

APPENDIX D – “THE PITCH”

A call has been put out by several local movie producers looking for demo submissions for their new films. Video clips have been posted online for you to get an idea of what the film looks like. You have a choice of one of 4 film clips to work on – action, comedy, drama, or horror. Go to Mr. Graham's teacherweb site under grade 12 to watch the videos. You are being asked to write a one page proposal highlighting would you would do musically in your movie score to enhance the visuals. It is imperative that you are very specific explaining what you plan to do – there are hundreds of other composers vying for this job, and you need to sell your skills, knowledge and creativity. Think of all the different compositional techniques and styles you have studied over the last few years, including recent study of idee fixe and leitmotif, and incorporate these into your pitch.

Your pitch should be between 250 – 350 words, typed, and single-spaced. Refer to the rubric below for how you will be evaluated, and hopefully you get picked for the job!

Categories	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Knowledge/ Understanding	Proposal describes use of melody and harmony (mood) with limited creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of melody and harmony (mood) with some creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of melody and harmony (mood) with considerable creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of melody and harmony (mood) with a high degree of creativity and insight
Thinking/ Inquiry	Proposal describes use of instruments (texture, dynamics) with limited creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of instruments (texture, dynamics) with some creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of instruments (texture, dynamics) with considerable creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of instruments (texture, dynamics) with a high degree of creativity and insight
Communication	Proposal describes use of historical/compositional styles with limited creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of historical/compositional styles with some creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of historical/compositional styles with considerable creativity and insight	Proposal describes use of historical/compositional styles with a high degree of creativity and insight
Application	Proposal is written with a limited persuasion and professionalism	Proposal is written with some persuasion and professionalism	Proposal is written with a considerable persuasion and professionalism	Proposal is written with a high degree of persuasion and professionalism

APPENDIX E – PROPOSAL EXAMPLES

1) F.W.Murnau's "Nosferatu"

To score a scene from a film such as this one, I would take into consideration the following important facts:

- time and place: it is based on Bram Stoker's Dracula, and takes place in the city of Bremen
- the film was made in daylight
- it is a series of shots of single characters acting in isolation, but in concert with others
- nature has a major part in the film – in particular odd shapes such as mountains
- there are many disturbing elements – rats, a procession of coffins, a crew-less ship
- the film has an overabundance of words for a silent film
- the completely unromantic treatment of the Count

Since this film is based on a novel that takes place in Germany during the Victorian era, I would incorporate melodic and textural influences based on Germanic folk music of this time period. This melodic material would be augmented in nature, in that it would be drawn out over long stretches, rather than a quaint folk ditty aboard a ship. The fact that the film was shot in daylight adds a mysterious quality to it, and I think this could be best brought out by shimmering layers of high-register strings blended with the electronic keyboard. Since this film leaves its characters in isolation, there must be a longing, fearful, and somewhat "empty" feel to the music, in the music leaves lots of space for individual instruments and single notes to be heard. Since these isolated characters then interact with others in far away places, the thematic content could be varied to reflect the alternating characters. Nature has an important part in this film, yet is a picture that is distorted – this would lead me to choose dissonant harmonies for typical woodwind combinations for woodland scenes – although this is nature, something is not quite right. Although there are many other disturbing elements and visuals in this film, I think they would be best underscored by a more subtle approach, where the music is tense, grating, and pushing the viewer's fear to a higher level. The fact that there is an overabundance of words for a silent film fits well with my minimalist approach because there must be space for the viewer to digest this information. Lastly, the unromantic treatment of the Count is something I would highlight by providing no sympathetic window in the music for the viewer – this character is evil, and the intent here is to scare the viewer. My approach would be to create a sense of atmosphere where the viewer is constantly on edge. Of course, applying the particular ideas listed above will depend greatly upon which scene is being scored.

2) Mack Sennett's "Salome vs Shenandoah"

To score a scene from a film such as this one, I would take into consideration both the time period this film was released in, and the content in relation to the director's "knockabout" style, involving chases and messy fights aimed at the less demanding in the audience, exemplifying the irreverence that made slapstick so sensational. Sennett's films were often ahead of their time, so although this film was released in 1919 and would likely require piano accompaniment in a ragtime style, by the 1920's ragtime was considered "old hat", being replaced by new kinds of music, including early jazz styles such as Dixieland and "Harlem Stride" jazz piano. In scoring this scene, I would employ these "cutting edge" styles to provide the film with newness appropriate for its original release, featuring the piano as the main feature, supported by the rest of the orchestra. This would allow for the piano and orchestra to interact in a call and answer fashion, where the orchestra is scored in a way that it reproduces the original piano motifs, much like hearing Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition and Ravel's interpretation of that piece, interacting sequentially.