todd, 2015). The biopic has been deemed 'the most embarrassing film ever made,' with its subject matter criticised as having 'little, if anything, to do with the life and music of Franz Liszt' (Tunzelmann, 2013; Ebert, 1975). As well as this, *Lisztomania* has been listed as one of the 'least historically accurate music biopics ever made,' with Russell described as having 'no interest in the literal truth of Liszt's life' (Phipps, 2015). Russell has also been described as a 'mythmaker,' due to the distorted view of Liszt's life that is portrayed in his film (Adams, 2009). Ultimately, a common factor in this negative criticism comes as a result of musicologists, like Maurice Zam, who problematise 'most of all the lack of historical authenticity' (Joe, 2006). This criticism demonstrates an

evaluation of the biopic against a criterion of historical accuracy; an unrealistic expectation for a genre that is only half-biography and half-dramatised film. Furthermore, the idea of biography as factually accurate was challenged decades ago, with its inherently fictional element also being recognised (Knight and Long, 2004). Thus, why are biopics being assessed by musicologists for their historical authenticity?

To achieve an answer within *Lisztomania*, I will now reference a few key moments from the film in order to accurately consolidate whether the assessing of the biopic as a historically accurate source is a workable criterion. Through this, I am aiming to demonstrate that Ken Russell is not attempting to adjust fact, nor become a ‘mythmaker,’ but that he is simply taking artistic liberties in the directing of his film, thus adhering to a film function.

The first aspect of the biopic that I will investigate is the portrayal of Liszt’s friendship with fellow composer, Wagner. Russell’s elaboration and mythical portrayal of this relationship wrought outrage from the musicological community, such as Alex Tunzelmann, who thought that the friendship was portrayed as contemptuous and that it went ‘a bit far’ (Tunzelmann, 2013). In a scene at the end of the film, Wagner is portrayed as a zombie-like vampire who rises from the dead to destroy the world. Liszt, on the other hand, is portrayed as a messiah figure who is riding a spaceship and preparing to save the world through his music. This narrative is also reflected through musical symbolism in which Lisztian and Wagnerian themes are heard clashing (Care, 1978). As a priest, Liszt is musically represented by the organ, whilst Wagner is represented by a rock version of *Ride of the Valkyries*. This is a clear demonstration of the dramatisation generally perceived to be held within film.

Ross Care has suggested that the film's imagery metaphorically symbolised the draining nature of the friendship between the two composers (ibid.). Concurring this, vampire Wagner is later seen sucking Liszt's neck and draining him of blood: clear imagery of a physical draining to represent the nature of the friendship between the two composers. Additionally, Russell's portrayal of Wagner is consistently of a parasitic fashion. He continually gains from Liszt's fame, and eventually attempts to overcome and kill Liszt. Russell stated that the inspiration for *Lisztomania* came from 'things I feel when I listen to the music of Wagner and Liszt, and when I think about their lives' (Lanza, 2007). This statement indicates that *Lisztomania* is not inspired by biography alone but is partly derived from Russell's imagination and creativity. This again heeds that historical accuracy is not a workable criterion for a film that incorporates so much creativity and fictitiousness.

However, Care also suggests that Russell's portrayal of Wagner as a vampire is an elaboration of theory and speculation which suggests that Wagner stole and adapted many of Liszt's musical innovations (Care, 1978). For example, the leitmotif is a musical innovation often associated with Wagner; despite this, Matthew Bribitzer-Stull speculates that it was first used by Liszt in his symphonic poems (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015). As well as this, he also surmises that Liszt's music, which was often inspired by art and poetry, had a 'profound impact' on Wagner's ideas about the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ('total work of art'; Rubin and Mattis, 2014; Bribitzer-Stull, 2015). Whilst a possibility stands that Wagner was inspired by Liszt, there is no historical evidence to consolidate the theory that he *stole* Liszt's musical innovations and claimed them as his own. This demonstrates the subjective nature of biography due to its use of theory and speculation. Its inclusion in a film, a frequently dramatised medium, further emphasises the perils of attempting to evaluate *Lisztomania* as a source of undoubted historical authenticity. Returning to Custen's outline of a biopic's dual

function of both biography and film, the tendency of the film medium to exaggerate narrative suggests that, as a film, *Lisztomania* is well within its right to dramatise its biography with fantasy and myth (Custen, 1992).

Despite the realisation of the fictional element of historical writing surfacing in the 1980s, musicologists, like Igor Kipnis, have expressed their anger regarding the lack of historical authenticity that often surfaces within composer biopics (Joe, 2006). However, with regards to *Lisztomania*, historical accuracy cannot be considered as a viable criterion with which to evaluate the biopic as it is filled with so much metaphorical elaboration of historical fact (ibid.). Russell's frequent symbolism means that historical fact is elaborated, causing documented truth to become distorted. Therefore, critics who approach *Lisztomania*, which is both a biography and a film, with the criteria of a historically accurate *biography* predestine the film for failure. It is not wholly biography, but also part film; thus, a dramatised version of events that functions to provide its audience with fact and entertainment (Custen, 1992). When also considering biography's fictionalised elements, it is clear that biopics cannot be evaluated as historical documents.

When investigating *Lisztomania's* dramatisation in more depth, it is clear that critics, musicologists and audience members alike were irritated by the metaphorical and fantasia-like approach taken by Russell. The general consensus was that the film 'gets worse and worse' as it progresses, which interestingly, correlates with the fact that the film gets increasingly metaphorical and fantastical (Tunzelmann, 2013). This criticism suggests that the main source of contention for the film came from a rejection of Russell's fantasia approach. It also suggests that audiences and critics alike preferred the realism portrayed in earlier scenes, such as the opening concert scene.

However, an aversion to fantasy films cannot be considered a genuine reason for the disfavour that met *Lisztomania*. As it currently stands, four out of five of the highest-grossing films of all time are of the fantasy genre which clearly indicates a strong enjoyment of the genre (Tribune.com, 2019). Despite this, audiences who watch fantasy films are generally prepared to suspend their disbelief so that the film may be enjoyed. *Lisztomania*, which presents itself as a film about the life of Franz Liszt, is presented as a biopic which means that it will have attracted an audience seeking realism and historical fact. The film's fantasy aspect, a factor that most of the film's criticism disparages, comes as an unexpected factor for the viewer. It distracts the narrative from its factual route and means that biography becomes entangled with fiction – a quality deemed to damage the biopic's narrative when it is evaluated by critics who search for historical accuracy. This forms the idea that *Lisztomania* is more akin to a 'documentary musical fantasy' than a biopic (Care, 1978). A 'documentary musical fantasy' is something Care describes as 'not a conventional narrative drawn from cold, documented fact, but rather a fantasia on the life of the composer under consideration (ibid.). Thus, it is likely that in preparing the audience for a fantasy narrative, there would have been less backlash from critics who were expecting a historically sound biopic.

In a contrast to the idea that the fantastical approach distracts the narrative from factual detail, Russell suggested that the film's overall narrative direction did, in fact, remain true to the historical events of Liszt's life, but with added metaphorical elaborations. When he encountered the negative responses, he stated that these came because the treatment of the subject matter was 'symbolically and intellectually above the heads of the Daltrey fans' and concluded that the film was 'pure magic' (Cooke, 2008). This implication that the biopic's symbolism was an intelligent portrayal of Liszt's life suggests that Russell blamed his

audience for lacking knowledge of Liszt's life, and therefore not understanding the metaphorical imagery incorporated into the film. However, the negative responses did not come from film critics alone, but also from those who had an in-depth knowledge of Liszt's life, such as Alex von Tunzelmann who writes musicology columns for *The Guardian*. When considering the criticism that *Lisztomania* 'failed' to accurately convey historical fact came from both film critics and musicologists alike, it becomes clear that these evaluations don't acknowledge that the medium of film through which the biography is conveyed, causes it to be subject to dramatisation (Tunzelmann, 2013). Therefore, the negative responses from *Lisztomania* came as a result of critics who evaluated the film alongside a criterion of historical accuracy, having no idea of the fantasy element that permeates most of the film. There are also other things at stake here, such as the inherent uneasiness with the slippery boundaries between fact and fiction. It is this uneasiness and slipperiness that Russell depicts and plays with explicitly in the film.

Moving on, Russell's portrayal of Wagner highlights the anti-Semitism that Wagner frequently expressed through his life. Russell portrays Wagner as a Hitler figure, complete with a moustache and a swastika, who is mass-murdering Jewish people with bullets from his electric guitar. Whilst this is occurring, Liszt is in heaven devising a way to save the Jewish people, and the world, from Wagner and his music. Historically, Wagner was outspoken in his anti-Semitism. In 1850, he published an essay entitled *Das Judentum in der Musik* (Judaism in Music) which expressed racist thoughts and ideas about the Jewish race. He described the Jews as an 'alien' race that seized him with 'a feeling of the greatest revulsion' and 'horror' (Wagner, 1850). He then went on to describe a detailed list of qualities and features of the Jewish people that he found to be repugnant and was 'instinctively repelled' by (ibid.).

As well as this explicit loathing of the Jews, it is frequently speculated that Wagner created Jewish caricatures for the antagonists of his operas. *Die Meistersinger* (1862) portrays a character named Beckmesser as a money-hungry annoyance, one who is foreign to the ‘true’ German people and is totally devoid of any musical talent. These characteristics align with Wagner’s own outspoken ideas about the Jewish race: for example, as a foreign people who cannot be held capable of ‘any sort of artistic utterance’ (Service, 2011; Wagner 1894). This demonstrates the outward expression of Wagner’s anti-Semitism which frequently pervaded his philosophies and art. These views have shrouded his music in controversy, particularly in Israel, where his music is not played (Ross, 2012). This declarative anti-Semitism has been seen as a defining feature of Wagner, which serves to explain its prevalence in Russell’s portrayal of the composer, and by extension, demonstrates how *Lisztomania*, as half-biography, has attained its narrative from historical fact.

As a further complicating factor in Wagner’s political legacy, Hitler was an avid fan of Wagner’s, with his music often being played at National Socialist rallies to represent an idea of the ‘true Germany’ and of ‘true German art’ (Potter, 2016). Wagner’s philosophies were held in esteem by Hitler, with historians like Thomas Grey writing that Wagner’s ideas on racial purity in Germany were a ‘rich source of inspiration for Hitler’s world view’ (Grey, 2008). Reinforcing the inspiration Hitler drew from Wagner, Hitler is recorded to have said that ‘Wagner’s line of thought is intensely familiar to me’ which suggests that Hitler also identified similarities between himself and the composer (Smith and Piccard, 2005).

Having explored the historical accuracy of *Lisztomania*’s narrative, the inspiration for the portrayal of Russell’s Wagner as a highly anti-Semitic individual is clearly drawn from

historical fact. Moreover, having consolidated an understanding for Russell's frequent use of symbolism and metaphor in *Lisztomania*, the portrayal of Wagner as a Hitler-like figure is likely to be Russell's symbolism of the inspiration Hitler drew from Wagner's philosophies, thus creating and becoming an actively anti-Semitic leader. Thus, Russell's portrayal of Wagner is like a microcosm for the biopic genre: Wagner's portrayal is based on historical fact yet is elaborated with symbolism and metaphor in order to create a dramatised historical narrative.

Despite the basing of Russell's Wagner on historical truths, Russell was criticised by Alex Tunzelmann for his blindness in accentuating Wagner's anti-Semitism, yet hiding Liszt's; a factor for which she heavily denounced the film. She acknowledged that Wagner's anti-Semitism was very outspoken, but also clarified that 'Liszt's own feelings about Jewish people, while not so actively hateful, weren't exactly friendly either' (Tunzelmann, 2013). Tunzelmann suggests that Wagner and Liszt's anti-Semitism are comparable to each other, however, there is a significant difference in the way the composers approach this perspective. As was witnessed in *Das Judentum in der Musik*, Wagner actively spoke of his hatred of the Jewish race, whilst Liszt's anti-Semitism was of a typical nineteenth-century social perspective (Gibbs and Gooley, 2010). Furthermore, at a later point in his life, Liszt stated that he was not an anti-Semite and that he respected 'every decent person,' which suggests that Liszt's view of the Jewish people changed as his life progressed (Hamilton, 2011). Through drawing a comparison between evidence of Liszt's anti-Semitism and Wagner's anti-Semitism, Tunzelmann appears to have formed a conclusion without in depth knowledge of her chosen subject of discussion.

Tunzelmann also directs a specific point of annoyance at Russell's 'silly point that Wagner is Hitler' (Tunzelmann, 2013). Musically, this is symbolised by the use of Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries* to accompany on-screen imagery of Hitler and a display of swastikas. Tunzelmann states that firstly Russell is blaming the existence of Nazism, as well as Hitler's rise, entirely on Wagner, and that secondly, Russell is suggesting that Wagner is Hitler (ibid.). This understanding suggests that Tunzelmann has evaluated *Lisztomania* as a historical source, and forgets the half-biography, half-film function of a biopic. As was previously suggested by Ross Care, *Lisztomania* is better referred to as a documentary musical fantasy; a fantasia on the life of a composer under consideration (Care, 1978).

Attempting to evaluate *Lisztomania* by as a historical source means that Russell's metaphorical interpretation of Liszt's life is being wrongly interpreted as a suggestion of historical fact and forgets that Russell uses fantasy as an 'integral facet of [his] cinematic vocabulary and style' (ibid.). By extension, this approach means that critics like Tunzelmann forget that Russell has created a biography in *film* form; a format that functions both as a film and as a biography. Custen's biopic theory reminds us that the amalgamation of film and biography found in the biopic means that the biopic can only be *half* biography and *half* film (Custen, 1992). Therefore, to assess a film biography by a criterion of historical accuracy is as ridiculous as evaluating a biography alongside a 'film' criteria. It will always fall short.

By this reasoning, Russell is not suggesting that Wagner is Hitler as Wagner died in 1883, six years before Hitler was born. However, Russell easily equates the two reflecting popular psyche ideas, like Wagner was a Nazi, or even that Wagner was alive during Nazi Germany. Despite the similarities that Russell may have drawn between the two, it cannot be said that Wagner advocated the Holocaust nor Hitler's extremist policies as he was not alive to give

his opinion on the matter. As a result, the creative license of a film medium must be remembered when evaluating *Lisztomania* as a biopic, as well as Russell's fondness of metaphor and symbolism. This means that it is vital for *Lisztomania* to be evaluated both as a film, and as a biography.

Russell's portrayal of Wagner as an active anti-Semite and of Liszt with no anti-Semitic qualities should not be deemed as factually inaccurate as Liszt's opinions of the Jewish race changed throughout his lifetime and this is how Russell has chosen to interpret the narrative. Furthermore, in a scene near the beginning of the film, Russell portrays Liszt as a modern-day glam rock star who did not care about his music. Therefore, to interpret *Lisztomania* as historically accurate would be to believe that Russell is suggesting Liszt was a rockstar and Wagner was a vampire. The metaphorical portrayal of the two composers demonstrates the dramatised narrative of the biopic which comes as a result of its half-film function.

Tunzelmann's approach in evaluating *Lisztomania* as 'straight' biography, or as a historically accurate source, raises questions. The overlooking, or ignoring, of the film's metaphors suggests a misunderstanding of the film entirely. For example, the film's first major sequence known as the 'Rienzi/Chopticks Fantasia' scene is based on a satiric interplay between Liszt's Hungarian Fantasy, Wagner's Rienzi and Chopsticks, the famous yet simple piano waltz (Care, 1978). The scene begins backstage and a repeated chant of 'Franz Liszt!' can be heard from the crowd in the auditorium who are waiting for Liszt to appear. The camera shots alternate back and forth between the chanting crowd of swooning women, and Liszt, backstage amongst cigarette smoke and alcohol. As if he is late, Liszt rushes towards the stage, and in continuing with the portrayal of the classical composer as a rock star, he bursts on stage through glitter curtains to a standing ovation and rapturous applause. Liszt, as a

classical composer, is presented in a way that is foreign to the traditional classical audience. He is presented as a rowdy rock star rather than a sophisticated pianist, and his concerts are loud affairs rather than the silent audience that is usually associated with classical music (Jones, 2012).

This is a performance that did not historically happen, but for the purpose of progressing the film's narrative, Russell has incorporated it. Its primary purpose is to introduce Liszt's character and convey his level of success as a context for the film's remaining scenes. Therefore, the scene is a fictional one embedded in the context of a factual reality. It must be reinforced that the fictionalised narrative derives from the dramatised and exaggerated 'film' aspect of *Lisztomania* as a biopic.

Liszt begins the concert by playing two quick major chords followed by an ascending chromatic scale. The simplicity of what he plays seems almost sarcastic or satiric when considering that Liszt is historically known for his virtuosic piano skills (Walker, 1987). Despite the extreme simplicity and short length of the music that is heard, the girls in the audience scream and run to the stage causing the music to battle with the loudness of the crowd. Due to the biopic's centralising of a composer's life, as well as the concert setting of the scene, music is a focal point of the film. However, the scene discredits the music through drowning out Liszt's simplistic playing and causing the screams and cheers to be the main auditory focus of the scene. Through this, Russell suggests that it is Liszt's image and looks that caused his fame and not his compositional or pianistic skill. Some have suggested that this dishonours Liszt's legacy (Burton-Hill, 2016). Wagner, who is in the crowd, is visibly distressed by the unwillingness of the screaming girls to hear the music that has been

composed. In this way, Wagner exhibits a similar reaction to the response that the musicologists gave this film.

Obviously, Russell's depiction of Liszt as a modern-day rock star is not historically true; Liszt was a classical pianist and composer, not a glitzy rock star. Tunzelmann's belief that Russell is stating that Wagner *is* Hitler would also suggest that he believes Russell is stating that Liszt *is* a rock star, not a classical musician. It has previously been mentioned how the film function of the biopic enables Russell to take creative liberties in his portrayal of the composer, however, Russell's artistic choice to portray Liszt as a modern-day rock star is an enabler for a modern-day audience to relate and identify with the classical composer. This is especially important as recent media articles suggest that classical music is being 'chased to extinction' (Davey, 2017).

Russell's portrayal of Liszt as a rock star harks back to the film's title, *Lisztomania*. 'Lisztomania' was a term used to describe the hysteria surrounding Liszt as a composer in the nineteenth-century (Gooley, 2004). The frenzy included women screaming, fainting and fawning over Liszt's good looks (Lynskey, 2013). Audiences of 1975, the year that *Lisztomania* was released in cinemas, would have been familiar with the term 'Beatlemania,' or even have experienced the frenzy. 'Beatlemania' was a term used to describe the frenzied fan behaviour for The Beatles, and although the term 'Lisztomania' preceded this, audiences would have identified and related with the Beatles reference. As well as this, Liszt is actually referred to by some contemporaries as the world's 'first rock star' (Reynolds, 2017).

Through exploring these scenes, it becomes apparent that *Lisztomania* does, in fact, cover many basic but historically accurate factors, such as Wagner's inspiration from Liszt,

Wagner's anti-Semitism, and Liszt's role as a sex icon in the classical music world of the nineteenth century. In his 'bio/pic' book, George F. Custen stated that the half-biography, half-film nature of the biopic means that only the bigger moments of a composer's life are likely to be covered so that dramatic intensity can be retained, and so that the film's pace is not slowed by minute details (Custen, 1992; Maher, 1998). This means that small details of a composer's life are likely to be ignored for dramatic purpose, and as a result, the 'biography' aspect of the 'bio/pic' suffers (ibid.). This is something that is clearly evident in *Lisztomania*. The larger, more well-known details of Liszt's life, such as his friendship with Wagner, are used as defining moments in the plot. However, the smaller details of Liszt's life, such as his changing feelings towards the Jewish race, are omitted so that the dramatic pace of the film is not slowed by smaller details.

As well as this, the 'biography' aspect of the 'bio/pic' suffers again due to the dramatised nature of a film. This is because the purpose of a biography is to relay factual events which contrasts with the purpose of a film to provide drama and entertainment. Therefore, it is vital that films within the biopic genre be considered as a film *based* on events of an historical figure, and not as straight biography or a historically accurate source. Writing for The Film Quarterly, Lewis Lockwood stated that a film version of a biography should never be expected to be 'true to the facts' because the medium of film means that the 'essential qualities of the composer's personality' are likely to be dramatised (Lockwood, 1997). This highlights that musicologists who criticise *Lisztomania* for its historical inaccuracies are forgetting the medium of film through which the story is conveyed. In discussing the Beethoven biopic, *Immortal Beloved*, Lockwood suggested that the biopic's purpose was 'not to portray Beethoven as he was, but to reinforce the enduring romantic myths about his personality' (ibid.). This reinforces the notion that biopics should not be considered as a

source of undoubted historical accuracy as they choose the most dramatic moments as a driving force for the narrative and omit the smaller details.

Jeongwon Joe argues that musicologists who disparage the dramatised nature of the biopic demonstrate qualities of modern elitists who argue for the 'autonomy of high art against popular or mass culture' (Joe, 2006). This means that even though there are concerns regarding the 'shrinking' audience of classical music, and even though film is of high consumerism, the modern elitists would prefer 'straight' biography to a dramatised film version (Lockwood, 1997). These modern elitists are dismissive of the fact that biopics are not wholly biography in form but are, as Custen mentioned in his book, two separate mediums of 'bio' and 'pic' affixed together (Custen, 1992; Maher, 1998). This has caused the more liberal historians and musicologists, such as Robert Rosenstone to suggest that it is vital to consider the biopic genre firstly as a source of entertainment, and secondly as a source of *alternative* history, but never a source of undoubted historical accuracy (Rosenstone and Parvulescu, 2012). Through their dual function of biography and film, biopics function to inform their audience of the life of a historical figure, whilst also to provide a source of enjoyment and entertainment. Therefore, through the adoption of this awareness, biopics can be enjoyed as a genre of film based loosely on the life of an historical figure, or as 'quasi' biographies in film form (ibid.).

With regards to Ken Russell, it is possible that he understood the dual function of biopics in his directing of *Lisztomania*. For example, the film clearly gathers its overarching plot from factual events, yet the presentation of these events is done in a highly fictionalised, metaphorical and fantasy-like way. Ross Care acknowledges this and calls the film a 'wildly free-form biography' of which Russell has taken an 'energetic departure from a strict realism'

(Care, 1978). He recognises that the film is loosely based on Liszt's life, but identifies a heavily 'imaginative restructuring of historical facts' in the way it appears in the film (ibid.). As a result of this, the film's opening fantasia sequence could also be interpreted as a musical foreshadowing of the fantasia to come.

To conclude this section, this exploration has made it clear that the largely negative response given to *Lisztomania* has stemmed from Russell's digression from realism and frequent use of fantasy, metaphor, and symbolism as an elaboration of historical fact. This negativity is caused by critics who evaluate the film against the criteria of a 'straight' biography, rather than considering its duality in functioning both as biography *and* the entertainment medium of a film. When considering Russell's heavy fantasia-like approach to Liszt's biography in *Lisztomania*, the search for historical accuracy demonstrated in the criticism of Alex Tunzelmann becomes an unrealistic criterion with which to evaluate the film by. As Ross Care suggested, *Lisztomania* is a 'fantasia' and a 'consideration' of Liszt's life, but is not historically documented fact, nor is it attempting to be so (Care, 1978). As a result, the film should be evaluated by accordingly, alongside a criterion of a 'bio/pic', therefore, half-film and half-biography.

Extending this beyond *Lisztomania*, the research from this section concludes that it is also unrealistic to evaluate any biopic, regardless of its genre or use of fantasy, by a criterion of historical accuracy. As was outlined by George F. Custen in his 'Bio/Pic' book, it is foolish to evaluate a biopic as wholly biography, or wholly film, as the very nature of the genre deems that a biopic is half-biography, half-film (Custen, 1992). This means that the amalgamation of biography and film, means that the biopic genre can be defined as a dramatised and exaggerated account of the factual events of a historical figure's life.

## Pre-existing Classical Music as Film Music

Now that an investigation into the nature of the biopic genre has been conducted, I will now begin to explore the uses of music in the biopic, more specifically the composer biopic, and how this necessitates the use of pre-existing music.

Traditionally, film music enhances a scene's narrative and emotion, telling the audience how to feel through mirroring the sentiment expressed in the onscreen events, such as dialogue, screenplay and acting. Film music also functions as a sound bridge, assisting in smooth transitions between changing scenes and filling the silence in the absence of dialogue (Hurbris-Cherrier, 2018). Russian musicologist and composer, Leonid Sabaneev, stated that film music 'should not draw attention to itself,' but should instead be a *subtle* factor of the film, acting as a 'psychological resonator,' of the screen, and aiming to enhance structures, like narrative and emotion (Sabaneev 1935). Composer Gerald Cockshott, said that film music must not 'keep nudging [him] violently in the ribs,' but must function as an 'unobtrusive servant,' to '*discreetly* heighten the spectator's emotional response' (Davison, 2017). Furthermore, many musicologists, such as Ellen Koskoff and Alexis Luko, often refer to film music as an 'invisible orchestra,' that must aid the audience's viewing experience, but not distract from the onscreen events (Koskoff, 2008; Luko, 2015). This view is held by those who believe dialogue should function as the more dominant part of a film's audio (Larsen, 2007).

The treatment of music within the composer biopic must be regarded as the exception to these things. With composers as the focal point of the narrative, it is necessary that the music of that composer becomes the soundtrack of the film. Often, the orchestra is not only visible,

but demands attention from the audience, and functions as an imperative form of narrative progression. In fact, Peter Shaffer, the playwright of *Amadeus*, stated that music must become ‘the most important character’ of the composer biopic, assuming a role equal to that of dialogue (Shaffer, 2001).

It must be remembered that in its original form, the music found within the composer biopic is not film music, but music played as a source of entertainment, predominantly in a concert setting. Thus, when placed into a filmic context, it is pre-existing music in film. Mike Cormack suggests that when music is placed into a film, it becomes ‘recontextualised,’ thus *becoming* film music and adopting its functions (Cormack, 2006). This means that when placed into a film, pre-existing music works to enhance the emotional and narrative properties of a scene, aiding the audience’s viewing experience.

This is not to say that other genres of film don’t make use of pre-existing music. Stanley Kubrick’s science fiction film *2001: A Space Odyssey* makes use of *The Blue Danube Waltz* and is one of the most famous uses of pre-existing music in film. The use of the pre-existing music in this scene causes the audience to be more involved in the film. Kubrick stated that he chose the music due to its waltz rhythm that reflected the visual rhythm determined in the scene (Benson, 2019). This is evident in the spinning, circular motion of the waltz that reflects the spaceship’s orbit around the spinning space station (Ziegler, 2013). Ultimately, the ‘recontextualisation’ of the pre-existing music causes it to adopt a film music role of mirroring the imagery and enhancing the onscreen narrative and emotion (Cormack, 2006).

With regards to the composer biopic, the music assumes an unconventionally dominant position due to its central role in progressing narrative. To demonstrate that the

recontextualisation of pre-existing music in a composer biopic means that it adopts both a conventional film music function of amplifying drama, and an unconventional role equal to that of dialogue, I will now investigate three composer biopics as case studies (Koskoff, 2008).

I will be assessing the use of music within the Mozart biopic, *Amadeus* (1984), the Tchaikovsky biopic, *The Music Lovers* (1970), and the Beethoven biopic, *Immortal Beloved* (1994). The reason I have chosen these biopics is because they each demonstrate a different use of pre-existing music as film music. *Amadeus* makes use of different technical functions to enhance narrative, *The Music Lovers* makes use of pre-existing music as a sound bridge to provide continuity between scenes, and *Immortal Beloved* manipulates sound quality to portray different character perspectives. The reason I felt it vital to choose composer biopics that use film music in varying ways is so that a clear demonstration of the way recontextualising pre-existing music into a filmic context causes it to *become* film music, thus adopting several of its functions. To evaluate the pre-existing music as film music, I will primarily be focussing on the technical functions of the music; the diegetic, nondiegetic and metadiegetic. Thus, before commencing, a definition of these terms must be clarified in order to ensure total clarity regarding the matter.

Diegetic music, also known as source music, is music that is 'located in the story space' (Van der Lek, 1991). This means that the audience is usually able to identify the source of the music. For example, a scene could imply that the music heard is coming from a radio, or a band, that is visible onscreen. However, the source of the music need not always be visible: off-screen diegetic music is also a common occurrence. Opposing this is nondiegetic music. Nondiegetic music is music without a visible or implied source. It is the more common

function of film music that the description of ‘invisible orchestra’ refers to (Cooke and Forde, 2016). It accompanies the tale and sentiment of a film without overtly drawing attention to itself.

The final technical function that I will be identifying within these case studies is music with a metadiegetic function. Metadiegetic music provides a film’s audience with a secondary narrative that affixes itself to the primary diegesis (Myer, 2012). Through providing a secondary account, the music is able to provide the audience with an insight into the mind or subconscious of a particular character (Wierzbicki, 2012). Metadiegetic music is often characterised by a sudden interruption of the music heard as an indication that a character’s thought process has been interrupted (Gorbman, 1980). For example, when a character reads the musical scores of a composer, the music might be played in the scene as a reflection of the music the character hears in his head. This music may then suddenly end when the character lifts his eyes from the scores as a demonstration that character’s thought process has reached its end. Therefore, metadiegetic music often enables a deeper understanding of a character’s emotional journey throughout a film.

Through evaluating the use of Mozart, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky’s pre-existing music against this film music criterion, I am expecting to conclude that the recontextualisation of their music into a filmic context causes it to be identified as film music in this instance.

*Amadeus*: The diegetic, nondiegetic and metadiegetic uses of Mozart's music

Adapted from Peter Shaffer's play of the same name, *Amadeus* (1984) is an opulent biopic that serves to emphasise Mozart's genius composing ability, as well as detailing his ever-present rivalry with the jealous-seared Antonio Salieri (Shariatmadari, 2011). The film portrays Mozart's life through a flashback of Salieri's, who at the end of his life, claims that he poisoned and killed Mozart because of the all-consuming envy that his music distilled in him. Roger Ebert describes the portrayal of Salieri as a composer 'whose curse was to have the talent of a third-rate composer but the ear of a first-rate music lover, so that he knew how bad he was, and how good Mozart was' (Ebert, 2002). Thus, through Salieri's perspective, Mozart and his music are recalled, music that caused Salieri to 'hear the voice of God' (Keefe, 2003).

With the exception of a few brief extracts from Salieri's opera, *Axur*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, and eighteenth-century gypsy folk music, *Amadeus* relies almost entirely on Mozart's music for its soundtrack (Joe, 2006). Its recontextualisation within a filmic context means that *Amadeus* renders Mozart's music a film soundtrack, and therefore adheres it to a conventional film music function of enhancing the narrative and emotional structures of a scene (Cormack, 2006).

Leonid Sabaneev stated that film music 'should not draw attention to itself', but rather uphold a subordinate position to that of dialogue<sup>4</sup> (Sabaneev, 1935). However, due to the focus of *Amadeus* in portraying the life of a composer, the biopic necessitates an unconventionally dominant use of music. Affirming this, Shaffer stated that the film's music should have such

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<sup>4</sup> Whilst this is one of the earliest texts about film music, Sabaneev's writing on music in film continues to be referenced and held in high esteem by film music experts, such as Mervyn Cooke and Holly Rogers, thus is an important source to consider with regards to music in film (Cooke, 2010; Rogers, 2014).

a prominent role that it should be considered as ‘the most important character,’ even above Mozart himself (Kakutani, 1984). This means that a paradox is formed in the composer biopic where the music functions as a soundtrack, thus as a subtle aid to narrative and emotion, but it also functions as a character, thus as a dominant and foregrounded feature of the film. This means that the composer biopic causes pre-existing classical music to oscillate in and out of a conventional and unconventional film music role.

In order to investigate this oscillation in this chapter, I will use three different scenes from *Amadeus* to illustrate how the dominant use of music within composer biopics breaks from the conventional treatment of music in films. I will demonstrate how this treatment causes it to become an extra character in the film, and an equal partner to dialogue. Additionally, I will explore musicological reaction to the use of Mozart’s music in *Amadeus*, and with reference to critical theory from Adorno and Eisler, I will assess the use of Mozart’s music as soundtrack and explore how it now functions as a narrative and emotional enhancer for the onscreen events, such as dialogue, screenplay and acting.

I will first demonstrate Mozart’s music as bearing both conventional and unconventional film music functions through a scene in which Salieri first encounters Mozart’s scores. Traditionally, film music is subservient to dialogue, but as the most ‘important character’ in the biopic, the music acquires an unconventional position through drawing attention to itself, and silencing the other characters (Van Order, 2009; Kakutani, 1984). Furthermore, the music progresses the narrative structures of the scene in the same way that a physical character would (Joe, 2006). It does this through emphasising Mozart’s genius and consequently accelerating Salieri’s jealousy: as a narrative catalyst. As well as the

unconventional role that the music adopts, Mozart's music is also used to fulfil a conventional film music role through reflecting Salieri's mood, thus enhancing the emotion.

The scene opens with Constanze, Mozart's wife, presenting Salieri with Mozart's scores in a bid to have him considered for a royal composing job, which would help ease their financial worries. At first, Salieri is dismissive, but once he lays eyes on the scores, he becomes visibly overwhelmed and can scarcely believe that the 'astounding' original scores show 'no corrections of any kind – not one' (Shaffer, 1979). He becomes increasingly dumfounded by the perfect nature of the compositions and begins to turn the pages faster and faster, his disbelief growing. The scene reaches a pinnacle as Salieri drops the scores to the floor in a rush of emotion, causing them to scatter everywhere.

Musically, an implied metadiegetic function synchronises the first entry of the music with the very moment Salieri first lays eyes on Mozart's scores. Music with a metadiegetic function affixes a secondary account to the principal scene and privileges an audience with the ability to see into a character's mind, eavesdropping on their thoughts (Van Sijill, 2005; Joe, 2006). In this case, the secondary account is provided through the implication that the music heard by the audience is a reflection of the music heard in Salieri's head. Through this insight into Salieri's mind, the audience's understanding of onscreen events is enhanced. This means that through the music's dominance over other characters, including the absence of dialogue it causes, the music is presented as a character within the scene and a driving force of the narrative.

The insight into Salieri's mind is heightened as he takes a closer look at Mozart's scores. A close-up of Salieri's tearful face shows that he is visibly moved by the music on the page, and

so he inhales a shaky breath. As an accompaniment to this inhale, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Flute, Harp and Orchestra swells greatly in a direct mirroring of Salieri's physical response to the scores. The music's metadiegetic function is reaffirmed here through the synchronising of Salieri's physical swell with the swelling of the music heard in the scene.

Salieri's physical reaction is a confirmation that the music the audience hears is the same music Salieri hears in his head as he reads the scores. The emotional effect caused by the synchronisation of soundtrack and onscreen imagery demonstrates the way Mozart's music has adopted the film music function of heightening 'atmosphere...grief...joy or any obvious emotion (Shaffer, 2001). It accentuates Salieri's emotional reaction to the music. The luscious strings and soaring melody of the flute hold cultural associations with a scene from a romance movie and implies Salieri is falling in love with Mozart's music (Gorbman, 1980). Claudia Gorbman states that an audience will know what romance music sounds like due to 'filmic and televisual representations of such events', thus, the decision to use music with romantic associations at this point in the scene demonstrates the way Mozart's music functions as film music in enhancing the narrative and emotion (ibid.).

Emphasising the metadiegetic function of the music, as well as the emotional effect it causes, Constanze, who is mere metres away from Salieri, sits in a blissful ignorance and is totally unaffected by the music that fills the scene. In fact, the stage directions written for the play version describe Salieri's face as 'agonised and wondering' whilst in contrast, Constanze 'sits happily munching chestnuts' (Shaffer, 2001). Despite their spatial proximity, a juxtaposition can be drawn between the two worlds of the characters in the scene – a juxtaposition created by the power of Mozart's music heard in Salieri's head. The narrative of Salieri's total

absorption in Mozart's music is emphasised by Constanze's obliviousness, and as a result, the metadiegetic function of the music is foregrounded.

As the scene progresses, the narrative continues to be structured by the metadiegetic music. Salieri begins to frantically turn the pages of Mozart's scores in disbelief of their perfect nature. The metadiegetic function causes the music to change in rapid accordance with every page that Salieri turns. It enhances narrative through audibly informing the audience of what piece Salieri reads on the score and hears in his head. This means that the music does not transition smoothly to and from each piece, but changes in a rather sudden and unexpected manner causing the film's treatment of Mozart's music to be criticised by musicologists, such as Robert Craft, for bleeding at every splice, for welling up, fading out, and for being 'left suspended in mid-phrase' (Craft, 1985).

This criticism disparages the use of short passages of pre-existing music in film, particularly if the pre-existing music is cut in a musically ungrammatical way. However, in an essay exploring the use of pre-existing music as film music, Mike Cormack describes music's 'recontextualisation' as being when it is taken from its original context and placed into a narrative film (Cormack, 2006). He states that this change of context causes the music to behave differently, due to its adoption of the new context's function (ibid.). Music is always heard in different contexts, but in this case, Mozart's music has changed from its original concert-style integrity and has adopted the new film music function of enhancing narrative and emotion properties.

When considering Cormack's idea of 'recontextualisation', Craft's denouncing of the short musical extracts in *Amadeus* demonstrates a failure to acknowledge the new filmic context of

Mozart's music. The 'recontextualisation' necessitates a cutting and shortening of certain pieces in order to 'accommodate music to the images' (Cormack, 2006; Joe, 2006). Affirming this, Frankfurt School Theorists Adorno and Eisler commended the 'advantage of musical brevity in film,' suggesting that short extracts of music can be more easily paired with the imagery onscreen (Adorno and Eisler, 2005). Therefore, Craft's disparaging of the short extracts of Mozart's music demonstrates that he is assessing the use of music alongside the criteria of musical integrity which, considering the new filmic context of Mozart's music, is not the only criteria by which to evaluate the music by (Joe, 2006).

Extending upon Craft's criticism, his ignorance of the film music function that Mozart's music has adopted, his criticism also demonstrates a disregard for the narrative force that the music holds in this scene. In discussing the narrative agency that film music holds, Jerrold Levinson states that film music cannot always be considered incidental as it often 'works as part of the process that transmits narrative information to the spectator' (Levinson, 1996). Whilst film music frequently performs other functions, the use of music to convey narrative agency is especially true in *Amadeus* where the music often acts as an informant of what music Mozart is composing, or what music is being read on the scores (ibid.). In the scene where Salieri reads Mozart's scores, the metadiegetic music's fragmented nature almost certainly serves a narrative purpose. Its primary motivation is to accompany Salieri's turning of the pages and indicate to the audience which particular piece he is hearing in his head.

As a primary narrative technique, it is conventional that dialogue sustains the narrative properties required to progress a scene (Thomas, 2012). However, in a scene where the music is a point of focus, the dialogue acquires a submissive position to that of music, meaning that the music becomes the narrative agent of the scene (Levinson, 1996). This means that the

decision to splinter the music is a purposeful decision that enhances dramaturgical effects and supports an audience's understanding of the occurrences onscreen. Claudia Gorbman states that the judging of film music as 'pure' music 'is to ignore its status as a part of the collaboration that is film' (Gorbman, 1987). This suggests that the extracts of musical brevity must therefore be viewed as vital in developing the film's plot. This surmises that, once again, Craft's criticism lacks a consideration for the 'recontextualisation' into a film context that Mozart's music has entered, and how in consequence, it now functions as film music (Cormack, 2006).

As well as in a narrative sense, the 'recontextualisation' of Mozart's music means that it also functions as an emotional enhancer for the scene. It is common practice in film for music to be employed as a device to manipulate an audience's emotion, and in this scene, the music achieves this through emotionally reflecting Salieri's physical response to the music, which in turn, causes the audience to feel the same feelings (Manchel, 1990). For example, as Salieri becomes increasingly visibly disturbed, the extracts of music change at a more frequent pace. The abrupt and uneven changes eliminate the musical grammar, which consequently disturbs the audience's listening experience. In an exploration into the psychological effects of music in film, psychologist Siu-Lan Tan stated that music that induces emotion in the viewer has been shown to 'intensify the perception of the emotional content of the images' (Tan, Pfordresher and Harré, 2010). Therefore, through the frequent jagged and abrupt changing of extract, the audience is able to identify with the shock Salieri feels in encountering Mozart's scores for the first time, which as Tan suggests, causes the audience to engage more deeply with Mozart's music, and Salieri's profound emotional and physical response to it.

As well as Tan's statement regarding the music's intensification of emotion, Claudia Gorbman suggests that emotion in a scene can be heightened by cultural associations found in the music (Gorbman, 1987). In the *Amadeus* scene, an excerpt of Mozart's Serenade No 10 in B-flat major is heard. The use of a serenade played by an ensemble of luscious strings holds associations with a love scene in a romantic movie due to its use of instrumentation that filmic and televisual contexts usually associate with romance. Gorbman describes association similar to this as a cultural code which reveals a great deal about the sentiment of the scene (ibid.). The serenade is paired with a close-up of Salieri's face, whose eyes fill with tears, informing the audience of an intimate romantic-like moment that is forming between Salieri and Mozart's music. The music's mirroring of onscreen imagery demonstrates the way that Mozart's music has adopted the standard procedures of film music and has become a vital element in enhancing and producing emotion (Santas, 2001). Furthermore, the narrative agency held by the music demonstrates Gorbman's theory that film music cannot be considered as 'incidental' or 'innocent' because it plays a large role in shaping the audience's perception of a scene (Gorbman, 1987).

The final extract heard in this scene is Mozart's Great Mass No 17 for Solo, Chorus and Orchestra in C major. As Salieri reacts to this extract, the audio synchronises with the onscreen imagery and creates a sonic peak to imitate the physical one seen onscreen in Salieri's acting. The melody of a soprano singer can be heard soaring into a higher and higher register before it is sustained. Reflecting this movement, Salieri physically swells, tilting his head backwards and closing his eyes. Enhancing this, the camera looks up at Salieri giving the impression that he is rising and creating a 'dutch tilt' shot. The 'dutch tilt' shot is often used by directors to suggest a character's unbalanced mental state, thus increasing the suggested distortive and overwhelming effect of Mozart's music on Salieri (Sikov, 2010).

Following this climactic moment, Salieri drops the scores and scatters them across the floor, causing the music to abruptly stop. Metadiegetic music can frequently be identified through an unanticipated end to the music heard, and in consequence, the music's disappearance signifies the end to Salieri's reading of Mozart's scores (Joe, 2006). The moment demonstrates the narrative power of metadiegetic music and indicates how the 'recontextualisation' of Mozart's music causes it to adopt a film music role. Without the use of Mozart's music in this scene, there would be a significant fracture in the film's plot, due to the narrative agency that the music holds in engrossing the audience and informing them exactly what piece of music Salieri is reading on the scores (Levinson, 1996).

I previously discussed how the scene's music created an emotion of love through its use of a serenade, and a tense emotion through its use of dramatic piano. It must be noted that the music's aid in creating these emotions also helps immerse the audience in the film. Psychologists agree that the use of music in a film 'has the power to further immerse the viewer by heightening emotion,' and so this suggests that the use of music to accompany Salieri's reading of the scores is a tool with which to further engross the viewer (Tan, Pfordresher and Harré, 2010). Mary Ann Doane, a professor of film and media, noted that music in film enhances the viewer's immersion through 'placing the viewer in the centre of the experience, rather than as a spectator' (Worth, 1993). She suggests that music evokes a sentiment in the audience which enables them to experience the character's emotion, rather than just watch the character experience it (ibid.). This is especially applicable to *Amadeus*. The music's metadiegetic function, which has provided an insight into Salieri's mind, enables the viewer to empathise with Salieri's experiences and understand his emotional response to the music.

The way the music helps immerse the audience becomes especially clear through the dramatic effect achieved in the music's abrupt ending. The unexpected silencing of the music causes the audience to feel the same type of disturbance that Salieri feels when he has absent-mindedly dropped the scores. This demonstrates how Mozart's music is able to amplify both narrative and emotion when it is placed into a filmic context. It also reaffirms that the music heard in the scene was music heard in Salieri's mind and demonstrates how the music causes the audience to see through Salieri's perspective.

Further consolidating that the music helps the audience see through Salieri's perspective, Constanze is visibly startled when the scores are scattered across the floor. During this scene she has remained outside of Salieri's mind, and therefore unaware of the emotional impact that Mozart's music has had on him. As a result, she remains devoid of the emotion portrayed by Salieri and startled by the outcome. The two differing reactions of Salieri and Constanze demonstrate the way that Mozart's music now functions as film music in enhancing narrative and emotion and immersing the audience into the world of the characters. As Doane suggests, the music enables the audience to experience the same emotions as the character's onscreen reference.

Therefore, when considering Robert Craft's criticism that Mozart's music was 'suspended mid-phrase' it is clear that the music's interruption is narratively justified, and as a result of the music's 'recontextualisation' within a filmic context, its function is to enhance narrative and emotion (Craft, 1985). Thus, Mozart's music as film music must be evaluated against a film music criterion, not a criterion of musical integrity.

Moving on from this scene, the next *Amadeus* sequence that I will be considering is a scene in which Mozart's final requiem is commissioned. The scene has been described as 'the beginning of the end' as it is filled with a constant foreshadowing of death – something that is also reflected musically through the playing of Mozart's Requiem in d minor K.626 (Lowe, 2002). It begins with a portrayal of Mozart composing in a hurried manner at his desk before he is interrupted by a diegetic knock at the door. Upon answering, he discovers a mysterious cloaked figure wearing a black, two-faced mask as a disguise. The strange figure commissions Mozart to write a requiem for the dead, and although he is visibly shaken by the peculiar encounter, Mozart accepts the work. Unbeknownst to him, this unfamiliar individual is, in fact, Salieri in a disguise.

In this scene, the music clearly functions as 'the most important character' of the biopic through its narrative agent that 'produces narrative meaning at the diegetic level' of the onscreen events (Shaffer, 2001; Winters, 2014). This means that through the use of Mozart's requiem the music provides an extra-narrative that suggests the looming presence of death. It has caused musicologists, like Melanie Lowe, to interpret the use of the requiem as a personification of death itself, and therefore, the that killer of Mozart (Lowe, 2002). Accentuating this, the music's narrative power in foreshadowing death is something that later comes into fulfilment through Mozart's death. In fact, following the act of commissioning the requiem, the last fifty minutes of the biopic's soundtrack is almost entirely made up of the requiem (ibid.). Therefore, the music in this scene functions primarily as an active narrative force enhancing Shaffer's statement that the music is a *character* in the film (Shaffer, 2001).

The narrative power of the music aids the understanding of the plot. Each of the three quotations used in this scene are 'narratively motivated' and are pieced together to create an

over-arching, continuous piece of narrative music (Joe, 2006). Beginning with an extract from Mozart's Piano Concerto No 20, this piece accompanies imagery of Mozart composing frantically at his desk. Salieri's knock on the door interrupts this and as Mozart opens the door, the piano concerto abruptly ends. Music with a metadiegetic function is commonly identified by a sudden interruption, particularly an interruption caused by a visitor (ibid.). This scene holds a clear parallel to this criterion. Claudia Gorbman suggests it is 'presumptuous' to claim that certain music is *thought* by a diegetic character, however, the narrative context of the scene is to demonstrate Mozart's interruption from his composition justifies this interpretation (Gorbman, 1980). As a result, the metadiegetic music progresses the narrative and enables the audience to observe the compositional process occurring in Mozart's head. This interpretation is also validated by Salieri's statement earlier in the film which draws attention to Mozart's ability to hear music 'already finished in his head,' not to mention the countless historical documents that also heed to this point (Shaffer, 2001).

After the door is opened and the piano concerto is interrupted, three powerful d minor chords from Mozart's opera, *Don Giovanni*, are played. The big and frightening nature of these chords mirror the terrified expression on Mozart's face, consequently enhancing emotion. However, these chords are also of a strong narrative agent. Throughout the film, these three chords have functioned in a leitmotiv way to symbolise the black, two-faced mask that Salieri wears in this scene, thus musically symbolising *who* Mozart has been interrupted by (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015). Adorno expressed the belief that the leitmotif was a rather 'redundant' musical expression as its sole purpose is to 'announce his master with an important air even though everyone already knows who it is' (Nasta and Huvelle, 2004). However, in this scene, the chords also function as a way to dramatise Salieri's arrival and emphasise the interruption from composing that has taken place in Mozart's mind.

Following these chords, Salieri verbally commissions the requiem. At this point, the music is silenced temporarily transferring the narrative to dialogue. Mozart appears unsure whether he should accept the job, but when he is offered a bag of money for his efforts, he hastily accepts. Mozart does not verbally accept the commission, but in a third demonstration of the music's narrative agency, the opening bars of the requiem begins to play as a musical indicator that he has accepted the request. Through a metadiegetic function the synchronising of the opening bars of the requiem with Mozart's acceptance of the money, indicates that initial ideas for the composition are already forming in Mozart's mind (Joe, 2006). The requiem builds and expands from its timid opening notes as Salieri begins to walk away, enhancing the narrative through demonstrating the requiem's development in Mozart's mind.

In total, this short two-minute scene makes use of three unrelated pieces: Piano Concerto No 20, *Don Giovanni*, and the Requiem in d minor, K.626. Despite being independent pieces, they are unified through their d minor key and joined to form one continuous piece in this scene. The splicing and re-joining of three different pieces enables the music to function through a traditional film music role and mirror the emotional and narrative arch of the scene.

However, much of the musicological criticism aimed at the film derived from the musical editing, with many agreeing that the film's splintered musical extracts prevented audiences from appreciating Mozart's music (Cook, Kolassa and Whittaker, 2018). In a similar way to Robert Craft who described the soundtrack as 'suspended in mid-phrase,' Joseph Horowitz argued that *Amadeus* disgraced Mozart's music through severing the music into short, abrupt passages (Craft, 1985; Horowitz, 1992). He criticised the interruptive nature of the extracts as 'superimposing bleeding extracts from a mutilated musical entity' (ibid.).

In a running theme of the biopic's criticism, this critiquing fails to consider the 'recontextualisation' of Mozart's works into a filmic context, favouring integrity over the enhancement of the narrative and emotional structures in a scene. If musical integrity was to be retained, then narrative and emotional effect would be lost. For example, if the piano concerto was to be played in its entirety then the narrative and emotional arch of the scene would not be reflected. Furthermore, when considering the role of film music in reflecting the underlying emotion of a scene, it is imperative that extracts of music not only fit the length of the scene but evoke the same mood that dialogue and acting creates – unless, of course, the director is aiming to achieve dramatic irony between the soundtrack and onscreen imagery (Rothbart, 2013). Therefore, short musical passages allow for greater control to be retained in the mirroring of sentiment within a film's scene.

Retaining greater control through small musical passages mean that film music can act as a *precise* accompaniment to pre-filmed images that reflect a sentiment expressed by the director. Leonid Sabaneev advises film composers to write in short phrases so that music can 'accommodate cuts...with a minimum of musical damage' (Citron, 2000). Film composer Bernard Herrmann also expresses a similar thought, stating that 'music with discrete and short phrases is more effective for the audience' (Brown, 1994). This is because film music is generally created as an accompaniment to pre-filmed images not the other way around. It would therefore be ineffective to include lengthy passages in a scene for the purpose of maintaining musical integrity if the music had no correlation with the narrative or emotional arch portrayed in the scene through acting and dialogue. Jeongwon Joe argues that Mozart's music in *Amadeus* should remain autonomous is to demonstrate a modernist elitism that argues against popular culture and for the autonomy of high art (Joe, 2006). As a result, it is

mandatory that short musical passages be used in *Amadeus* as its filmic context means that the music's purpose is to enhance emotion and narrative, not provide its viewers with a concert-like performance.

Moreover, Horowitz's description of the score as 'mutilated' suggests that the music has been violently hacked at without thought given to the musical coherence. This was also an issue that was raised by Craft in his criticism that the music within *Amadeus* spliced Mozart's music and left it 'suspended in mid-phrase' (Craft, 1985). Horowitz criticised the use of the three *Don Giovanni* chords as a 'brutal interruption' of the piano concerto. However, when investigating these claims, it becomes apparent that although the musical editing sews together several independent pieces, they are joined together in a way that demonstrates an acknowledging of musical phrase and grammar (Joe, 2006).

The three pieces used within the commission scene are musically related through their d minor key (Powrie and Stilwell, 2006). As a result of this, the pieces are joined together to create a unified and continuous piece of music that mirrors the emotional and narrative arch of the scene. Contrasting with the criticism that the musical editing is brutal and mutilated, Joe outlines good musical grammar in the spliced music which results in a 'grammatically smooth and adequate' new piece of music (Joe, 2006). This means that there are no disjointed edges or unexpected interruptions within the regular time signature heard through the three quotations.

Although Horowitz's criticised the 'trivial' treatment of the soundtrack's musical editing, this deeper investigation concurs that the film's splicing of Mozart's music is done in a grammatically correct manner (Horowitz, 1992). As well as the grammatically aware phrases,

it must be remembered that the ‘recontextualisation’ of Mozart’s music in a film means that the quotations chosen function as an underscoring for the narrative and emotional content of the occurrences onscreen (Cormack, 2006). In consequence, the adapting of Mozart’s music to correlate with the onscreen imagery must not be seen as an offence to Mozart’s works, but a necessity.

Therefore, the criticism that Mozart’s music within *Amadeus* was ‘mutilated’ and ‘suspended mid-phrase’ came as a result of the music’s cut and spliced nature. However, the primary function of film music is to enhance the dramaturgical effects, and therefore the spliced music ‘should be tolerated as far as it is cinematically justified’ (Joe, 2006). Additionally, the biopic’s musical editing gives clear thought to the retention of accurate musical grammar which enables a musically satisfactory listening experience to occur (ibid.). As a result, the critiquing of the music’s ‘mutilated’ nature occurs through a discontent at the lack of a concert-style reconstruction of Mozart’s music in the biopic, and not from a dissatisfactory musical editing.

I will now move on to discuss the final scene of my chosen case study; a scene in which Mozart, on his deathbed, attempts to finish the composition of his requiem. Following the dramatic foreboding of death in the commission scene, death now evolves into a very present threat for Mozart and his family. Melanie Lowe describes this scene as the moment in which ‘the requiem becomes a personified, active agent in the drama’ and kills Mozart (Lowe, 2002). The overarching narrative of the scene portrays Mozart, facing death, and dictating the notation of his requiem to Salieri, who hurries to write it down.

The scene has been described as the ‘most striking and wonderfully effective’ scene of the biopic due to the music’s seamless transitioning in and out of the diegesis (ibid.). Treated as a third character, the music appears as an equal to the dialogue used. In fact, because of the quick and frequent changes of technical function, the overarching narrative of this scene is carried completely by the music’s presence. For example, the music first appears in the form of Mozart singing the melody lines of his composition. This diegetic singing gives the audience an insight into the possible compositional process of Mozart and so enhances the narrative through demonstrating how the gradual accumulation of different musical lines forms to create the final requiem. In terms of the emotional properties, Mozart’s weakened diegetic singing voice allows the audience to understand the fragility of his mortality at this point and stirs a saddened emotion for the viewers who have grown attached to the composer through the course of the film.

Following each excerpt of Mozart’s diegetic singing, Salieri writes down the notation, and then hands the score back to Mozart so that he can read over the composition so far. As this happens, the musical line that Mozart previously sang is again heard. This time it is heard through a metadiegetic function, thus it is heard as it would sound when performed by the choir and orchestra. Through this change of function, the narrative arch of the scene is aided as the audience is given an insight into the happenings of Mozart’s mind during his compositional process. It enables the audience to better understand Mozart’s ability to hear music ‘already finished’ in his head (Shaffer, 2001). Furthermore, Salieri appears totally unaffected by the music, and when Mozart lifts his eyes from the score, the music immediately stops which highlights the music’s metadiegetic function.

As the scene progresses, the compositional process intensifies, and both the functions of Mozart's diegetic singing and the metadiegetic choir and orchestra are used alongside each other. For example, Mozart states that he wants the 'second bassoons and bass trombones with the basses...identical notes and rhythm' (ibid.). Following this statement, both Mozart and the audience are then able to hear a melody that is played through a metadiegetic function by bassoons, bass trombones and basses. The metadiegetic function of this melody is highlighted as Salieri doesn't notate anything until Mozart diegetically sings the required melody.

As well as the narrative, the music also intensifies emotion in the scene. The final part of the requiem that Mozart composes in this scene is a quick, ascending ostinato sequence heard in the strings. It is heard through a metadiegetic function and intensifies emotion due to its quick, persistent nature. Mozart continues to sing diegetically and this time, Salieri joins in too. The imagery of a very ill Mozart in conjunction with a crescendo caused by the unification of voices with the orchestra creates a suspense and suggests a haste to finish the requiem before death approaches.

Up until this point, Salieri has been notating all the different musical lines of the requiem onto the score. Each separate line has been vocalised by Mozart's voice and heard through a metadiegetic function in his head, but the requiem has not yet been heard in its entirety. However, when Mozart lays eyes on the finished score, the full requiem is heard. The synchronising of the requiem's entry with Mozart's reading of the score demonstrates a clear metadiegetic function, however, the requiem is also used as a nondiegetic sound bridge to provide continuity through a visual transition between Mozart's composing and a scene of a

fast-moving horse and carriage. The nondiegetic music finds its purpose in creating suspense within the scene and suggests a matter of urgency.

This scene not only demonstrates a mutilation of musical phrases, but also a mutilation of texture. Through isolating and playing each instrumental line individually, Mozart's music is dismantled and stripped to its foundations. Again, the cut-up treatment of the music at this point echoes the criticism from Horowitz and Craft which described it as 'mutilated' and bleeding at every splice (Horowitz, 1992; Craft, 1985). These comments reflect criticism that other films receive for their use of pre-existing classical music, for example, Disney's *Fantasia* was critiqued as 'musical blasphemy' because of its treatment of 'sacred' pieces of classical music (Maltin, 1987). The use of the term 'sacred' suggests that it is not the mutilation that has caused upset, but the mutilation of classical music. Jeongwon Joe adheres this by stating that 'the problem of mutilation for Horowitz and Craft lies in the fact that what is mutilated is Mozart's music' (Joe, 2016).

Therefore, when remembering the recontextualisation of Mozart's music in a filmic context, it must be said that his music can no longer be considered in the same way as it would be in its original form. Its filmic context means that it adopts a film function and aims to enhance narrative and emotional structures. The enhancement of such structures was seen clearly in this scene through the music's changing technical functions which progressed narrative through allowing audiences to gain an insight into Mozart's compositional process, simplifying the process even for those with no musical knowledge.

The Music Lovers: Music's Manipulation and Governing of Movement

Developing on the idea that it is the filmic context of Mozart's music that enables it to be identified as 'film music', a return to the definition of film music is required. Having previously established that film music is generally written as a specific accompaniment to the onscreen imagery, the describing of Mozart's music as 'film music' becomes problematic due to its pre-existing nature. By its nature, pre-existing music is composed without any thought to the emotional or narrative properties that a scene may hold, and therefore functions differently to conventional film music which is specifically composed to enhance the narrative and emotion of a scene (Maconie, 2002).

Despite allowing directors to 'retain creative control' of their films, some film critics view the use of pre-existing music as a disadvantage to a film due to a difficulty in correctly fitting the music to individual scenes (Cormack, 2006). Further emphasising pre-existing music's artistic vitality independent of a film, Mike Cormack suggests that an audience's awareness of a music's pre-existing nature creates a 'distancing effect' that causes the audience to look for a meaning in its use (ibid.). These comments denounce the use of pre-existing music in film due to concerns that its use would negatively impact the narrative course of a film.

That being said, the nature of a composer biopic *necessitates* the use of pre-existing music, more specifically, the pre-existing music of the composer in question. This is because of the vital narrative agency held by music in film (Levinson, 1996). It is indisputable that the narrative of, for example, a Mozart biopic would be confused and distracted if it were to be absent of any music written by the composer. In a similar way, the narrative of a Mozart biopic would be confused, and perhaps be misleading for some, if it were to be accompanied

by the pre-existing music of another composer, such as Beethoven. This is because audience members are aware they are viewing a *composer* biopic, and as a result are likely to form an association between the composer in question and the music heard in each scene. Affirming this, Melanie Lowe states that pre-existing music acquires for itself new associations when it is placed in a filmic context, such as a composer biopic (Lowe, 2002). Despite Cormack stating that this would only become a problem if the audience recognised the music, it is vital for narrative consistency that a composer biopic use the pre-existing music of the composer in question (Cormack, 2006).

An exception to this rule would be the use of another composer's music as a way of enhancing the narrative curve of a scene. For example, in *Amadeus*, the use of Salieri's arrangement of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* is used as an accompaniment to imagery of Salieri's father's death, and flashbacks of his childhood (Joe, 2006). At this point, the narrative rests from exploring Mozart's life and causes Salieri to be the main focus. The music is an auditory reflection of this.

Despite the pre-existing nature of Mozart's music, it must be argued that placing Mozart's music into a filmic context causes it to be identified as film music in this instance. Developing on this, the treatment of music within *Amadeus* exhibits an adoption of the primary function of film music; to enhance the narrative and emotional structures of the onscreen events, such as dialogue, screenplay and acting. This suggests that film music need not be composed as a 'specific accompaniment' to a scene as the use of pre-composed music in *Amadeus* is able to achieve a similar effect through cutting and splicing various sections of music.

Therefore, despite Joseph Horowitz's condemnation that the music within *Amadeus* is 'mutilated,' the spliced nature of the soundtrack is justified through its mirroring of the narrative and emotional curvature of a scene (Horowitz, 1992; Joe, 2006). Again, this rationalises the use of succinct musical sections in film as music is required to concisely fit the length, narrative and emotion of a scene. Therefore, through the use of pre-existing music a film's director is able to retain creative control by selecting and cropping the precise sections of music that best accompany a scene's narrative and emotional properties (Cormack, 2006). Without this cropping, a difficulty would arise in corresponding the music with the onscreen events.

This leads me onto the second case study I would like to discuss, *The Music Lovers* (1970). Directed by Ken Russell, this 'melodramatic and self-indulgent' biopic focuses on the life and career of Pyotr Tchaikovsky (Milney and Pym, 2007). Giving an overarching view of the composer's life, the biopic details the death of Tchaikovsky's mother, his battle with cholera, as well as the battle between his homosexual urges and his marriage to Madame Nadezhda von Meck. The biopic portrays these events through a series of memory, fantasy and nightmare sequences which serve as explanations for the poor mental health Tchaikovsky experiences at the end of the film. The biopic was generally received well, particularly by critics like Joseph Horowitz who value musical integrity, with the many dream-like sequences described as scenes of 'ravishing beauty' (LIFE Magazine, 1971).

It was previously discussed that musicologists, film critics and composers commended the use of short musical phrases as a more effective way to use music within film (Adorno and Eisler, 1994). In fact, some even argue that the actual 'character' of film music is made up of brief musical ideas and not a long, musically-developed piece of music (Crookes et al.,

1951). *The Music Lovers* (1970) stands in a stark contrast to this. Juxtaposing the short, succinct phrases found in *Amadeus*, *The Music Lovers* opts to retain musical integrity through the use of lengthy extracts of music as a sound bridge to cover a variety of different scenes. For example, a fifteen-minute excerpt of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto is used as an accompaniment for several different scenes of varying narrative and emotion, such as fantasy, nightmare, and memory (Gomez, 1976). The treatment of music within the Tchaikovsky biopic is much more akin to a concert-style performance, satisfying the modern elitists, such as Horowitz and Craft, through retaining musical autonomy and integrity. Emphasising this, Horowitz stated that *The Music Lovers*' 'synchronisation of musical and dramatic gesture is beyond praise' (Winters, 2014). However, it must be questioned how a successful correspondence of music and drama could possibly be achieved when considering the use of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto, a fifteen-minute piece of music, as a continuous accompaniment to numerous different scenes of different moods.

The use of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto within *The Music Lovers* means that it can now be identified as film music, thus functioning as a narrative and emotional enhancer. Claudia Gorbman notes that the playing of *any* piece of music will evoke some sort of emotion within a film's scene, however Tchaikovsky's piano concerto functions as a continual accompaniment to four differing scenes of differing narrative routes (Gorbman, 1980). Whilst Mozart's music in *Amadeus* functioned as an extra character, attempting to forebode and reflect every minute change in atmosphere and narrative, Tchaikovsky's piano concerto functions as a sound bridge and glues several different scenes together, creating an impassioned, sentimental atmosphere as the overarching mood for the fifteen-minutes of film.

This contrasts with a conventional use of film music due to its purpose in enhancing the onscreen events and creating a minutely detailed reflection of the narrative and emotion portrayed through the onscreen imagery (Juslin and Sloboda, 2011). Italian director, Federico Fellini, notes the importance of music in a scene and attempts to coincide each musical phrase ‘as exactly as possible’ with the sentiment and emotion expressed in the acting (Garnett, 1996). Furthermore, for *Psycho*, Alfred Hitchcock requested Bernard Hermann to write ‘small cells of music’ with ‘very specific start and stop points’ so that he could intensely mirror the onscreen emotion (Rothbart, 2013). It is clear that a large role of film music is found in the direct reflection of the onscreen imagery, but with one piece of music to accompany several different scenes, Russell’s use of Tchaikovsky’s piano concerto in *The Music Lovers* does not achieve the same effect.

The music in *Amadeus* enhanced the narrative by providing an insight into Salieri’s mind through abruptly changing the musical extracts in order to communicate to the audience which of Mozart’s pieces Salieri was sight-singing. The music even swelled in a direct reflection of Salieri’s physical sigh which demonstrated the specific thought given to the music’s mirroring and enhancement of narrative and emotion within the scene. In contrast, *The Music Lovers*’ use of music is similar to that of the silent era. It retains musical integrity through forming an ‘aural wallpaper’ that aims not to enhance narrative and emotion, but to ‘cover the discomfort of silence’ caused by the absence of dialogue (Edgecombe, 2014).

This questions Horowitz’s disparaging of the use of film music in *Amadeus* yet praising the treatment of music within *The Music Lovers*. *Amadeus* makes use of short musical passages with the intent of underscoring the emotional and dramatic direction of the movie. On the other hand, *The Music Lovers* focusses on retaining musical integrity. Despite the clearly

juxtaposing treatments of music within the biopics, Horowitz disparages the spliced nature of the music within *Amadeus* yet praises the prolonged musical extracts within *The Music Lovers*. How then, can Horowitz use the same musical criteria to compare films with contrasting uses of music?

Through evaluating the use of music within *Amadeus* and *The Music Lovers* against a conventional 'film music' criteria then *Amadeus*' treatment of music could not be criticised as 'trivial' due to its purposeful role in reflecting minute details of dramaturgy and emotion (Horowitz, 1992). This shows that the treatment of music within *Amadeus* abides by the rules of conventional film music which suggests that Horowitz's disparaging of the treatment of music within *Amadeus*, yet his commending of *The Music Lovers*' use of prolonged musical extract, has been achieved through assessing the music alongside a criterion of integrity and autonomy of music. He is assessing two differing musical uses against the same criteria which is not viable.

Horowitz's assessment of two different films against the same criteria is further clarified through his statement that 'only Stanley Kubrick, among major contemporary filmmakers, treats music with something like the respect and understanding Russell accords it' (Adams, 2009). However, when using *2001: A Space Odyssey* as a case study with which to consider Kubrick's use of pre-existing music, it is apparent that the retaining of musical integrity is a 'hallmark' of his choice of orchestral score (Buck, 2017). Through this it becomes clear that Horowitz is assessing the use of pre-existing film music against a criterion of musical integrity which is not a sustainable form of evaluation. His statement in which he searched for retaining 'respect' for the music is indicative of what Jeongwon Joe referred to as a modern elitist perspective that favours autonomy and integrity over the musical brevity that

Adorno and Eisler recommended for film music (Adams, 2009; Adorno and Eisler, 2005; Joe, 2006).

By extension, Horowitz does not acknowledge that conventional film music functions as an amplification of narrative and emotion. He fails to acknowledge the filmic context that Tchaikovsky and Mozart's music have entered into within their respective biopics, and also insists on evaluating these biopics by the same criteria despite clear evidence of the differing musical functions in the two. This means that the evaluating of *The Music Lovers* against a criterion of musical autonomy is viable, but the assessing of *Amadeus* by the same criteria is not. In consequence, the notion is reinforced that musical integrity is not always a viable criterion for the assessment of music in film (Joe, 2006).

As well as this, Horowitz's comments suggest that the maintaining of a piece of music in its original form is of higher importance than the educating and relaying of historical event. However, with classical music's shrinking audience, is holding onto the music in its original form a realistic way of combating this? In 1996, *Billboard* magazine reported that sales of classical music decreased from 3.7 percent in 1994 to 2.9 percent in 1995, a hefty 21.6 percent loss (Holland, 1996). As well as this, only 7% of classical concert attendees are under the age of thirty-one which indicates a young audience's disinterest in the genre (Chepovetsky, 2018).

In a stark contrast, following the release of *Amadeus*, sales of Mozart increased by almost 1,000 percent and enrolments in college music courses about Mozart saw 'unprecedented increases' (Culshaw, 2002; Marshall, 1997). As a result, Lewis Lockwood suggests that films that include short extracts of classical music should be 'considered as better than nothing' as

it keeps classical music relevant (Lockwood, 1997). Surely then, biopics such as *Amadeus*, who do not treat the music in an integral or original manner, should be considered as equally as important as those that do, especially when considering Shaffer's central objective to saturate *Amadeus* with Mozart's music causing a young audience to engage with it (Marshall, 1997).

Therefore, with films as the most popular form of mass consumption for young people, composer biopics enable more people to come into contact with classical composers and engage with their music, regardless of their lengthy or mutilated treatment of music (McClintock, 2016). As a result, Horowitz's disparaging of biopics that do not use prolonged musical extracts indicates that he is not considering the positive effect that biopics have on the sales of classical music. This concludes that Russell's contributions to the classical composer biopic are significant, but Shaffer and Forman's contributions are equally as important through the way they've 'given thousands of viewers their first exposure' to Mozart (Adams, 2009).

Returning focus to *The Music Lovers*, some critics, such as Rodney Edgecombe, have argued that although the music does not necessarily minutely mirror the emotional and narrative inflections of the scenes, it is the music's synchronisation with diegetic sound and movement that causes the film's use of music to be a success. Edgecombe notes that the music in the piano concerto scene 'homologises two different, but commensurate, events' such as the correlating of quavers with pedal strokes (Edgecombe, 2014). Tchaikovsky is seen playing the piano part of the concerto, however in the recording that is heard, the piano is played by pianist, Rafael Orozco. This demonstrates that instead of a live performance, the actor who plays Tchaikovsky perfectly mimes along with the concerto. Horowitz described this section

as ‘the most convincing pianist-mime in the history of cinema’ and goes on to discuss the ‘perfectly synchronised’ nature of music with image (Winters, 2014). This suggests that the actors’ movements synchronise with Tchaikovsky’s music as if it were choreographed, like a ballet.

Tchaikovsky’s piano concerto pre-exists the creation of the biopic, but the synchronisation of dramatic movement with music suggests that the concerto was not only expressly chosen for this scene but was the foundation for its creation (Kalinak, 2010). The use of music as a starting point for a scene can provide an overall rhythm in which the music no longer acts as an assist to the emotional and narrative route, but antagonises and manipulates it (Sabaneev, 1935). Through using the concerto as a first point of reference, a definitive structure is applied to the scene through the music’s form. This provides Russell with a definite cutting sequence and gives the actors a clear idea about the emotions they should express and emphasise (Edgecombe, 2014).

Russell acknowledged the ‘self-framing distinctiveness’ of the concerto which suggests that everything else within the scene, such as acting and screenplay, is manipulated by the music (ibid.). Music has been described as an ‘integral part of the director’s vision’ for *The Music Lovers*, with the piano concerto ‘providing an aural rhythm’ which is then complemented by the onscreen actors’ movements, the camera’s movements, and the editing (Gomez, 1976). In some ways, this is in keeping with the tone of a Tchaikovsky biopic as the composer wrote some of the most popular ballets in music history, such as *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* (Kidder and Oppenheim, 2008). This means that in a biographical reflection of the type of music Tchaikovsky wrote in his life, Russell uses the pre-existing piano concerto as a way to choreograph movement creating a ‘demi-dansante’ quality (Edgecombe 2014).

For example, during the concerto scene, Tchaikovsky looks down and spots his lover, Anton. Following this, the scene individually introduces other characters who share a close, personal relationship with the composer. At this point, the visual phrasing of the camera movements is governed by the metric value of the concerto. Edgecome describes ‘three slow camera zooms’ that focus on each character in turn, with a certain ‘rhythm’ that is structured by the diegetic concerto of the scene (ibid.). This demonstrates how the pre-existing nature of the concerto is able to have an effect on a scene’s structure. It also indicates the dominant nature of music within this composer biopic.

The scene demonstrates the music’s assertion as the ‘co-equal partner of the image it attends’ (Koskoff, 2008). Due to the piano concerto’s control over the other factors in the scene, it is clear that in a similar way to the treatment of music in *Amadeus*, *The Music Lovers* also promotes Tchaikovsky’s music to an extremely dominant role. The dialogue ‘sketches an outline’ to each scene but the music functions as an ‘interconnective commentary through taking a dominant role and thickening out texture (Edgecombe, 2014). In fact, the scene makes very limited use of dialogue with only a few short sentences uttered through the entirety of the piano concerto. As well as this, Claudia Gorbman argues that hearing is less direct than the visual perception (Gorbman, 1980). This suggests that the visual nature of diegetic music means that more attention is demanded from the audience, which prioritises the music, and causes it to have a more dominant role in the scene. Combining this with the subject matter of composers and their compositions, it can be said that the elevated role of music is a characteristic of the composer biopic genre.

In a similar way, attention was previously drawn to the submissive role of dialogue within *Amadeus* as well as the position of the music as ‘the most important character’ (Shaffer, 2001). The dominant role of music within *Amadeus* also silenced dialogue and acted as an enhancement for the scenes, providing the audience with extra-narrative and a heightened sense of emotion. Despite the different treatments of music within the two biopics, the obvious elevation of music as an equal to dialogue suggests that this is a characteristic of composer biopics as a genre. Furthering this, it is argued that conventional film music is predominantly a nondiegetic ‘invisible orchestra,’ but the fore fronted subject of music within the composer biopic genre necessitates that music plays a dominant, diegetic role (Koskoff, 2008; Larsen, 2007).

To conclude these findings, it is clear that both *The Music Lovers* and *Amadeus* make a conscious correlation and synchronisation of music, image and movement. However, *Amadeus* applies music to image whilst *The Music Lovers* applies image to music. This produces vastly different effects. For example, *Amadeus* abides by more conventional film music laws in which the music is used to directly reflect every detail of narrative and emotion. It does not attempt to retain musical integrity but instead uses Mozart’s music as a way of creating and enhancing dramaturgical effects. In consequence, *Amadeus* appears as a conventional film with pre-existing classical music functioning as its soundtrack.

Contrastingly, *The Music Lovers* uses Tchaikovsky’s music as a reference with which to create the whole sequence, synchronising movement and music, thus achieving an intensely choreographed and ballet-like scene. In doing so, the film retains the musical integrity of the pre-existing music in a way that *Amadeus* did not, and also functions as a sound bridge to provide continuity. Conclusively, *The Music Lovers* demonstrates the way that longer

extracts of pre-existing music can retain musical integrity and also function as film music through synchronising movement to reflect the narrative and emotion conveyed through the music.

### *Immortal Beloved: The Manipulation of Sound Quality as Narrative Progression*

Investigating Horowitz's musicological response to *Amadeus* and *The Music Lovers* has clearly demonstrated his value for musical integrity over musical brevity. As was demonstrated earlier, musicologists such as Lewis Lockwood convey a more relaxed approach to the use of pre-existing classical music in film, so long as attention and interest is being brought to the composer in question. Horowitz's rigidity in his insistence on retaining musical integrity causes him to be identified as a modern-elitist musicologist and places him in opposition with film critics and film composers who argue for musical brevity in film (Adorno and Eisler, 2005).

Whilst Horowitz praised Russell's use of music to create a choreographed ballet-like biopic, this use of music was disparaged by the majority of film critics, such as Roger Ebert, who described the film's pairing of image with lengthy extracts of music as 'careless and unsophisticated' (Ebert, 1995; The Service, 1991). Film critic Pauline Kael despised the film with such passion that she felt as if she could murder Russell for creating it, describing it as 'so vile' and 'so horrible' (Kael, 1996). She also said that she knew 'all sorts of people who didn't believe [her] review, went to see it, and they phoned and said, "You didn't make it bad enough! It's the most horrible thing I've ever seen!"' (ibid.). In contrast, these same film critics praised the use of music within the Bernard Rose's Beethoven biopic, *Immortal Beloved*. The reason this raises questions is due to *Immortal Beloved's* use of a lengthy extract of music as a sound bridge to glue various scenes together. It is the same use of music as *The Music Lovers*. Why then, has Rose's sequence been described as an image 'as evocative as any I can remember' whilst Russell's similar sequence is disregarded as a failed attempt at coordinating image with music (Ebert, 1995).

In an attempt to answer this question, this chapter will explore the treatment of music in *Immortal Beloved* and compare its use with *The Music Lovers*' treatment of music. I will specifically be exploring Rose's use of the final movement from Beethoven's ninth symphony as a sound bridge across an eight-minute scene of varying moods. First, I will provide an in-depth description of the sequence and its changing scenes whilst referring back to the treatment of music within *The Music Lovers*. I will explore both the technical functions of the music and the manipulation of sound quality and evaluate how this enhances the narrative of the onscreen events. Then, I will consider my findings in relation to critical comments from both film critics and musicologists.

*Immortal Beloved* (1994) follows the life of Beethoven and his rapidly worsening hearing loss. Romance is foregrounded in this biopic with the composer's love life playing a central role in the narrative, even above his expertise as a composer. Ebert describes the biopic's portrayal of Beethoven as 'a man on the edge of madness' who is 'obsessed' with women (ibid.). The tale focusses on discovering the identity of the mysterious 'immortal beloved,' a secret lover of Beethoven's who he addressed in a series of letters that were found following his death. The biopic also recreates the premiere of Beethoven's ninth symphony which is the sequence that I will be investigating in this chapter.

Beginning in a similar way to *The Music Lovers*, the ninth symphony's sequence begins outside the concert venue and portrays various characters on their way to the premiere. It is at this point that the symphony is first heard. Narratively, this is confusing as the characters have not yet reached the concert venue and so should not yet be hearing the music. However, the whole scene takes place in the memory of Johanna van Beethoven, who is telling the

story to Schindler, thus the music is narratively motivated through a metadiegetic function. The symphony occupies the silence and provides continuity through acting as a sound bridge between the outside and inside of the concert hall. Furthermore, the music provides temporal continuity through depth cues in which the symphony grows louder in volume as the guests walk towards the concert hall (Gorbman, 1980). In consequence, the music bears a narrative agency and reflects the onscreen narrative which portrays the characters walking closer to the music's source (Levinson, 1996). Emphasising this, there is a drastic increase in volume as the scene cuts to the inside of the concert hall and the diegetic orchestra is seen playing the symphony.

In a similar treatment to *The Music Lovers* where the diegetic orchestra becomes a main focus of the scene, the camera cuts to the orchestra at the precise time that they start to play the symphony's famous 'ode to joy' motif. The orchestra's visible nature means that the music heard is diegetic and so an extra narrative is provided as the film's audience sees and hears what the concert's audience do. Due to the fame of the 'ode to joy' motif, drawing attention to the orchestra at the exact moment that the motif is played enhances the narrative through the music's creation of a 'shared subjectivity' between the film's audience and the concert's audience (Winters, 2014). This, by extension, causes the film's audience to *become* the concert's audience.

However, Mike Cormack states that drawing attention to the pre-existing nature of the 'ode to joy' motif disadvantages a film and interferes with an audience's enjoyment as it distracts from the film's narrative (Cormack, 2006). He suggests that it is better for a director to choose a piece of pre-existing music that is not well-known as it bears less 'cultural baggage' (ibid.). Despite this, Rose's highlighting of the 'ode to joy' motif is narrative justified due to

the concert context of the sequence which means that the music is supposed to be the audience's focal point. This is a common feature found in the composer biopic genre and is an example of a 'pure musical code,' where the music refers to itself, and draws the audience's attention to what is playing (Gorbman, 1980).

Then, in another similarity to *The Music Lovers*, the camera uses close-up shots to draw attention to the various characters who have been involved in Beethoven's life so far. The camera's focus is shifted from the orchestra, but the ninth symphony provides continuity over the changing shots through an implied diegetic function which demonstrates that the characters shown are also watching the premiere. The camera shot returns to the orchestra just as the 'ode to joy' motif reoccurs. Again, this draws attention to the orchestra and causes the music to be foregrounded. The camera's timing in returning to the orchestra as the 'ode to joy' motif reoccurs suggests that the ninth symphony was a significant point of reference in the creation of the scene. In a similar way to the use of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto in *The Music Lovers*, Beethoven's ninth symphony and its effect on the camera's changing shots demonstrates that the music manipulates and governs the onscreen events. The music's dominant role in controlling the scene demonstrates that both *The Music Lovers* and *Immortal Beloved* are feature films 'concentrated by musical intervention' (Edgecombe, 2014).

Up until this point the treatment of the ninth symphony within this scene has remained almost identically comparable to the treatment of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto in *The Music Lovers*. However, Beethoven's physical appearance in the scene is the turning point of this where the continuous extract of the ninth symphony begins to be manipulated in sound quality and technical function. This causes the music to adopt a strong narrative and emotional enhancing role.

It is historically recorded that Beethoven was so deaf when conducting his ninth symphony that he was several measures behind the orchestra and continued conducting even when the audience began their applause (Beall and Carter, 2005). In keeping with this, Beethoven's first appearance in this sequence sees him walk on stage and stand next to the conductor. Dramatising his arrival is a descending string figure which is accompanied by a slow camera zoom which begins at the back of the orchestra and ends with a close-up of Beethoven's face.

In a reflection of Beethoven's deafness, the symphony's sound quality becomes muted and muffle (Hubris-Cherrier, 2012). The scene's narrative dictates that the source of the music remains the same as the scene's beginning; thus, functioning in a diegetic way. However, due to the dampened sound quality, the music is also heard through a metadiegetic function as it enables the audience to hear the music from Beethoven's perspective, thus reflecting the film's narrative. It is subjective sound as it is a sound that we assume is not heard by other characters in the same way that Beethoven hears it (ibid.). Therefore, although Rose uses a lengthy extract of music in this scene, the manipulation of sound and its creation of a muffled texture is a clear indicator that long excerpts can still function as an effective enhancer for the narrative an emotion of a scene.

Through this manipulation of sound, a clear difference can be identified between the use of music in *The Music Lovers* and *Immortal Beloved*. Whilst both films use long excerpts of music as a sound bridge, the manipulated sound quality in *Immortal Beloved* means that the music reflects the narrative arch of the onscreen events, thus amplifying it for a film's audience. Although film composers and film critics advise the use of shorter musical extracts for film Rose demonstrates that long musical extracts can also be effective enhancers for a

scene's narrative and emotion when they are manipulated through technical function and sound quality (Reay, 2004). Therefore, when comparing the treatment of music within *The Music Lovers* and *Immortal Beloved*, it is clear that *Immortal Beloved* achieves a greater effect on the narrative structures of the sequence.

Following the symphony's muffled sound quality within *Immortal Beloved*, the scene changes again to portray a memory of Beethoven's from when he was a young boy. Once more, the symphony functions as a sound bridge over several shot changes between the close-up of Beethoven's face and the portrayal of his younger self. The memory portrays a young Beethoven gazing out of his window at the stars. He is interrupted by the shouts of his abusive father and so he climbs out of the window and runs through a forest until he reaches a lake. Upon reaching the lake, the young Beethoven decides to enter the water and float on his back and continue looking at the stars. The camera zooms out and the stars that were shown at the beginning of the scene are now seen reflected in the water of the lake. This scene, where Beethoven is depicted 'at one with the universe' has been praised as the most impactful imagery of the whole sequence (Fhaner, 1997).

As an accompaniment to the onscreen memory, the 'full aural dimension of the music returns' as it functions in a nondiegetic way (Hubris-Cherrier, 2012). However, the audience remains aware that the ninth symphony's premiere is still occurring. Therefore, although the lack of visible source for the music suggests a nondiegetic function, the overarching narrative of the scene demonstrates that the music is still heard and played through a diegetic function. This makes it clear that context is crucial to the interpretation of a musical scene (Neumeyer, 2015). In isolation, the music in this scene is nondiegetic, but through narrative context, the music is diegetic.

Memory and reality begin to blur into one as the scenes continue to flit back and forth. The overall scene and its combining of past and present has been described as a sequence in which Rose successfully ‘imagines the mental state of Beethoven’ (Ebert, 1997). It is historically documented in his personal letters that Beethoven began to struggle with depression, even struggling with suicidal thoughts, as his hearing worsened. However, he stated that his motivation to compose was the one thing keeping him alive (Ferris, 2018). In 1824, Beethoven wrote that ‘only in [his] divine art do I find the support which enables me to sacrifice the best part of my life to the heavenly muses’ (Solomon, 2003). In this, Beethoven expresses the cruelty of his fate as a deaf composer. He states that it is only through continuing to compose that he finds the strength to endure his deafness. The ‘Ode to Joy’ scene is filled with imagery that portray the strength and agony of this quote.

In one close-up of Beethoven’s face, he is seen mouthing in an out-of-time manner with the lyrics of the choir. Through this lack of synchronisation between music and imagery, the narrative is amplified as it draws attention to Beethoven’s deafness. It also promotes the idea of Beethoven’s genius through demonstrating that he was able to hear his compositions in his head despite his deafness. The lack of synchronisation between music and imagery demonstrates that in the same way as *The Music Lovers*, the ninth symphony clearly governs the onscreen events demonstrating its role in the creation of the scene. Whilst *The Music Lovers* consciously synchronised music with image as a way to portray the performance of Tchaikovsky’s piano concerto, *Immortal Beloved* creates a purposeful *lack* of synchronisation as an assist in amplifying the scene’s overall narrative. Once again, this demonstrates the way that the music within *Immortal Beloved* plays a vital role in enhancing both the narrative and emotional structures of a scene.

The ending of the memory scene synchronises with the end of the symphony which, in the same way as *The Music Lovers*' treatment of music, further demonstrates the way that the music manipulates and controls the onscreen events. This is because the ninth symphony was not composed as a specific accompaniment for this scene meaning that the onscreen imagery has been created around the symphony. The choir sing the final repeat of the 'ode to joy' motif and it is heard in a climactic, full and dramatic way. As this final repeat plays, the camera slowly pulls away from the young boy to reveal a galaxy of stars reflected in the lake in which he floats. The pairing of such powerful imagery with the 'symphony to end all symphonies' has been endlessly praised for its evocative imagery (Service, 2014; Ebert, 1995).

The ending of the symphony is accompanied by a sudden silence. The symphony's end indicates that the silence is diegetic, however, the quiet also serves to amplify Beethoven's deafness. Following this, the audience's applause is heard through a muffled sound quality which indicates that we are, once more, hearing through Beethoven's perspective. The applause is subjective sound through a metadiegetic function. Beethoven remains unaware of the applause he is receiving as he cannot hear it, however, he is turned around by the conductor so that he may *see* it instead. The sound demonstrates its narrative agency and directly reflects the narrative of the events portrayed through the acting onscreen. For example, the muffled sound of the applause continues when Beethoven has his back to the audience, but when he is turned around to *see* his applause, the sound increases in volume and becomes clearer in quality. The impactful sound difference that arises between the two perspectives causes the audience to experience the same surprise as Beethoven when he turns around and realises his applause.

When comparing the use of music within this *Immortal Beloved* sequence to the use of music within the piano concerto scene from *The Music Lovers*, there are similarities that can be identified within the overarching structure of the music. Firstly, both films treat their respective pieces of music as a sound bridge to affix several different scenes and provide continuity throughout. Secondly, both sequences demonstrate evidence that the music governed and manipulated the onscreen events. For example, in *The Music Lovers*, this was done through a detailed mime in which a choreographed demi-dansante sequence was created (Edgecombe, 2014). In *Immortal Beved*, this was seen through the timing of the camera shots and their continued return to the diegetic orchestra as the ‘ode to joy’ motif was played.

Referring back to the reviews that *Immortal Beloved* received from film critic Roger Ebert, it is clear that he regarded the ninth symphony sequence in high esteem. Despite the film music theory provided by Adorno and Eisler which argued for short musical phrases in film, Ebert praises Rose’s match of ‘visual images to great music’ something he understands to be difficult when it is a long excerpt of music (Ebert, 1995). Additionally, in a review entitled ‘The Music Almost Tells the Tale,’ *The New York Times* also commended this sequence as ‘most impressive’ with Rose applauded for ‘inspiring awe’ through subjugating ‘his imagery to the film’s soundtrack’ (Maslin, 1994). This praise demonstrates Rose’s successful use of a lengthy extract of music as a narrative enhancer and as a sound bridge to provide continuity.

Having drawn attention to the similarities between the use of music within *Immortal Beloved* and the similar use of music within *The Music Lovers*, the question remains as to why Ebert so highly praised the ninth symphony sequence yet used Russell’s use of music in *The Music Lovers* as an example of a bad piece of filmmaking (Ebert, 1995).

The answer to this question is not found within the *use* of music, but in its *treatment*. Whilst the overarching use of music within the two films bears similarities through a sound bridge function, it is the manipulation of sound quality and the changing technical functions that causes *Immortal Beloved* to stand out. As a film critic, Ebert would have been assessing the film's music by its enhancing of the onscreen events and so through manipulating sound to reflect narrative, Beethoven's ninth symphony was treated as film music and therefore adopted the film music function of reflecting the narrative and emotional properties found portrayed onscreen. This explains Ebert's praise of the lengthy musical excerpt. As a result, from a film critic perspective Rose has successfully enhanced the sequence's narrative through treating a lengthy extract of music as film music.

In a contrast to this, Horowitz's praise for the piano concerto sequence must be remembered. As a musicologist of a modern-elite perspective, Horowitz stated that *The Music Lovers'* piano concerto scene deserved high praise to the absence of mutilated extracts and the retention of music integrity (Horowitz, 1992). This shows that he is assessing the sequence's *use* of music over its contribution to the filmic structures of narrative and emotion. He is evaluating the music as an isolated feature rather than as a contributing factor to the film's overall effect, such as one of the conventional roles of film music.

However, it was this same treatment of music that caused film critics to disparage *The Music Lovers*. As was discussed in previous chapters, an opinion expressed by several film critics and composers, such as Claudia Gorbman and Jeongwon Joe, is that it is 'not sufficient to judge film music by criteria similar to those used for judging autonomous music' (Gorbman, 1980; Joe, 2006). This suggests that modern elite musicologists and film critics are in

disagreement with regards to how pre-existing music should be treated within films. This disagreement comes from differing assessment criteria with modern elite musicologists, like Joseph Horowitz, primarily focussing on the music, and film critics primarily focussing on imagery and the music's enhancement of it.

Therefore, through conducting an in-depth analysis of this sequence's treatment of music it is clear that Rose uses the ninth symphony as a sound bridge to cover three different scenes that occur in different eras and locations (Hubris-Cherrier, 2012). As well as creating visual continuity through the symphony's continuous playing, Rose also made use of three different technical functions; the diegetic, nondiegetic, and the metadiegetic as a way to effectively enhanced the narrative of the sequence (ibid.). The use of these functions enabled the film's audience to interpret the onscreen events through different perspectives, such as Beethoven's and the concert audience's, which also caused an extra-narrative to be attained. Finally, Rose manipulated the sound quality of the symphony in order to exaggerate the changing perspectives. For example, in an audible representation of how Beethoven perceives the unfolding events, the sound quality of the orchestra was dampened as a way to reflect Beethoven's deafness. The return of a clear sound quality then acted as an audible representation of how the concert's audience, and by extension the film's audience, perceive the unfolding events. Conclusively, it is clear that Rose has successfully used a long extract of music as a way of enhancing the narrative structures of a scene through the manipulation of sound quality and the use of different technical functions.

This chapter has also made it clear that opposing criticisms regarding the same treatment of music often comes from the differing criteria of critics. For example, it has been discussed how Joseph Horowitz, a musicologist, praised *The Music Lovers* for its treatment of

Tchaikovsky's piano concerto which was played continuously as a sound bridge for fifteen minutes. Contrastingly, film critics like Roger Ebert, and film music experts such as Claudia Gorbman, disparaged this, yet praised *Immortal Beloved* for the same sound bridged treatment of Beethoven's ninth symphony. This is because as a modern-elite musicologist, Horowitz evaluates the music of a scene through its integrity and autonomy, whilst film critics tend to evaluate the music by its overall effect on the narrative and emotional structures of the scene. As a result, musicologists tend to regard the treatment of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto in *The Music Lovers* as a high-quality use of music within a film. Film critics, on the other hand, regard *Immortal Beloved's* enhancement of narrative and emotion through its treatment of music as the stronger filmic sequence.

## Conclusion

This project was formed with the intent of researching how the placing of pre-existing music into a filmic context causes the music to become film music, thus adopting its role. Three main functions of film music were outlined; its enhancement of onscreen narrative and emotion, its reflection of onscreen events such as movement and acting, and its role as a sound bridge to provide continuity between changing scenes. This was then considered as the criteria of film music with which to assess the use of music within my three biopics of choice, *Amadeus*, *Immortal Beloved* and *The Music Lovers*.

To summarise, as an introduction to the biopic genre as a whole, Ken Russell's *Lisztomania* made it clear that the biopic genre is an amalgamation of biography and film. It was suggested that these two mediums draw on differing criteria with biography aiming to relay factual events, and film often dramatising and exaggerating its subject matter. Attention was drawn to musicologists, like Joseph Horowitz, who insisted upon evaluating composer biopics with regards to their accuracy in relaying historical fact, giving no consideration to the filmic function of a biopic. Given that the biopic genre is half biography and half film, it was concluded that biopics should not be evaluated as wholly biography, nor wholly film, but as an amalgamation of both. Finally, it was concluded that the biopic genre should not be considered as a source of undoubted historical accuracy as it often shares in elements of fictionalisation that other film genres, such as science fiction, also hold.

With these things in mind, an investigation into the use of music in composer biopics took place. With the intention of discovering whether the 'recontextualisation' of pre-existing music into a filmic context causes the music to become film music, chosen scenes from

*Amadeus* were analysed with specific attention given to the diegetic, nondiegetic and metadiegetic treatment of music. It was concluded that this treatment encouraged and enhanced narrative and emotion in the different scenes, thus demonstrating that pre-existing music adopts a film music function when it is placed in a filmic context, thus it *becomes* film music. For example, the frequent use of metadiegetic music provided an extra-narrative through giving the audience an insight into the minds of characters. This indicated that the pre-existing music was functioning as film music and had adopted the film music function of elaborating the onscreen events.

As well as this, it was determined that Mozart's music functioned as film music in the way it was spliced to directly fit and reflect the atmosphere and narrative of the onscreen events. For example, the three d minor *Don Giovanni* chords were spliced with Piano Concerto no 20 as a way of dramatising Salieri's entry. Whilst criticism, primarily from Joseph Horowitz, stated that pre-existing music in film should not be mutilated but should retain its autonomy, it was concluded that musical integrity is not a viable criterion with which to assess film music as a filmic context meant that the pre-existing music had become film music. Furthermore, it was concluded that short musical phrases were better able to mirror the length of a scene, as well as a scene's emotion and narrative, which is required of film music. This concurred that Mozart's pre-existing music within *Amadeus* has adhered to the film music function of reflecting narrative and onscreen imagery.

In order to further demonstrate the advantages of short musical phrases, Russell's *The Music Lovers* was explored due Horowitz's praise of its long extracts of music. Functioning differently to the music within *Amadeus*, Tchaikovsky's music within this biopic did not mirror each change in emotion or narrative. In contrast, it functioned as a sound bridge which

is also a feature identified within a film music criterion. Therefore, it was concluded that Tchaikovsky's pre-existing music in *The Music Lovers* had become film music due to its 'recontextualisation' into a filmic context, as well as its film music function of providing continuity over several different scenes in the form of a sound bridge.

Furthermore, the use of music in this biopic governed onscreen events, such as the actors' movements and the timings of the camera shots. It creates a mime effect in which music and image are synchronised; one of the criteria listed for a film music function. Whilst this was not necessarily an example of music enhancing onscreen imagery, it achieved the same effect, thus demonstrated the way Tchaikovsky's pre-existing music functions as film music, and by extension, becomes film music when it is placed in the composer biopic. It exemplifies what happens when the film music is chosen before the creation of the scene.

Finally, Bernard Rose's Beethoven biopic, *Immortal Beloved*, was investigated with specific exploration given to the manipulation of sound quality as a way of enhancing the narrative structures of a scene. Rose's use of music was similar to that of Russell's in *The Music Lovers* as they both used long excerpts of music as a sound bridge. However, Rose chose to use a dampened sound quality in some sections to musically reflect Beethoven's deafness. Through this manipulation of sound, Beethoven's music became film music through its reflection of onscreen imagery and consequent enhancement of narrative and emotion.

The research into pre-existing music within biopics has demonstrated that although film music's conventional role is to submit to dialogue and act as the 'invisible orchestra,' the composer biopic is the exception to this rule (Marshall and Stilwell, 2000). Due to music's dominant role in the narrative, composer biopics necessitate an equally dominant use of

music in the audio. This is witnessed through the focal point of the diegetic orchestra and the music's prominent position in progressing narrative.

In consequence, through conducting this exploration into my chosen biopics it is clear that pre-existing music in film should not be evaluated against a criterion of musical integrity as its function is no longer to provide its audience with entertainment in a concert setting. Its 'recontextualisation' into a filmic context causes pre-existing music to become film music, thus working to enhance narrative and emotion, to reflect onscreen imagery, such as movement, and to provide continuity through acting as a sound bridge between changing scenes. This demonstrated music's mutability across varying contexts. As a result of this filmic context and changed function, the music must be evaluated accordingly, against a film music criterion.

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