

Ivory: Creating a Sound-based Genre

Andrew Newcombe
16/11/2018

Contents

Declaration	2
Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	5
1.0 Chapter One: Methodology	8
2.0 Chapter Two: Literature Review	10
Part One: Genre	10
[2.1] Aristotle to Altman: A History of Film Genre	10
[2.2] A Triadic Phenomenon: How a Genre is Formed	11
[2.3] The Cinematic Cocktail: Mixing Genres and Creating New Ones	13
Part Two: Film Sound	15
[2.4] Sonic Cinema: A History of Film Sound	15
[2.5] Film Sound Theory: Watching with your Ears	16
[2.5.1] A Sound Move: Key Film Sound Movements	18
[2.6] Hearing Film: Dialogue, Effects and Music	21
3.0 Chapter Three: The Sound-based Genre	25
[3.1] Soniconography: Iconography of Genre Sound	25
[3.2] The Genre Bartender: Creating a Sound Based Genre	26
[3.3] <i>Ivory</i> Discussion	30
Conclusion	36
References	37
Filmography	40

Declaration

I hereby declare that the material contained within this exegesis is an account of my own research and creation, which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institute.

Mr Andrew Newcombe

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Glen Stasiuk. You have guided me through the writing of this exegesis and given great advice throughout the production of *Ivory*. Without your encouragement this may never have been completed.

To the all-important cast and crew of *Ivory*. You have exceeded all expectations. Your professionalism and belief in my theories have allowed us to create a film that not only pairs perfectly with this exegesis but stands alone as a great film. We should all be proud of what we have accomplished.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family. The encouragement you have shown me, both through financing the film and supporting me during the long hours reading and writing, has allowed me to create something I can be proud of. A special thanks to my girlfriend Dani for being so accommodating of my long absences in front of the computer and for stepping up and running unit.

Abstract

Many critics understand the film genre as being borrowed from literature and theatre. This understanding assumes that the most significant element of the genre is the narrative, thus ignoring the technical aspects of film, including camera and sound.

The exegesis and supporting short film argue that an understanding of film genre, film sound theory and sound design techniques, when applied to practical filmmaking will lead to a technical based film genre, namely a sound-based genre.

This argument is constructed through the discussion of film genre theory, film sound theory and sound design techniques and the combination of the three acts as evidence for the creation of a film sound genre in the future, proving a technical based genre is indeed possible.

The significance of this research is in its new understanding of film genre and its original application of existing film sound theory and sound design techniques. This thesis forms the bedrock of 'sound genre' research, creating a pathway into further exploration of technical based genres.

Introduction

Genre theory consistently focuses on narrative. When discussing genre, Tudor attempts to understand how a film can be understood to belong to a specific genre. The films used as examples are described in terms of their narrative. He argues that, “to say a film is a western is immediately to say that it shares some indefinable “X” with other films we call westerns” (2012, 3). To discover this “X”, Tudor looks only towards the narrative, using examples of character, story and themes. This focus does not allow for new understandings of the term ‘genre’.

Many genre theorists have sought to understand how a genre is formed, yet clear, descriptive theories specific to film are rarely written. Most agree that modern genre theory stems from Aristotle and his theories stated in *Poetics English* (384BC-322BC), in which he defined poetry (understood as literature). Aristotle’s genre theory has gone relatively unchallenged. However, Rick Altman argues that some of his most basic terms need to be reconsidered (1999, 2). Genre theory is complicated by the introduction of subgenres. The theories regarding subgenres continue to focus on narrative, leading to subgenres such as romantic comedy or action thriller.

This exegesis critiques the existing definition of what constitutes a film genre. It does this through examining existing genre formation theories, using them to argue for a genre based on sound design rather than narrative. The exegesis and supporting short film argue that an understanding of film genre theory, film sound theory and sound design techniques, when applied to practical filmmaking will lead to a technical based film genre, namely a film sound genre.

This exegesis defines the soundtrack as existing of three elements; dialogue, sound effects and music. Each of these elements contributes to the effectiveness of the soundtrack. They are most effectively employed in a 5.1 surround sound mix. Together they inform the audience about narrative, character and can make the most fantastical worlds seem real.

Four film sound theories and sound design techniques; leitmotif, diegetic/non-diegetic sound, sound montage and point-of-audition, are expanded on in this exegesis and then examined in the original short film *Ivory*. These sound theories and design techniques form the base of a film that fits into the theoretical sound-based genre. It is not a conclusive list, but is an example of conscious sound design.

Both Italian Neorealism and the French New Wave filmmakers used sound in interesting and original ways. The creation of a new genre is not the same as a film movement. However, sound was integral to the style of Italian Neorealism and French New Wave. Sound can influence the formation of a genre in the same way it influenced these movements.

While genre and film sound have volumes of literature written about them, no significant connection between the two has been made. This exegesis introduces the term 'soniconography' and explains how an intricate understanding genre formation can be paired with film sound theory and sound design techniques to justify a sound-based genre.

Specific examples of these theories and design techniques being used in existing films are discussed in Chapter Three. A film that engages with a significant amount of these theories and design techniques would qualify for the sound-based genre. The original short film *Ivory*, which accompanies this exegesis, is discussed in detail. This discussion provides examples of the theories and design techniques that inform the short film. It also explains how some of

the insights would not have come through secondary research alone, only made possible through practice-based research.

1.0 Chapter One: Methodology

Chapter one argues for the use of practice-based research. It discusses how this form of research leads to unique outcomes. The exegesis has resulted in a theoretical genre, while the short film *Ivory* is an example of a film that would exist within said genre. This methodology was chosen for two key reasons. It allowed for the practical testing of theories discussed in the exegesis, and it allowed new questions and research avenues through the production of the short film. Smith and Dean state that this form of research “generates detectable research outputs” and “can lead to specialised research outputs which can then be generalised and written up as research” (2009, 5). This has resulted in a revised exegesis. The practice has informed the theory.

Several key sound theories and sound design techniques inform *Ivory*. The practical application of these theories and design techniques has led to different conclusions than those that can be made through theory alone. As the research focuses on film genre and its relationship with the film soundtrack, *Ivory* needed to be a recognisable genre film. Budgetary restraints were the deciding factor. *Ivory* could not be a western, sci-fi or musical as to do these genres justice, a much larger scale production was needed. The genre which made most sense financially, story wise and as a canvas to test film sound theories was drama. While not as immediately recognisable as the aforementioned genres, it does allow for connection with sub-genres and the possibility of a sound-based genre. Four primary sound theories and sound design techniques informed *Ivory*; leitmotif, diegetic/non-diegetic sound, sound montage and point-of-audition. These theories are discussed at length in the exegesis.

The inclusion of skilled, industry-based cast and crew members, particularly the sound editor, director of photography and editor, provided insight into the practical application of

theoretical plans and ideas. The application of key film sound theories and design techniques dictated the three stages of film production; pre-production, production and post-production. Pre-production, was sound rather than image based. The shot list revolved around how these theories and design techniques would be included. Production was also influenced in a similar way. Key moments (both in the narrative and specific shots) were difficult to change, as their meaning went beyond the production. Both the picture and sound edit were also dictated by the exegesis. The sound editor was loath to deviate from industry standards. As the director, I was informed by the theory and fought for the changes, allowing the theories to be tested. The outcome of this methodology was not an exegesis and creative work that functioned separately, but a thesis with two components, working harmoniously to achieve one goal. The exegesis birthed the creative work, giving it form and purpose. *Ivory* tested the exegesis, answering some questions and prompting others, thus expanding the research. Each component would be incomplete without the other.

2.0 Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this thesis I argue that existing genre theories can be adapted to argue for a theoretical genre based on sound, rather than narrative. Part one of this chapter supports this argument through its discussion of film genre, from its inception to how new genres are accepted and how they have previously been altered.

Part One: Genre

2.1 Aristotle to Altman: A History of Film Genre

This section explores the history of film genre, focusing on the way genre has previously been categorised. This style of categorisation will be challenged with the introduction of a sound-based genre. Film genre theory stems from Aristotle and his theories on literary types. Aristotle's *Poetics English* (384BC-322BC) speaks of the "species and their respective capacities" (384BC-322BC) of poetry (which is now understood as literature). He states that all of the poetic kinds "differ from one another in three ways, either by a difference of kind in their means, or by differences in the objects, or in the manner of their imitations" (384BC-322BC).

Aristotle's theories for categorising poetry have been used on all forms of literature, including prose, drama, music and most recently film. While Aristotle remains relatively unchallenged, Altman argues that several of his basic assumptions should be questioned, because "every one of Aristotles apparently transparent expressions conceal a set of assumptions tacitly adopted by virtually every subsequent genre theorist" (1999, 2). Altman asserts that it is important to define the basic terms Aristotle and other, recent genre theorists use so their arguments can be clarified. This idea is discussed further in section 2.2 in relation to the formation of genres.

Film, and therefore film genre theory, is subjective. The categorisation of films into genres is not a science:

For most of its 2000 years, genre study has been primarily nominological and typological in function. That is to say, it has taken as its principal task the division of the world of literature into types and the naming of those types - much as the botanist divides the realm of flora into varieties of plants (Allen 1989, 44).

Using Aristotle's theories, genre theorists have categorised texts into specific genres in an almost scientific process. Altman uses the theory of genrification¹ in his text *Film/Genre* (1999, 64), to argue that this scientific method cannot effectively deal with the reading of genres. Altman's genrification theory is expanded on when discussing the mixing of genres in section 2.3.

2.2 A Triadic Phenomenon: How a Genre is Formed

In this section I engage with two theories on how a genre is formed. Altman's theory is accepted as the more convincing, and then used to argue for a sound-based genre. Edward Buscombe's article *The Idea of Genre in the American Cinema* (1970) made an argument on the formation of genres; however, it was unclear. He states that identifying the elements of a genre is common sense and that any film with one or more of these elements shall be included within that specific genre. The first issue with this is that for this argument to hold, a general understanding of a specific genre must be agreed upon. Using a quote from Wellek and Warren, Buscombe develops his argument further, stating that genre definition needs to be based on an 'inner' and 'outer' form; thus:

¹ The way a botanist would divide flora into varieties of plants (Altman 1999, 64).

genre should be conceived, we think, as a grouping of literary works based, theoretically, upon both outer form (specific metre or structure) and also upon inner form (attitude, tone, purpose – more crudely, subject and audience) (1956, 260)

Buscombe argues that it is the combination of the inner and outer form that is essential. If only the inner form is considered then the “concept will be too loose to be of any value” (1970, 36) and if only the outer form is considered “then the genre will be ultimately meaningless, since devoid of any content” (1970, 36). Using the western as an example genre, the article describes the ‘outer form’ using examples of the setting, character’s costumes, tools of the trade (primarily guns), and horses. However, he does not elaborate on the ‘inner’ form, leaving the original argument of the importance of the combination of the two elements unresolved.

Film/Genre (Altman 1999) examines genre, dissecting terms to explain their meaning. Altman argues that there is a difference between film genres and the genres of other mediums, but this difference is often overlooked, “Both industrial decision-making and critical evaluation of each new film genre are taken to be simplified by the prior existence of the same genre in other media” (1999, 30). Unlike Buscombe, Altman clearly argues that film genres are formed and understood through the relationship between producer, critic and the public. A common understanding of genre must be shared between these three entities if a film genre, or subgenre, is to be created. This is an important distinction as it gives a practical theory on which to base our understanding of film genre.

2.3 The Cinematic Cocktail: Mixing Genres and Creating New Ones

This section argues for the expansion of what is included as genre. It uses subgenres as an example of how genres have developed in the past. Genre theory is complicated by the introduction of subgenres. Just as many early genres borrowed elements from existing mediums, including their names, the term subgenre is also originally a literary term. *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (3 ed.)* describes 'subgenre' as:

Any category of literary works that forms a specific class within a larger genre: thus the pastoral elegy may be regarded as a subgenre of elegy, which is in turn a subgenre of lyric poetry (Baldick 2008).

Bordwell and Thompson use clear examples to describe how subgenres work and the influence they can have on filmmakers and audiences:

In 1979, *Alien* proved innovative because it fused science-fiction conventions with those of the contemporary horror film... by the 2000's the science-fiction/horror blend had become conventional, as in *Pitch* and *Doom* (2012, 337)

Thus, one innovative film which proved popular with audiences, stimulated a trend within the industry, resulting in similar films being produced. Additional films create a common understanding between producer, critic and the public, leading to a recognised subgenre.

Altman explains the evolution of genres into subgenres, which may eventually become distinct genres. His explanation follows the scientific categorising process of genrification, where a specific category (such as cats) is broken into subcategories (such as lynx, panthers, wildcats) (Altman 1999, 64). Altman does this for genres by using nouns and adjectives, which he has given the term "adjectival genre" (1999, 64). The noun genre (comedy) becomes a

subgenre through the inclusion of an adjective (romantic) to create the subgenre romantic-comedy. This cycle of subgenre creation has endless possibilities:

A fresh cycle may be initiated by attaching a new adjective to an existing noun genre, with the adjective standing for some recognizable location, plot type, or other differentiation factor (Altman 1999, 65).

This differentiation factor could be the sound design. Theories on the history of genre, how genres are formed, and the mixing of existing genres all struggle with the subjective nature of film. What was in the past seen as a distinct element of one genre may now be viewed as an example of a recently created subgenre in the present. Bordwell and Thompson state:

Although we can't pin down a single description of a genre that will apply for all time, we can recognize that at any moment in film history, filmmakers, critics, and audiences agree closely on the genres in play (2012, 337).

Genre categorisation must be malleable, ever evolving.

Part Two: Film Sound

This chapter continues to argue for a sound-based genre. Part two discusses film sound theory and sound design techniques, focusing on elements of sound theory and sound design that will be needed within a film fits into this new, theoretical genre.

2.4 Sonic Cinema: A History of Film Sound

In this section I argue that sound's history of revolutionising film puts it in good stead to revolutionise genre. Film sound and the silent film era is often misunderstood. Synchronised sound² is a more accurate term as film was arguably never silent.

In fact, the term *silent film* (italics in original) is a bit of a misnomer, as silent films were seldom silent, often including live or recorded music, sound effects, and other accompaniment (Taylor 2009).

The introduction of synchronised sound was a development in Thomas Edison's 'vision' for film. He stated:

I believe that in coming years... grand opera can be given at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York without any material change from the original, and with artists and musicians long since dead (Altman 2004, 157).

It may have simply been a case of limited technology that denied synchronised sound from being introduced alongside the moving image.

After the success of *The Jazz Singer* (Crosland 1927) in 1927, the five major studios (Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), Fox, Warners and RKO Radio Pictures (RKO) all began the transition to synchronised sound (Gomery 2005, 126). However, MGM executive

² Where the image and soundtrack occur simultaneously.

Nicholas Shenk opposed the hasty conversion to synchronised sound, arguing that “The novelty of sound has upset all reason. Sound has been applied indiscriminately whether it belonged or not.” (Crafton 1997, 206). It was not only producers who were initially against synchronised sound. Due to the limitations it placed on camera (the then noisy cameras had to be placed in a large, sound proof box) and actors (microphones were placed around the scene, forcing actors to act in relation to the microphones), many filmmakers believed synchronised sound did not add anything to film as an art form (Elsaesser and Hagener 2015, 151). They believed the novelty of sound did not warrant its inclusion. Believing it only detracted from the developing art form.

2.5 Film Sound Theory: Watching with your Ears

Just as practice informs theory, so theory informs practice. A film’s sound design may be enhanced through knowledge of film sound theory. This knowledge allows filmmakers to implement styles and techniques needed for the sound-based genre. Four key theories and design techniques are discussed in this section. The first is leitmotif³. While leitmotif does not always refer to music (a non-musical sound may also function as a sign), it generally does. Leitmotif works through repetition. The musical theme (or other sound) is assigned meaning through its pairing with the image. Audiences make connections when repeated images are paired with the same theme or sound. The images may be greatly varied, as Gorbman believes

³ A short piece of music that, for particular contextual reasons, has acquired the function of a sign and has come to mean something else than itself within a particular context (Larsen 2007, 70).

when she describes leitmotif as “a theme in a film [that] becomes associated with a character, a place, a situation, or an emotion” (1987, 3).

The second key theory/design technique primarily relating to music is diegetic and non-diegetic sound⁴. For music to be considered diegetic, its source must exist within the world of the film. Non-diegetic music (existing eternally to the world of the film) is the more common of the two and generally the type of music spoken about when discussing leitmotif. While diegetic music is less common than non-diegetic, it is still used frequently in film. Music played on a radio, by a ‘live’ performer (within the diegesis) or listened to by a character through headphones is diegetic.

The third theory focuses less on music and more on all three elements of sound; dialogue, effects and music. Sound montage “stresses the fact that images and sounds communicate on two different levels; rather than trying to make them equivalents, montage calls attention to what they each contribute differently” (Corrigan and White 2012, 204). Bordwell defines montage as a way:

To build a narrative (by formulating an artificial time and space or guiding the viewer’s attention from one narrative point to another), to control rhythm, to create metaphors, and to make rhetorical points (1972, 9).

Filmmakers can apply these principles to sound, resulting in sound montage. Sergei Eisenstein extended his theory on montage to include sound, suggesting “that the listener incorporates the same synthetic process in making sense of the entire audiovisual cinematic presentation” (Cohen 2001, 253).

⁴ Sound, whose supposed source is not only absent from the image but is also external to the story world [the diegesis] (Winters 2010, 224).

The final major sound design technique discussed here is point-of-audition⁵. This is when sound is heard from the reference point of a character or place. This style of sound design is often used to invoke a sense of realism. Things that are far away, sound far away (or extremely close) and things which are close, sound close (or extremely far away). More creatively still, it can allow the audience to experience the diegesis in the way the character is imagined to be experiencing the diegesis. The audience may hear the music coming from a pair of headphones, or not hear something they can see because a character is distracted. These four theories are examples of what will exist within a sound-based genre film. It is not an exhaustive list, but it provides examples of sound design that will be noticeable enough for producers, critics and the public to notice, leading to a sound-based genre.

2.5.1 A Sound Move: Key Film Sound Movements

This section uses the examples of Italian Neorealism and the French New Wave to argue for the importance of sound design in previous film movements. While a movement is not the same as the creation of a new genre, sound was integral in their development and style. It can fulfil that role again in the creation of a new genre. Italian Neorealism was a cinematic movement that rose to prominence in the first decade following World War Two. Making a significant and deliberate breakaway from the propaganda of fascist Italy, Italian Neorealism had a:

Preference for location filming, the use of non-professional actors, the avoidance of ornamental mise-en-scène, a preference for natural light, a freely-moving documentary style of photography, a non-interventionist approach to film directing

⁵ A clumsy term whose only merit is to recall unfailingly the 'point-of-view' shot" (1992, 60).

and an avoidance of complex editing and other post-production processes likely to focus attention on the contrivance of the film image (Shiel 2006, 2).

Italian Neorealist films also had a distinctive sound. Italian Neorealist directors removed the heavy noise insulation from cameras and hand-held them. This forced them to shoot without sound, which they post-synchronised. The neorealists demonstrated the financial advantages of such filmmaking, and the liberating creative advantages (Wiegand 2012).

The post-synchronisation of sound was not foreign to these directors, as under Italy's fascist regime, dubbing the sound of their films had been compulsory (Shiel 2006). While many films made in the Hollywood style have their sound added during post-production, it is very unusual to not record sound on location. This is especially true for dialogue, which is surprisingly time-consuming to insert into the film during post-production. In the 21st century, post-production is often associated with visual effects and complicated sound design. However, Italian Neorealism used post-production sound to increase the verisimilitude. Post-production was used to replace lost location sound, where "diegetic sound cinematically mimics neorealist films" (Ruberto and Wilson 2007, 242). Roberto Rossellini's *The Man with the Cross* (1943):

Recreates wartime Russia using real footage and intense combat sequences which mimic the documentary authenticity of newsreel both in their images and in their use of richly textured sound to suggest the cacophony of war (Shiel 2006, 32).

Diegetic post-production sound can be creatively used to great effect.

Richard Neupert describes the French New Wave as primarily a cultural phenomenon, influenced heavily by "economic, political, aesthetic and social trends that developed in the 1950's" (2002, 3). The French New Wave pushed the boundaries of film sound in all three key areas, dialogue, sound effects and music. With regards to music, theorists disagree on the

extent of this influence. Michel Chion argues that the films we consider 'French New Wave' today, were not considered so in their time. The films considered French New Wave upon their release were diverse in genre, with music similarly diverse. Yet Mervyn Cooke states that the French New Wave was revolutionary for film music, more so than any other film movement in the history of cinema. Cooke bases these claims on the unconventionality of Jean-Luc Godard's films alone, which has garnered criticism towards what some consider a revolutionary claim (Mcmahon 2014, 61-62).

In *Le Beau Serge* (Chabrol 1958), Claude Chabrol uses a mixture of genres, techniques and traditions to alternately reinforce and undercut the narrative. The most significant of these is Chabrol's alternation of diegetic versus non-diegetic and realist versus artificial stylistic techniques that structures the narrative itself. Chabrol uses a musical note to introduce Serge, a main character of the film. This ominous sound functions as leitmotif:

The soundtrack not only blasts out a warning, it also connects the audience's attention and this highly parodic, evocative strain of music to Serge before Francoise has even seen him (Neupert 2002, 135).

Louis Malle pushes film sound design even further in his film *Elevator to the Gallows* (1958). Malle uses unconventional camera techniques to disorientate the audience and add to the mythology of Paris at night. Florence (the protagonist) turns to look at something in the distance, then when it cuts to (what is presumed a point-of-view shot), she walks into frame. This technique is further enhanced by the rather strange style of diegetic and non-diegetic dialogue. Florence's lips move, and no sound is heard, then we later hear her speaking while her mouth stays closed. Neupert argues that this image-to-sound relationship challenges norms and typifies many of Malle's films and much of the French New Wave (2002, 104).

Malle also uses sound to show the internal struggle of Florence. To reflect her internal psychological struggle, he drops all diegetic sound. After this point much of her dialogue is internal, functioning in a similar way to voice-over in films made under the Hollywood system (Neupert 2002, 101).

2.6 Hearing Film: Dialogue, Effects and Music

In this section I argue for the importance of each element of the soundtrack. They all contribute differently to the film. A film which belongs to the sound-based genre will proactively engage with each of the elements. The film soundtrack is commonly understood as comprising of three main elements; dialogue, effects and music. Perhaps the least creatively used of the three is dialogue. Yet, dialogue is a key part of the film soundtrack. The use of an actor's voice in film allowed much information to be conveyed. Accents tell audiences a lot about characters, invoking pre-conceived ideas about varying dialects "to upper-middle class city dwellers, country dialects were backward, working-class dialects inferior and foreign accents either suspect or funny" (van Leeuwen 2009, 432). It can be assumed that large percentage of patrons of the cinema were 'upper-middle class city dwellers' because theatre chains built most U.S. theatres in the largest city in the region (Gomery 2005, 126). This business model was similarly used in Australia.

Dialogue does not make meaning on its own. The picture edit influences how the audiences understands and reacts to the dialogue. Bordwell and Thompson claim that the audience may or may not sympathise with a character depending whether the camera shows the character speaking or being spoken to (2012, 275). Dialogue has been creatively used through overlapping dialogue. Francois Thomas states that:

Cinema favours the consistent alternation of spoken lines, which guarantees intelligibility and does not encumber the editing process with live recordings that cannot be disconnected from one another in post-production (2013, 126).

Overlapping dialogue creates a sense of reality as people seldom take it in turns speaking, especially when in a group or crowd.

Just as the picture edit can alter the effects of dialogue, sound is able to alter the picture edit. The common screenwriter saying, 'show don't tell' could easily be altered to 'hear don't show.' A film may indeed benefit from guiding the audience through what they hear instead of what they see. If the example of a door opening is used, when the audience hears the door creak, they do not necessarily need to see it. The sound also informs the next shot, as the audience then expects to see who came through the door (Bordwell and Thompson 2012, 268).

Many audience members obviously believe that sound effects are purely the sounds recorded on set. This may be true for some sounds, however, many synchronous sound effects in a film are recorded during a process known as foley⁶. It may not have been possible to record it on set, or in the case of some sound effects, it may not have existed on set at all. To achieve the correct sound, sound recordists go to extreme lengths, such as dropping concrete slabs from a crane (Buhler, Neumeyer and Deemer 2010, 417). This effort is to simulate a certain level of verisimilitude, whether this is high or low level depends on the film. Sound can help any world created in a film seem believable, even if it looks entirely unbelievable.

⁶ Foley is primarily used to produce sound that would be there in the film (LoBrutto 1994, 62). It is named after the man who pioneered the technique, sound recordist Jack Foley (Ament 2014, 4).

Music is the most common element that comes to mind when thinking of a film's soundtrack. There are two main forms of music used in film. Originally scored music intended for a specific film and compiled music which most commonly pre-existed the film (Kassabian 2001, 2). Scored music can have many purposes within a film. A clear responsibility of scored music is to illicit an emotional response from the audience. Gorbman argues that:

In dominant cinema, this capacity of music to refer to commonality, destiny and the like, is exploited for producing emotion and pleasure. The appropriate music will elevate the story of man to the story of Man (1987, 81).

Scored music also has more practical functions within a scene. *King Kong* (Cooper and Shoedsack 1933), one of the first films to feature a completely original score, used scored music to compensate for the lacking realism in the Kong they had created. Scored music begins when the crew reaches Skull Island, as it "signalled the entry into the fantastic realm, facilitating the leap of faith necessary to accept Kong as real" (Kalinak 1992, 71). Composer Bernard Herrmann, famous for his work with director Alfred Hitchcock, believes scored music plays an integral role in film, "I always tell a story: a composer writes a score for a picture, and he gives it life" (Brown 1994, 290). While often regarded as a final edition to a film, scored music can be an integral element.

Compiled music exists prior to the film, it functions differently to scored music and can provide different outcomes. Filmmakers often use classical music similarly to scored music, yet they function differently. The pre-conceived understanding of classical music an audience brings to their viewing of a film influences their reaction. Each individual audience member will view classical music differently. Ford states that "The use of classical music to denote culture... has become a cinematic commonplace" (2010, 87) because for many, classical music

is highbrow. This understanding may determine the audience's view of a character, class or culture. Audiences experience 'popular' compiled music differently. Memories of songs, opinions on artists and tastes in genres all subconsciously effect audiences' responses to the popular music used. Popular music often comes with the complication of lyrics, which may be a negative (due to the aforementioned reasons) or a positive, which is the stance Gorbman takes, "song lyrics are perceived to add to rather than detract from audio-viewing" (2007, 151). Dialogue, effects and music are all integral to the sound-based genre.

Using genre theory, sound theory and sound design techniques, chapter two argued for the creation of a new, sound-based genre. Existing genre theory argues for the possibility of a genre not based on narrative. History has shown that sound can alter film in drastic ways. It is possible a collection of films with identifiable sound elements would be recognised as belonging to a specific genre.

3.0 Chapter Three: The Sound-based Genre

In chapter three, I outline how the theories discussed in chapter two can be applied to practical filmmaking. This is supported through examples from existing films. I then introduce the term 'soniconography', explaining how it more accurately describes elements of the sound-based genre than iconography. The chapter concludes with a discussion of *Ivory*, where I give descriptions of how I engaged with the sound theories to produce a film that fits within the sound-based genre.

3.1 Soniconography: Iconography of Genre Sound

This section outlines how the theories discussed in chapter two can be applied to practical filmmaking. Much research has been done on both genre and film sound. Little has been written on 'genre soundtrack'. This research focuses on significant sound design theories and creative choices and how these can be used to form a genre of films based on the soundtrack rather than narrative. When discussing film genre, the literature often focuses on iconography. Buscombe describes this as the 'outer form'. Again, from the example of a western, this includes; setting, costumes, tools of the trade (primarily guns), and horses (1970, 36). To describe the iconography of film sound, I have coined the term 'soniconography'. The introduction of a sound specific term follows the style of Rick Altman, who introduced the term point-of-audition to describe the sound design having a point-of-view (1992, 60). Point-of-audition turns the focus to the sound. Non-diegetic music (for example) could be described as iconic of the theoretical sound genre, however the word icon and by extension iconography, is still defined by image. Soniconography is a more specific and accurate term.

According to Altman, changes in genre must be significant enough that they can be recognised by the producer, critic and the public (1999). For a sound-based genre to succeed it must have noticeable sound design. Diegetic and non-diegetic sounds play an important role. Diegetic and non-diegetic sound focuses on music but also includes sound effects and dialogue. Sound effects are very rarely placed outside of the diegesis, making any that are, significant to the producer, critic and the public. Voice-over is a common form of non-diegetic dialogue. Leitmotif is a necessary component of the sound-based genre as it makes a strong connection between the sound design and the narrative. Leitmotif allows the film to tell the audience information through sound rather than the image. Sound montage functions in film in a similar fashion to leitmotif. It focuses on the different meanings that can be made from both the soundtrack and the image, arguing that the audience can create meaning from a montage of sounds in the same way they do images. The final primary sound design element is point-of-audition. This style of sound design places the audience within the film, using the sound to alter their 'view' of the scene. It is also crucial in allowing a creative use of surround sound. A 5.1 surround sound mix is a fundamental technical aspect of the sound-based genre.

3.2 The Genre Bartender: Creating a Sound Based Genre

Using specific examples of creative sound design from existing films, this section will explain in greater detail the types of sound design that I include in the sound-based genre. Films that I included in the sound-based genre feature most of the 'soniconic' elements listed in the previous sections. Creative and thoughtful sound design is not new. However, no meaningful connection has been made between films that have made a conscious decision to engage with creative sound design.

Of the three main elements that make up the soundtrack, dialogue is perhaps the least discussed and arguably the least creative. Within the mix it is generally set to a standard level and panned entirely to the front centre speaker. This is done so that the dialogue is audible and sounds as if it is coming from the characters' mouth no matter where in the large cinema a person is seated. Dialogue is also traditionally alternated, with each character speaking after another. This allows for the highest level of intelligibility while simplifying the editing process by allowing the sound editor to manipulate each character's dialogue individually.

In *Citizen Kane* (Welles 1941), Orson Welles rebelled against this trend by pioneering overlapping dialogue. Welles' style of dialogue was significant because: it influenced the way dialogue was used within the narrative; and, how it was recorded and edited during the production and post-production phases of filmmaking. Robert Atman was heavily inspired by this, using overlapping dialogue in *A Prairie Home Companion* (2006) and *M*A*S*H* (1970) among many of his other films.

Another way of creatively using dialogue is voiceover, where the voice is seemingly disconnected from the image. Many critics believed that even with the introduction of sound films, the meaning should still be made by the image, "for sound films to be true to the basic aesthetic principle, their significant communications must originate with their pictures" (Kracauer 1960). Voice-over goes against this tradition, as the significant communication originates with the sound, not the image. *Dr. Strangelove Or: How I learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (Kubrick 1964) uses voice-over to successfully orient the audience within the world of the film. This style of dialogue engages with non-diegetic sound. The characters within the film (diegesis) cannot hear the voice, it is solely for the audience, allowing the soundtrack to communicate on a level reserved for the image.

The second key element of a film soundtrack is the sound effects. Like dialogue, sound effects can be inserted into a film purely because they are needed to give verisimilitude; however, if planned and executed correctly, they can be used as creatively as music. Verisimilitude was the primary reason the sound design of the Omaha Beach scene in *Saving Private Ryan* (Spielberg 1998) worked so well. Using point-of-audition, Spielberg situated the audience in the middle of the chaos, with bullets flying past, the sound of being dunked under water and bombs exploding right next to the audience's 'ear' leaving a ringing sound. Some sound effects, such as the lightsaber sounds from *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (Lucas 1977) or the Light Cycles from *Tron* (Lisberger 1982), have become so well known that an audience would recognise them even without their accompanying image. Filmmakers can use this to their advantage, as once a sound is understood they no longer need show the audience something they can convey through sound alone. This is the primary way sound effects utilise leitmotif.

Sound effects are also able to alter the picture edit. This can be used to create interesting scenes out of mundane situations. *Baby Driver* (Wright 2017) does this to great effect, where the sound effects of a character counting money sync with the music another character is listening to through headphones. *Apocalypse Now* (Coppola 1979) uses sound effects expertly, turning a slow scene (regarding the image) into a masterpiece. Through the syncing of a spinning ceiling fan and the sound of a helicopter, the sound design provides the audience an avenue to dive into the psyche of the protagonist. Off-screen sound effects also allow for the filmmakers to give both the characters and audience information without showing them anything. This could be a sound that catches a character's attention, leading to the next shot or could allow the filmmaker to achieve something that cannot be shown due to budgetary restraints.

Music is used in a variety of ways in film. Arguably the most common and most recognised way is non-diegetic score. This style of film music has given audiences classics such as the themes from *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (Lucas 1977), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Spielberg 1981) and *Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone* (Columbus 2001). Yet these themes go against classical understanding which states that, "Music is not meant to be heard consciously. As such it should subordinate itself to dialogue, to visuals – i.e. to the primary vehicles of the narrative" (Gorbman 1987, 73). These themes are unarguably heard consciously. Diegetic music is any music that can be heard within the diegesis, primarily by a character in the film. This is commonly achieved through a live musical performance or a song being played over the radio.

As with many areas of filmmaking, filmmakers eventually begin to play with the rules. The barriers between what is non-diegetic music and diegetic music are often broken. This can be done using point-of-audition, as in *Guardians of the Galaxy* (Gunn 2014) where the music originating in the protagonist's headphones functions as non-diegetic score. It can also be done by blending diegetic music into non-diegetic, such as in *The Martian* (Scott 2015) where the music on the radio blends into the clarity of non-diegetic score. Another way is through having the diegetic performance of a character accompanied by non-diegetic music like in *Empire of the Sun* (Spielberg 1987), where the protagonist sings a Welsh lullaby and is accompanied by non-diegetic instruments and voices. *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (Meyer 1982) does this by having a diegetic performance transform into a non-diegetic one, where diegetic bagpipes play over a funeral scene, to eventually be accompanied by a non-diegetic orchestra.

Leitmotif allows music to represent characters, relationships, memories or any number of things. The film which arguably uses music as leitmotif to greatest effect is *Jaws* (Spielberg 1975). In the opening scene of the film, Spielberg connects the shark with the now famous theme, allowing him to substitute images of the shark with the music. This adds to the suspense of the scene (as our imagination is far more creative than what can be shown on film) and saves on production cost and time on set.

3.3 *Ivory* Discussion

In this section I use detailed examples of how I engage with the theories and techniques discussed in this exegesis in my short film *Ivory*. *Ivory* consciously uses the previously discussed theories and sound design techniques to construct a film that fits within the theoretical sound-based genre. These theories and techniques heavily influenced all three stages of production; pre-production, production and post-production. Pre-production was first changed by the sound design when it was the soundtrack rather than visuals that was 'shot-listed'. This required a close working relationship between director and director of photography (DOP), as the soundtrack was prioritised, dictating much of what the DOP was able to do. The casting was also influenced by the soundtrack, as four characters needed to know how to play piano. This limited who could be cast. Nonetheless, shooting the piano scenes with genuine musicians gave the DOP freedom to shoot from whichever angle he wanted to. This led to a seemingly restrictive sound design decision allowing for more freedom for the visuals.

The Production phase was influenced by three key factors. The first factor was the diegetic musician playing in the bar. The decision was made during pre-production that his performance would be improvised. This was because of a late casting (original compositions

were not possible) and it saved the production the time and money of clearing the copyright for existing music. Because of this, the musician effectively scored the film live on set. This music went on to influence the edit of both the picture and soundtrack. The primary way it did this was through complicating the studio recording of the piano, as the musician was unable to re-play what he had played on set. Much of what he played was re-scored during the studio recording, while also attempting to sync what we could see him play through the visuals.

The second area was overlapping dialogue. As discussed earlier, dialogue is generally written to be spoken consecutively, allowing for intelligibility and simple recording. The overlapping dialogue forced production to prioritise it over the image. This was particularly important in the tracking shot between the couple on the date and Daina speaking to the elderly lady. Dialogue between both couples overlaps over the course of one, continuous shot. This meant both sets of dialogue had to be recorded separately, and then overlapped during post-production.

The final key factor that influenced the production phase was ensuring the final 'flashback' scene was able to sync with the adult Daina playing in the bar. This required both the adult Daina and older child Daina to play at the same beats per minute (BPM). This was planned during pre-production. Our simplest solution was to have the musician who arranged *Ivory's* version of *Amazing Grace*, record himself playing the song, which we could then be played back on set for the two pianists to accompany. The music was then re-recorded during post-production and synced to the visuals.

The post-production phase was undoubtedly the most important in creating a film for the sound-based genre. The planning of the pre-production and production phases relies on

successful execution in post-production. The post-production phase is discussed in the chronological order the sound design techniques and theories are applied within *Ivory*. A reference time for the film is placed before each discussion. The first theory is a combination of point-of-audition and a blend of diegetic/non-diegetic music. The protagonist (Daina) enters the bar as an electronic music track plays, during which, there are (supposedly) no diegetic sounds. As she gets changed behind the sliding door the soundtrack changes from the electronic music into the diegetic piano and ambient sounds of the bar. What the audience realises during this transition (or a keen eye may pick up when she first walks past camera) is that Daina was wearing headphones. This was achieved by using a high pass filter on the music as the earbuds came out, making it sound as if it were coming from headphones. This sequence reveals that what at first appeared to be non-diegetic music functioning as score was, in fact, diegetic music (at least for Daina) and that the first shot of the film was sound designed to be heard entirely from the point-of-audition of Daina's character. This allows the audience to engage with the story through the sound design, a key element of the sound-based genre.

Immediately following the opening shot, Dr Hammond enters the room. The confrontation between him and Daina was planned to be shot entirely from Daina's point-of-view. A static mid shot of Dr Hammond would allow for the sound design to use the sound effects of Daina making the drink to inform the audience of what she was doing. The sound of her making the drink would be panned completely to the rear speakers, putting the audience into the point-of-audition and point-of-view of the camera, with Dr Hammond directly in front and the sound of Daina working directly behind. The primary reason for doing this was to allow for the sound to convey the story. It also freed the visuals to focus on Dr Hammond, thus giving insight into his character. Two issues disallowed this from happening. The mid shot of Dr

Hammond was shot from the wrong side of him, placing the piano on the opposite side of frame it had been on for all previous and future shots. This forced the shot to be flipped during post-production. To avoid this being picked up, the shot was significantly shortened. The second and most significant was that it was not clear what Dr Hammond was doing. The sound perfectly described Daina's actions, but Dr Hammond's eyes were too subtle to make his actions understandable. When a shot of Daina bending over was intercut with Dr Hammonds eyes looking down, it was clearer.

The montage scene showed the progression in time across the night and how bad a night Daina was having. It was used as an example of how sound effects can become the primary 'action' of the shot. It also transformed the pianist's music from diegetic, to non-diegetic and back again. This was achieved through keeping all diegetic sounds contained within each specific shot, when the shot cut, so did all the sound. The piano, however, continued across the montage uninterrupted. If it had stayed diegetic it would also cut between shots and multiple songs would be played during the sequence that covered half the night. Sound montage theory influenced this sequence too. The picture and sound editors cut to the sounds rather than focusing on the image. We heard Daina being busy rather than seeing her busy. The connections between the sounds were more important than the image of her rushing.

The initial purpose of the first flashback scene was to engage with leitmotif, making a connection between the song *Amazing Grace* and the relationship between Daina and her grandmother. To make this connection as concrete as possible, a memory of a young Daina watching her grandmother play the song was used. Instead of simply cutting to the memory, a slow focus pull to the diegetic piano was used, as the soundtrack blended into the music

from the next scene. This allowed for the soundtrack to once again take focus while also creating an interesting shot for the image. Daina is brought back into reality with the sound of her name being called. The dialogue (Daina's name) here breaks all conventions. Instead of remaining at a steady level in the front centre speaker, it is equally panned around the room, excluding only the front centre speaker. Reverb⁷ has also been added to the word to increase the sense that Daina is in a dream-like state. The effect of this panning is that wherever an audience member is sitting in the theatre, Daina's name will sound as though it is coming from the speaker closest to them. A low frequency rumble builds up towards the end of the flashback sequence, making the cut back to reality more noticeable. The final sound which brings Daina back to reality is the beer overflowing.

As Daina gives the drinks to the couple on their date, there is a transition between that action, the piano, and Daina giving a bowl of soup to the elderly woman. During this transition the music follows the image as it uses point-of-audition, panning from left to right and then into the centre. It also uses point-of-audition in relation to the physical distance between Daina and the piano. The piano's loudness also increases when she focuses on the piano. When she is closer to the piano the music is louder, as it is when she is facing the piano.

When the film returns to the couple on their date, one continuous shot tracks between them and Daina returning to the elderly woman. This shot places the audience in the position of the camera. As they move towards Daina and the elderly woman, the conversation between the couple pans to the rear speakers, allowing the dialogue between Daina and the elderly woman to be the focus in the front centre speaker. This panning allows for intelligibility as the two conversations cross over, using overlapping dialogue to creatively move from one

⁷ An echo effect added to sound during post-production.

scene to the next. The couple's conversation ends just as the elderly woman speaks an important line, meaning that if any of the audience is confused by the overlapping dialogue, they will not miss any key plot points.

The Daina playing piano/funeral/young Daina playing piano with grandmother sequence is the crux of the film's narrative and also the culmination of how music has been used regarding diegetic and non-diegetic theories. It also acts as the final reinforcement of *Amazing Grace's* role as leitmotif. Daina begins playing piano in the bar (diegetic) then when it cuts to the funeral her music acts as non-diegetic score. When it cuts to the grandmother's lounge room, the audience can still hear adult Daina playing as young Daina begins to play. As they perform their duet through time, it asks the question whether adult Daina's performance has once again become diegetic, as young Daina is able to play in time with her. On the return to the funeral, both their playing becomes non-diegetic score. When it cuts back to the bar, the visuals show Daina complete the song and stop playing. However, the soundtrack continues the song, making a final and permanent transition to non-diegetic score. As Daina leaves the bar, she puts her headphones back in, initiating the 'band' accompaniment to the piano solo. The audience will be left asking if that is the song she is listening to, or if it is simply part of the non-diegetic score.

Conclusion

While it has traditionally focused on the narrative, genre theory can be applied to the technical aspects of film, such as the soundtrack. The conscious use of creative sound design, informed by film sound theory, can lead to films recognisable as belonging to a sound-based genre. This theoretical genre will only be made possible when an agreed upon understanding can be had between producer, critic and the public. Neither party can declare its existence alone. To achieve this understanding, a large volume of sound-based films will need to be released. They will also need to be both critically and financially successful, to reach the maximum number of the producer, critic and public trios.

The original short film *Ivory*, attached to this exegesis, functions as an example of the type of film that fits within this new genre. It consciously uses a creative take on diegetic/non-diegetic sound, leitmotif, sound montage and point-of-audition. These four theories are an example of the types of sound design that will be required to bring sound to the forefront of the film, allowing sound to gain the recognition needed to be noticed by the producer, critic and the public.

The research in this thesis, both in the exegesis and through the practice-based research of the original short film *Ivory*, is significant as it puts forward a new way of understanding genre theory. It applies existing film sound theory and sound design techniques to an original reading of theories on the formation of film genres, resulting in the creation of a theoretical sound-based genre.

References

- Allen, Robert. 1989. "Bursting bubbles: "Soap opera" audiences and the limits of genre." In *Remote Control: Television, Audiences and Cultural Power*, edited by Ellen Seiter, Hans Borchers, Gabriele Kreutzner and Eva-Maria Warth. London: Routledge, 44-55.
- Altman, Rick. 1992. "Sound Space." In *Sound Theory Sound Practice*, edited by Rick Altman. New York: Routledge, 46-64.
- Altman, Rick. 1999. *Film/Genre*. London: British Film Institute.
- Altman, Rick. 2004. *Silent Film Sound*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ament, Vanessa Theme. 2014. *The Foley Grail: The Art of Performing Sound for Film, Games and Animation, 2nd Ed*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press.
- Aristotle. 384BC-322BC. *Poetics English*. Project Gutenberg.
- Baldick, Chris. 2008. *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 3rd ed. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bordwell, David. 1972. "The Idea of Montage in Soviet Art and Film." In *Cinema Journal 11, no. 2 (Spring)*: 9-17. DOI:10.2307/1225046.
- Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristen. 2012. *Film Art an Introduction*. 10th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Brown, Royal S. 1994. "Bernard Herrmann." In *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music*, edited by Royal S. Brown. Berkeley: University of California Press, 289-293.
- Buhler, James, Neumeyer, David and Deemer, Rob. 2010. *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Buscombe, Edward. 1970. "The Idea of Genre in the American Cinema." *Screen 11, no. 2 (March)*: 33-45.
- Cohen, Annabel J. 2001. "Music as a Source of Emotion in Film." In *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research*, edited by Patrik N. Justin and John A. Sloboda, 249-272. London: Oxford University Press.
- Corrigan, Timothy and White, Patricia. 2012. "Listening to the Cinema." In *The Film Experience: An Introduction*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Crafton, Donald. 1997. *History of the American Cinema 4 - The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926-1931*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Elsaesser, Thomas and Hagener, Malte. 2015. *Film Theory: An Introduction Through the Senses*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Ford, Andrew. 2010. *The Sound of Pictures: Listening to the Movies from Hitchcock to High Fidelity*. Collingwood: Black Inc.
- Gomery, Douglas. 2005. *The Coming of Sound: A History*. New York: Routledge.

- Gorbman, Claudia. 1987. *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Gorbman, Claudia. 2007. "Auteur Music." In *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, edited by Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer and Richard Leppert. 149-162. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kalinak, Kathryn. 1992. *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Kassabian, Anahid. 2001. *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music*. New York: Routledge.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. 1960. *Film Theory: The Redemption of Physical Reality*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Larsen, Peter. 2007. *Film Music*. London: Reaktion Books.
- LoBrutto, Vincent. 1994. *Sound-on-Film: Interviews with Creators of Film Sound*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Mcmahon, Orlene Denice. 2014. *Listening to the French New Wave: The Film Music and Composers of Postwar French Art Cinema*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Neupert, Richard. 2002. *A History of the French New Wave Cinema*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Ruberto, Laura E. and Wilson, Kristi M. 2007. *Italian Neorealism and Global Cinema*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Shiel, Mark. 2006. *Italian Neorealism: Rebuilding the Cinematic City*. London: Wallflower Press.
- Smith, Hazel and Dean, Roger T. 2009. *Practice-led, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Taylor, Jessica. 2009. "Speaking Shadows": A History of the Voice in the Transition from Silent to Sound Film in the United States." In *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 19, no. 1 (June): 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1395.2009.01016.x>
- Thomas, Francois. 2013. *Film Dialogue*. Edited by Jeff Jaekle and translated by Leah Anderst. London: Wallflower Press.
- Tudor, Andrew. 2012. "Genre." In *Genre Reader IV*, edited by Barry Keith Grant. Austin: University of Texas Press, 3-11.
- van Leeuwen, Theo. 2009. "Voice: A Semiotics of the Voice." In *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media: A Critical Overview*, edited by Graeme Harper, Ruth Doughty and Jochen Eisentraut. New York: Continuum, 425-436.
- Wellek, Rene and Warren, Austin. 1956. *Theory of Literature*. 3rd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Wiegand, Chis. 2012. *French New Wave*. New York: Oldcastle Books.

Winters, Ben. 2010. "The Non-Diegetic Fallacy: Film, Music and Narrative Space." In *Music & Letters* 91, no. 2 (May): 224-244. www.jstor.org/stable/40871578

Filmography

- Altman, Robert. 1970. *M.A.S.H.* Written by Richard Hooker (novel) and Ring Lardner Jr. (screenplay), directed by Robert Altman. United States of America: Twentieth Century Fox. Blu-ray, 116 min.
- Altman, Robert. 2006. *A Prairie Home Companion*. Written by Garrison Keillor and Ken LaZebnik, directed by Robert Altman. United States of America: Powdermilk Pictures, LLC. DVD, 105 min.
- Chabrol, Claude. 1958. *Le beau Serge*. Written and directed by Claude Chabrol. France: Les Films Marceau. DVD, 98 min.
- Columbus, Chris. 2001. *Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone*. Written by J.K. Rowling (novel) and Steve Kloves (screenplay), directed by Chris Columbus. United Kingdom: Warner Bros. Pictures. DVD, 147 min.
- Cooper, Merian, C. and Shoedsack, Ernest B. 1933. *King Kong*. Written by James Creelman and Ruth Rose, directed by Merian Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack. United States of America: RKO Pictures. DVD, 100 min.
- Coppola, Francis Ford. 1979. *Apocalypse Now*. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. United States of America: Omni Zoetrope. Blu-ray, 147 min.
- Crosland, Alan. 1927. *The Jazz Singer*. Written by Samson Raphaelson (play) and Alfred A. Cohn (adaptation), directed by Alan Crosland. United States of America: Warner Bros. DVD, 88 min.
- Gunn, James. 2014. *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Written by Nicole Perlman and James Gunn, directed by James Gunn. United States of America: Marvel Studios. Blu-ray, 121 min.
- Kubrick, Stanley. 1964. *Dr. Strangelove Or: How I learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. Written by Peter George (novel and screenplay), Terry Southern (screenplay) and Stanley Kubrick (screenplay), directed by Stanley Kubrick. United States of America: Columbia Pictures. Blu-ray, 95 min.
- Lisberger, Steven. 1982. *Tron*. Written and directed by Steven Lisberger. United States of America: Walt Disney Productions. DVD, 96 min.
- Lucas, George. 1977. *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope*. Written and directed by George Lucas. United States of America: Twentieth Century Fox. DVD, 120 min.
- Malle, Louis. 1958. *Elevator to the Gallows*. Written by Noel Calf (novel), Roger Nimier (adaptation) and Loius Malle (adaptation), directed by Loius Malle. France: Rialto Pictures. DVD, 91 min.
- Meyer, Nicholas. 1982. *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. Written by Jack B. Sowards, directed by Nicholas Meyer. United States of America: Paramount Pictures. DVD, 113 min.

- Rossellini, Roberto. 1943. *The Man with the Cross*. Written by Asvero Gravelli, Alberto Consiglio, Giovanni D'Alicandro and Roberto Rossellini, directed by Roberto Rossellini. Italy: Continentalcine. DVD, 72 min.
- Scott, Ridley. 2015. *The Martian*. Written by Andy Weir (novel) and Drew Goddard (screenplay), directed by Ridley Scott. United States of America: Twentieth Century Fox. Blu-ray, 144 min.
- Spielberg, Steven. 1975. *Jaws*. Written by Peter Benchley (novel and screenplay) and Carl Gottlieb, directed by Steven Spielberg. United States of America: Universal Studios. Blu-ray, 124 min.
- Spielberg, Steven. 1981. *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Written by Lawrence Kasdan, directed by Steven Spielberg. United States of America: Paramount Pictures. DVD, 111 min.
- Spielberg, Steven. 1987. *Empire of the Sun*. Written by J.G. Ballard (novel) and Tom Stoppard (screenplay), directed by Steven Spielberg. United States of America: Warner Bros. Pictures. Blu-ray, 153 min.
- Spielberg, Steven. 1998. *Saving Private Ryan*. Written by Robert Rodat, directed by Steven Spielberg. United States of America: Paramount Pictures. Blu-ray, 169 min.
- Welles, Orson. 1941. *Citizen Kane*. Written by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles, directed by Orson Welles. United States of America: RKO Radio Pictures. Blu-ray, 119 min.
- Wright, Edgar. 2017. *Baby Driver*. Written and directed by Edgar Wright. United States of America: TriStar Pictures. Blu-ray, 112 min.