

My first piece that I'm choosing to analyze for my composer project is The Bridge of Khazad Dum. This piece was created in 2001, which was a notable year because during this point in Howard Shore's life he had already established himself as a soundtrack writer for movies along with shows on tv. What was interesting about this project, though, is the fact that he had to branch out his musical style and be a bit less depressing in his compositions and start trending towards a more regal tone. The Bridge of Khazad Dum is featured in the movie The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring and was the first movie of the trilogy, meaning this was also the first time Howard Shore had to compose for any of the movies. During 2001, America had been devastated by the 9/11 attacks which had happened that same year. Although I doubt that the attacks had any impact on Howard Shore's writing for the movie, I also doubt he wasn't at least a little bit affected by them.

This piece of music was extremely well received and is considered the best piece of music to come out of The Lord of the Rings trilogy. It has won many awards and has been featured and parodied many times over and due to its recognizability it has even seen its way into other media such as a trailer for the superman movie Man of Steel in 2013. This piece of music is performed extremely often and is a great source of fanfare, and is easily heard to any fan of the series. Although the song is replayed a lot with orchestras and other, more formal forms of music, it is not heard very often on the radio but this may be due to the fact that it has no lyrics and was meant to be a piece that accented a very particular part of the movies.

(more hard data?)

I don't think there is much of a message to the song until the end, but that's only because a very memorable moment in the films occurs. The death of Gandalf (capitalize) is made extremely dramatic in the movie with slow-motion and a muting of all sound except for this song.

I first heard this music when I watched Lord of the Rings for the first time when I was about nine years old. I will always recognize the iconic theme that is present throughout most of Howard Shore's music for the movies. I chose this music because it stuck out to me due to the amount of awards it has received along with the amount of media attention that it got back then as well as the amount of attention it is still getting today. Although it is not winning awards still, it is often regarded as one of the most recognizable pieces of music to date. I like this piece of music a bit for the reasons stated above, it's memorable and easy to recognize and it always gets me in the mood to watch Lord of the Rings whenever I hear it.

The second piece was called Helm's Deep by Howard Shore. This piece was composed a year after my previous piece, and as such you can tell that a bit more of Shore's techniques have been refined. Not much happened in 2002 that I feel could have impacted Howard Shore's music at the time aside from him having a year of experience under his belt. Some other compositions that date from this time include soundtracks from Shrek and A Beautiful Mind as well as Tomb Raider. The composer wrote this music for Lord of the Rings and as such it has much of the instrumentation that is a staple of the movie's soundtrack. The composer wrote this music because of the impact he had to have on a certain part in the movie just like The Bridge of Khazad Dum. Although this piece isn't nearly as memorable nor has it won as many awards

as *The Bridge of Khazad Dum*, it still sets the tone and atmosphere that is exceptionally needed for another important part in the film.

The music was obviously a huge success along with the rest of the soundtrack for all three movies, but is not performed as much as one might think. Along with not being performed, it is not often played on the radio but again this may be due to the fact that it is a part of the atmospheric soundtrack to a movie and wouldn't sound too good on the radio. The message of the song isn't too clear, but you can easily feel the gathering before the storm. The music is for a part of the movie where an army is preparing for war and the odds are stacked extremely for the favor of the enemy. You can really feel the army mustering their strength for battle and the anxiety that can be felt washed through you with an ebb and flow that rivals the ocean. I first heard this piece along with a lot of the other pieces when I saw the movie, except this one came a year afterward. I didn't even realize that other pieces of music were a part of the movie because most of it just blends together into background music, but now that I'm a bit more educated it's easy to see what an impact great composing can make on certain parts of a movie.

The third piece is *Concerning Hobbits*. This piece is similar to *The Bridge of Khazad Dum* in that it is extremely recognizable, but it never won any awards that were individual to itself. It has been parodied a few times in certain shows and because it is one of the pieces that was made for the first movie, we go back to seeing some of the less refined tactics that Howard Shore used for his music. The music was composed in 2001 for *The Lord of the Rings*, much like many of my other pieces and again has much of the instrumentation that is a staple to the soundtrack. This piece differs a little bit in that it has a strong flute that takes the lead instead of horns or percussion like other notable pieces on the soundtrack. There weren't any notable world events that could have really impacted Howard Shore's composing during this period but it is evident to see that he was trying a couple different composing techniques. Reading about him and listening to his other music, it is clear to tell that he likes minor themes to take control and lead the listener to a dark place that is both comforting and a bit heartwarming and somber at the same time. This piece varies in that it is very lighthearted and keeps a tone of major that lifts up the spirits. It fits in perfectly for the beginning of a long and tragic story because its intent is to get the listener into a happy mood before they begin to realize the amount of drama that is about to set into the story.

The music was received well by the public and although it differs from some of the other songs of the soundtrack it is easily one of the more well-known. It is light and airy and actually makes you feel like you're in a small town filled with little hobbit people who love to laugh and live and drink all day. The message of the song probably revolves around having fun and being merry throughout the day. Shore obviously didn't want to start out the story on bad notes and instead wanted to make sure that the listener was in a place of comfort and happiness during the introduction to characters that they may know nothing about. The importance of this piece lies in the fact that it is a part of the exposition of the movie and yet it still has enough power to be recognizable even throughout the exposition of the movie. I first heard this song along with the other songs when I watched the movie, and it made me feel happy. Although I couldn't really pinpoint exactly what was making me feel happy, this piece of music is obviously what did the trick. The fact that the flute is so beautifully executed in this piece is what marks a true piece of wonderful music.

The final piece of music I chose was *The Uruk-Hai*. This piece was in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, and after researching a bit more about the music in the film it's really

cool to see the difference between the songs in the soundtrack of the first movie to the soundtrack of the second. It's actually interesting to note that the themes of both movies are pretty different in that the first movie is full of hope and a bit of whimsy as this band of heroes begins their adventure to save the world, but the second movie revolves around the band beginning to realize what they are up against and that they may not make it out of the adventure alive. This is accurately portrayed in the soundtrack and you can hear what Shore has done with many of the songs of the second movie. This piece of music is no exception. Shore went back to his roots with this piece and gave it all he got. During this period of his life he was in the middle of creating a soundtrack for what will eventually become one of the best trilogies of movies of all time. Howard wrote this music for a scene in the movie in which the entirety of the enemy army is being shown, and it's easy to feel the uneasiness that is present throughout the score. There are trumpets and percussion that bash on the inside of your eardrum and overall the entirety of the music is not one that you would listen to if you wanted to start off with a good day.

This piece has been received by the public very well along with the rest of Shore's music for the movies. It's obvious that Shore put his soul into this music and as such it is performed again and again in different orchestras that play different pieces from the movies. The message of the song is similar to what I said before about the song, it is meant to put you in an uneasy place because during the movie at this point it is showing the enemy army. It wants to make a concrete feeling in your brain of emotions of seriousness and gloom. I first heard this music when I watched the movie, again, and I chose this piece because it is the music to one of my favorite scenes in the movie. I like it because of the instrumentation and the strong percussion that excellently accents the horns and other brass in the orchestra.

Nic - thank you for your thorough discussion of this iconic music. Especially notable
your discussion of how the music complements the action of the films in which
it is used. I enjoyed learning about the instrumentation and how it affects the
overall mood of the music. Watch out for the song titles with quotes and movie titles
with the same. Your work would be strengthened by more data and specific information
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