

Edexcel GCE

Music Technology 6718/2A

Music Technology in
Context

Summer 2006

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Mark Scheme (Results)

1. ET: Flying Over the Forest

Identify **four** features of the music that reflect Elliot's feelings of anticipation and excitement in this cue.

Instrumentation/Texture

- Brass used to signify danger/triumph (1)
- Twinkling percussion/glockenspiel creates magical effect (1)
- Timpani/triangle roll heighten suspense (1)
- Full orchestra used at point of climax (1)
- Soaring strings (1) in octaves (1)
- Harp/percussion flurries/glissandi (1)
- Texture builds from strings+piano to full orchestra (1)
- Polyphonic at the beginning (1) more homophonic at the end (1)

Melody/Rhythm/Harmony

- High melodies/register (1)
- Rit prior to climax (1)
- Shifts from minor to major at climax (1)
- Oscillating melodies (1)
- Theme builds to a climax at shot of Elliot's realisation he is safe (1)
- Rising sequence in strings (1)
- Series of key changes/modulations/chromaticism at the beginning (1)
- Dramatic and memorable string melody (1)
- Tonality constantly changing until the main theme enters (1)
- Piano is out of time with the strings at the beginning (1)
- Piano accelerando as ET prepares for flight (1)
- Long held chord before flight begins (1)
- Music continually pushing forward/sense of movement (1)
- Rallentando before reaching the musical climax (1)
- Agitated piano part (1)

Max 2 per heading

(Total 4 Marks)

2. Bladerunner: Titles

Listen to **track 2** on the CD.

Identify **four** features of the music that reflect the content of this futuristic film.

Mainly electronic timbres/synthesizers (1)

Slow and dramatic/no clear pulse or beat (1)

Single note melody line/sparse texture gives feeling of solitude/desolation (1)

Occasional spiky gestures create sense of discomfort and disorientation (1)

Doppler effect/pitch bend on synths mimic the often seen air-borne transport (1)

Much use of FX processing to create an expansive soundscape to match the images (1)

Sirens – police/industrial elements of the film (1)

Dissonance – creates unease and is unpredictable (1)

Expansive and majestic score reflects the equally impressive on-screen images of the huge civilisation (1)

Mainly non-percussive sounds heighten sense of unknown/ambiguity (1)

(Total 4 Marks)

3. ET: Titles

This cue is divided into several sections.

The music in the title sequence contains a number of different sections, each of which portrays a different mood or atmosphere.

Complete the table below. For each section identify **two** composition techniques and/or musical devices which illustrate the mood or atmosphere.

Timings	Film section	Mood/ Atmosphere	Composition techniques and/or musical devices
01:07	A call from space (fragment of ET's theme)	Still/calm Eerie Isolated	Solo flute/piccolo/high melody with heavy reverb (1) Overlapping instrumental entries (1) Call and response between flute and horn (1) Sustained chord (1) Slow/rubato (1)
01:37	The spaceship	Suspense Uneasy	Unison and 2-part textures (1) Tonal ambiguity/unresolving harmony (1) Extremes of pitch (1) Rising sequences (1) Dissonance/chromaticism(1) Bare octaves (1) Minor tonality (1) Sustained bass notes (1)
02:43	Spaceship interior	Otherworldly Alien	Use of broad glissandi (1) Atonality (1) Contrary motion (1) Improvised nature of celeste/vibes part (1) Lack of clear pulse (1) Texture thins to just strings + celeste/vibes (1)
03:49	ET in the forest	Wonderment Awe	Pastoral feel from instrumentation (strings/oboe) (1) Open texture (1) Grand string gestures (1) suddenly louder (1) Slow tempo/harmonic rhythm/static harmony (1) Almost plainchant/reverent feel (1) Homophonic texture (1) Long held notes/chords (1) Diatonic (1) Stepwise/conjunct melody(1) Harp/tuned perc. Represent the lights of the city (1)

(Total 8 Marks)

4. Bladerunner: Deckard in a Reflective Mood/Pris' Entrance?

This cue is divided into two distinct sections.

The first part of the cue accompanies images of Deckard looking through some photographs.

a) How does the music attempt to illustrate Deckard's reflective mood?

- Slow tempo (1)
- Rubato (1)
- Sparse/open texture (1)
- Minor tonality (1)
- Slow harmonic rhythm (1)
- Much use of reverb (1)
- Heavy chorus/detuning on piano (1)
- Blues/jazz/added note harmony (1)
- Improvisatory feel (1)
- Sentimental solo melody (1)
- Sustained accompaniment (1)
- Use of piano heightens nostalgia (1)

(6)

b) The second half of the cue is entirely different.

How does the second part of this cue reflect Pris' character?

- Synth (sax) lead = harsh/stark (1)
- Contrast between melody and accompaniment = Pris' disregard for/detachment from her surroundings (1)
- Soft/sustained accompaniment = stereotypical soft feminine nature (1)
- Improvised melody = loose/unstructured (1)
- Plaintive melody/blues/jazz scale = adds to sleazy/sexy nature (1) and sadness about Pris' realisation her life is nearly over (1)
- Unmetred/loose rhythm = lack of pulse/unstructured (1)

(4)

(Total 10 Marks)

5. ET: ET 'Dies' and Bladerunner: Deckard Shoots a Replicant

Listen to **track 5** and **track 6** on the CD.

These two cues are both used to accompany images of a character dying.

- a) Using the table below, compare the different ways each cue describes the termination of life.

Musical feature	ET	Bladerunner
Tonality	Minor	Minor/blues scale
Instrumentation	Sustained strings - prolonged (1) Downwards glissandos - sadness (1) Muted strings - despair (1) Horns added as ET dies (1)	Heartbeat provides rhythmic drive (1) Heartbeat cuts out dramatically (1) Mellow pads provide calm (1) while (1) the harsh synth sax sound cuts through creating tension (1)
Texture	Sparse/open (1) Thins when checking for pulse (1) Homophonic (1)	Static (1) Sparse/open (1) Accompaniment matches slow visuals (1) Homophonic (1)
Melody	Occasional use of ET theme (1) Overall shape is falling/sinking (1) Falling sequence (1)	Improvised pentatonic synth line adds to surrealism of the cold 'retirement' (1) Plaintive/sad (1) Solo line (1)
Dynamics	Cresc./dim. swells (1) Generally soft (1)	Static/flat/calm/emotionless (1) Soft/quiet (1)

**NB – Single word answers are acceptable if relevant and appropriate
Max 1 per box**

- b) These cues suggest **two** contrasting moods. Which cue do you think is most successful. Give two reasons to support your answer.

Which is most successful?:

Candidates should gain credit for positive well-supported answers.

NB They should not gain credit if they make negative comments about the score they find least successful.

(2)

(Total 10 Marks)

Answer EITHER Question 6 OR Question 7

EITHER

6. ET

John Williams' score won him an Oscar and is considered to be one of the most accomplished film scores of all time.

What aspects of this score merit its success and popularity?

Use of leitmotif (1)

- Most material is drawn from 2 main themes (1)
- They are linked to characters/situations/emotions (1)
- They are varied to match different situations/developed as characters or situations change (1)
- Create sense of familiarity/helps communication (1)
- They combine well with each other (1)
- Memorable (1)
- Help increase pace of narrative (1)
- 'Flying Theme' not used in its entirety until late in the film (1) to heighten tension (1) and draw audience in (1)

Accessible score (1)

- Draws on popular styles/pastiche composition (1)
- Very tonal score (1) but skilful use of dissonance (1)
- Accessible style (1) Late romantic/emotional (1)
- Heightens audience involvement (1) through expressive scoring (1)
- Well suited to target audience (1)

Skilful orchestration (1)

- Good use of conventional/tradition orchestration (1) e.g. Piccolo + harp + tuned percussion for 'magical' feel
- Use of pitch range to represent good and evil (1)
- Varied for each occurrence of the main themes (1)

Prominent score (1)

- Music is at forefront of most scenes (1)
- Integral part of the film (1)
- Spielberg allowed total freedom to JW where necessary (1)

Links well with visuals/on screen action (1)

- Good use of hit/syncpoints (1)
- Combines with film without overpowering (1) or being overpowered (1)
- Minimal use of 'Mickey-Mousing' (1) but skilfully done when employed (1)
- Efficiently emphasises on-screen action/emotions (1)

- Provides depth to characters (1)

Emotional score (1)

- Not overly sentimental, though (1)
- Avoids sci-fi clichés (1)

Commercial (1)

- ET Suite is popular with orchestras (1) furthering its appeal (1)
- Highly memorable score (1)
- Gives audience ‘value for money’ as an accompaniment for a blockbuster film (1)
- Enduring (1) appeals across generations (1)

1 mark per example given to a maximum of 1 example per bold heading

1 extra mark per example if substantiated with a musical quote (in notation)

7. Bladerunner

Vangelis has successfully created an example of a futuristic soundscape whilst retaining many elements of a more conventional film score.

What features of the score contribute to this success? You should refer to at least **three** specific cues from the film in your answer.

Use of electronic instruments/synthesizers/electro-acoustic score (1)

- Analogue synths create futuristic feel/timbres (1)
- Pad synths fill textures (1)
- Reflects the cyberpunk nature of the film/contemporary visuals (1)
- Highlights the artificial nature of replicants (1) e.g. synth strings rather than real strings
- Very memorable timbres used for key moments in film (1)
- Combined with conventional instruments (1) e.g. piano and synths to highlight human/non-human elements of narrative
- Use of FX (1)
- Musical SFX constantly reinforce futuristic nature (1)

Effective performance style (1)

- Much use of improvisation (1) to complement decayed urban/futuristic visuals (1)
- Many cues are rhythmically very free (1)

Unique composition style (1)

- Texture based (1) as opposed to being motif led (1) adds to ambiguity of many cues (1)
- Simple diatonic harmony (1) complements love story (1) and innocence of Rachel (1)
- Superficially loose structure to most cues (1) **NOT random**
- Intuitive composition style probably related to Vangelis being self-taught (1)
- Largely tonal (1) with use of blues/pentatonic scales (1)

Effective combination with visuals (1)

- Music weaves in and out of scenes (1) adding to the ambiguous nature (1)
- Gentle instrumentation of many cues is often opposite to the striking visual imagery (1) e.g. huge cityscapes accompanied by simple melody + pad synth
- Little strict adherence to hitpoints (1) Music tends to fade in and out (1)
- Interaction between diegetic/non-diegetic music (1)
- Accurate musical portrayal of on-screen visuals (1) e.g. melancholy cues accompany dark and oppressive visuals (1)
- Very slow pace/static cues reflect slow pace of narrative (1) but also allow audience to focus on highly stylised visuals (1)
- Although electronic, love and other emotions (e.g. nostalgia) still effectively portrayed (1)
- Brings 50's style *film noir* visuals up to date with electronic timbres (1)

Conventional film-scoring techniques

- Musical content is largely conventional/tonal despite being electronic (1)
- Could have been realised on conventional instruments (1) albeit less effectively (1)

- Some use of theme and variation (1)
- Many major cues are melody plus accompaniment (1)
- Sparing use of 'real' instruments (e.g. electric piano) aids familiarity (1)

Avoidance of convention (1)

- Avoids obvious motivic development (1)

Max 12 marks if no cues are used as examples.

(Total 16 Marks)
