

[Pirate SaiKaT]

# HANS ZIMMER TEACHES FILM SCORING



MASTERCLASS

[Pirate SaiKaT]



“

When we run out of words and when we run out of beautiful pictures, we have to resort to this other language called music. — *Hans Zimmer*

”

## A FEW FACTS ABOUT HANS ZIMMER

- ▶ Hans Zimmer was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1957.
- ▶ As a child, Hans disliked the discipline of formal piano lessons.
- ▶ A turning point in his career came when director Barry Levinson hired Hans to score the film *Rain Man*, which won the Oscar for Best Picture of the Year and earned Hans his first Academy Award nomination for Best Original Score.
- ▶ In 1994, Walt Disney Animation Studios approached Hans to score *The Lion King*, for which he won an Academy Award for Best Original Score, a Golden Globe and two Grammys.
- ▶ Hans was featured in the first music video to be aired on MTV, The Buggles' "Video Killed the Radio Star."
- ▶ In 2003, Hans completed his 100th film score for the film *The Last Samurai*.
- ▶ Hans received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in December 2010.
- ▶ In 2016, Hans composed the main themes for the BBC's *Planet Earth II*, presented by David Attenborough, and Netflix's *The Crown*.

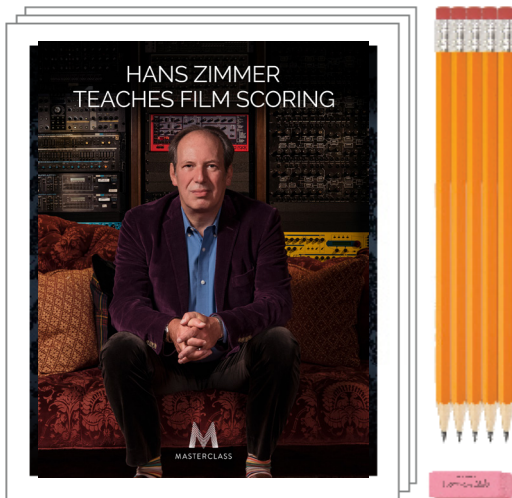


### HOW TO USE THIS CLASS

Before you dive in, we have a few recommendations for getting the most out of your experience.

### THINGS YOU MIGHT NEED

To enjoy this class, you only need your computer and a desire to learn. However, here are a few other items we think will enhance your learning experience:



A

#### CLASS WORKBOOK

This printable PDF filled with lesson recaps and assignments.

B

#### SUGGESTED VIEWING SCHEDULE

Hans explains his techniques to you in 31 lessons. It's tempting to finish all of the lessons in one sitting. We'd like to recommend our suggested viewing schedule, which you'll find on page 5 of this Class Workbook.

C

#### HANS ZIMMER'S FILMS

To fully enjoy some of the lessons, we recommend watching these films before beginning: *Sherlock Holmes*, *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*, *Interstellar*, *The Dark Knight*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Frost/Nixon*, and *The Thin Red Line*.

D

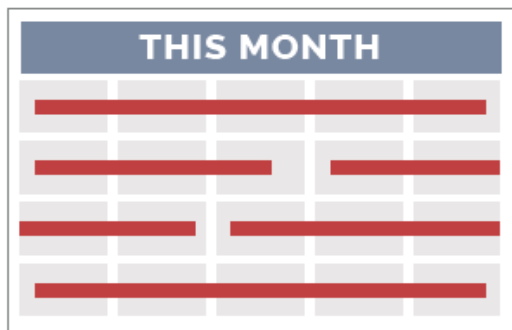
#### HANS ZIMMER'S FILM SCORES

Have Spotify or YouTube handy to listen to the official soundtracks for each of the films Hans discusses.

E

#### WRITING MATERIALS

You'll want to keep writing materials handy, both for taking notes while going through the class and for completing several of the assignments.



### THINGS YOU WILL SEE

Here are a few general tips for navigating your way around the class site:



#### LESSON VIDEOS

Watch and listen to Hans explain the nuts and bolts of his process, one lesson at a time.



#### ASSIGNMENTS

Take advantage of the assignments we've created to enhance your education.



#### LESSON DISCUSSIONS

Share your works in progress and ask your peers for help and support if you've hit a roadblock.



#### OFFICE HOURS

Submit and watch video and text questions for Hans from the MasterClass community.



#### COMMUNITY

Continue connecting with your MasterClass peers with our community features.



#### QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

We want to hear from you!  
Email [support@masterclass.com](mailto:support@masterclass.com)

### CLASS OUTLINE - SUGGESTED VIEWING SCHEDULE

#### WEEK 1

##### 01 INTRODUCTION

##### 02 THEMES

- ▶ Find the Simplest Tune That Carries Your Story
- ▶ Choose a Key Strategically
- ▶ Themes as Questions and Answers
- ▶ Creating a Theme: *Sherlock Holmes*
- ▶ Creating a Simple Tune: *Interstellar*

##### 03 STORY

- ▶ Live in the World of the Story
- ▶ Learn the Rules of the Story From Your Director
- ▶ Establish Rules and Break Them

##### 04 DIRECTORS: PART 1

- ▶ Have a Conversation to Sneak up on the Film
- ▶ Some Questions are for the Producer
- ▶ Begin Collaborating Before Filming Begins
- ▶ Music Can Influence the Direction on Set

##### 05 DIRECTORS: PART 2

- ▶ Remind Your Director of Their Intentions
- ▶ Speak in Plain English (or German)
- ▶ Avoid Temp Music
- ▶ Keep the Laboratory Open

#### WEEK 2

##### 06 DIRECTORS: PART 3

- ▶ Qualities of a Great Director
- ▶ Trust Each Other
- ▶ Support Each Other in Pursuit of Your Best Work

##### 07 SOUND PALETTES

- ▶ Create Unique Palettes for Different Story Atmosphere
- ▶ Study Light and Color
- ▶ Create Your Own Samples
- ▶ Sample Musicians You Love
- ▶ Creating a World Through Sound

##### 08 CREATING WITH SYNTHS

- ▶ Building From Sounds
- ▶ Creating a Sound From Scratch
- ▶ Play with Expression
- ▶ Build Your Own Abstract Instrument

##### 09 SCORING TO PICTURE

- ▶ Consider the Whole Story First
- ▶ Recognize When Music Isn't Needed
- ▶ Don't Always Hit the Cut
- ▶ Let the Audience Complete the Emotion
- ▶ Liven Up Exposition Scenes
- ▶ Help Tell a Complicated Story

#### WEEK 3

##### 10 SCORING UNDER DIALOGUE

- ▶ It's Not Volume, It's Perspective
- ▶ Aim for the Best Sound System
- ▶ Coexist with Dialogue

##### 11 TEMPO

- ▶ The Editor is Your Drummer
- ▶ The Click is Your Friend
- ▶ Find Your Tempo
- ▶ The Film's Tempo
- ▶ Good Tempo

##### 12 TEMPO: SHERLOCK HOLMES SCENE

##### 13 MUSIC DIARY: SHERLOCK HOLMES

##### 14 CHARACTER

- ▶ Getting to Know a Character
- ▶ Give Them a Backstory
- ▶ Relate to Your Characters

##### 15 CHARACTER THEME: BATMAN

##### 16 CHARACTER THEME: THE JOKER

##### 17 CHARACTER THEME: JACK SPARROW

**WEEK 4****18 CASE STUDY: FROST/NIXON****19 CASE STUDY: THE DARK KNIGHT****20 WORKING WITH MUSICIANS**

- ▶ Handpick Your Player
- ▶ Write for Specific People
- ▶ It's Not the Notes, It's the Performance
- ▶ Test the Limits of Instruments
- ▶ Write to Their Strengths

**21 WORKING WITH MUSICIANS: THE ORCHESTRA PART 1**

- ▶ Earn Their Respect
- ▶ Maximize Efficiency to Get the Performance You Need
- ▶ Communicate in Terms of Emotion & Story

**22 WORKING WITH MUSICIANS: THE ORCHESTRA PART 2**

- ▶ Get in the Same Room
- ▶ Listen for the Players Who Aren't Telling the Story
- ▶ It's Not Theatre, It's a Recording

**WEEK 5****23 FEEDBACK & REVISIONS**

- ▶ Make Revisions a Collaboration
- ▶ Revise Early and Often
- ▶ Show it to Your Music Editor First
- ▶ Getting a Yes or No From Your Director

**24 AUDIENCE FEEDBACK**

- ▶ Find Your Doris
- ▶ Test in Front of an Audience
- ▶ Get Executives in the Audience, Too

**25 WRITING TIPS: PART 1**

- ▶ Write Every Day
- ▶ Start When They Start
- ▶ Write in Diary Form to Figure out the Movie
- ▶ Stay Organized
- ▶ Ask New Questions With Your Work
- ▶ Break Rules (Elegantly)

**26 WRITING TIPS: PART 2**

- ▶ Don't Rely on Muscle Memory
- ▶ Find Your Story to Beat Writer's Block
- ▶ Don't Be Limited by Budget
- ▶ You Only Need Passion to Start Writing

**WEEK 6****27 HANS' JOURNEY**

- ▶ Falling in Love with Movies
- ▶ Growing as a Storyteller
- ▶ Getting to Los Angeles
- ▶ Learning in the Real World
- ▶ Balancing Family & Work

**28 LEARNING BY LISTENING**

- ▶ Learn How to Listen
- ▶ Dissect Music
- ▶ How to Watch Films for Their Music
- ▶ Hans' Musical Influences
- ▶ Find Music That Touches You
- ▶ Hans' Recommended Film Scores

**29 LIFE OF A COMPOSER: PART 1**

- ▶ There is No Plan B
- ▶ Have the Courage to Struggle
- ▶ Watch Movies and Talk to the People That Made Them
- ▶ Getting in the Door
- ▶ Take Risks

**30 LIFE OF A COMPOSER: PART 2**

- ▶ Listen to Your Voice
- ▶ Test the Limits of Your Talent
- ▶ An Artist's Life

**23 CLOSING**

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## NOTES

- ▶ Practice choosing a key strategically by thinking through each key—how does each key sound to you? How does it make you feel? Write down the emotions or keywords that you associate with each key, and use this as a guide to choose a key for your next theme.
- ▶ Hans suggests thinking about a theme as a set of questions and answers. Find a scene you love in a film, and create an original score by setting up a question and answer motif. Think about the fact that you know how the scene ends before the audience does, and establish a question at the beginning knowing how the scene will conclude. Write a cue that highlights those questions and answer them. Share your compositions with your peers in [The Hub](#).

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## NOTES

- ▶ Practice writing a theme by working within a set of rules that a director might give you. If you need inspiration for a rule: Think about a director you've worked with or research one online, and write a theme that's inspired by that director's favorite band. Stay within the rules and ethos established by that band. Then write one cue that breaks those rules to add some freshness. This exercise takes you out of your comfort zone and functions as a study in satisfying your director, a crucial skill of the successful film composer.

“

You and the director make a pact that you're going to do this movie together...even if it means you have to kill him sometimes.

— Hans Zimmer

”

## CHAPTER RECAP

Films aren't made by committee. Your duty is to follow the director's lead and create a shared musical vision. If you jump into discussing music specifically or even technically, you may miss important subtext that informs the director's intention. Hans makes a habit of starting conversations with directors as early as possible and allowing that conversation to inform how the music will shape the story. Avoid having those “reality” conversations that are imagination-killers, and save those for the producer.

Hans likes to write music as soon as possible, even before filming begins, to help influence the direction on set. He avoids temp music because it can pigeonhole him into something that limits his freedom and creativity. The most effective environment exists when everyone on set works towards serving the story, and uses their individual voices (and talents) to do so. Trust your collaborators' instincts and help influence their creativity by giving them your music early on in the process.

## TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Watch one of your favorite movies and take note of the way the score enhances the story. Now mute that movie and play the soundtrack to one of Hans' movies—*The Dark Knight*, *Sherlock Holmes*, or even *The Lion King*—over the film. How does the composition change the story? If this were given to you as temp music, how would you approach writing your own score?

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Have Conversations to Sneak up on the Film
- ▶ Some Questions are for the Producer
- ▶ Begin Collaborating Before Filming Begins
- ▶ Music Can Influence the Direction on Set
- ▶ Remind Your Director of Their Intentions
- ▶ Speak in Plain English (or German)
- ▶ Avoid Temp Music
- ▶ Keep the Laboratory Open
- ▶ Qualities of a Great Director
- ▶ Trust Each Other
- ▶ Support Each Other in Pursuit of Your Best Work

## NOTES

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## NOTES



“

I hear the world maybe more than I see the world. — Hans  
Zimmer

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### CHAPTER RECAP

Sound palettes are used to design the world of the film and give them unique atmospheres. Hans discusses how instrumentation helped to distinguish day from night in Gotham City. As an iconic fictional city, it needed its own distinct sound.

Hans considers music and image as complements to one another, and attempts to create sound palettes that coexist with the cinematographer's approach to telling the story. Hans thinks every composer should study light, color, and editing to help with the world-building.

With the observation and deduction skills of Sherlock himself, Hans studied the baggage that came with such a familiar character and the expectations of the audience. Letting the film's era and setting inform the instrumentation, Hans created a dangerous and exotic version of the beloved character. He thought about the colors and sounds of Victorian England to inform his own sound palette to the film. Hans tells us that it's important to set up the sound palette early in the film, to inform and invite the audience on the journey into the world that your sounds help build.

### TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Hans references cinematographer Vittorio Storaro's book [Writing With Light](#), and the way he uses light in film. Learn more about Storaro's work [here](#).
- ▶ Hans made his own samples using his favorite cellist Anthony Pleeth, who is featured in *The Dark Knight* and *Hannibal*. Which musicians would you like to add to your sample library? Join the discussion with your MasterClass peers in [The Hub](#).

### SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Create Unique Palettes for Different Story Atmospheres
- ▶ Study Light and Color
- ▶ Create Your Own Samples
- ▶ Sample Musicians You Love
- ▶ Creating a World Through Sound

### NOTES

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- ## NOTES

► Think of one of your favorite cities, and one of your favorite periods of time. Now combine those two and create a sound palette for that city and time. Consider the sounds, colors, sights, and how a DP might shoot a film set in that place. What instruments would you use to build that world? What sounds would help color that world? Draw inspiration from Hans' conception of Victorian England.

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- ▶ Hans has worked with director Christopher Nolan many times throughout his career. Learn more about Nolan and his specific cinematic style [here](#).
- ▶ [Here](#) is an interview with Hans about creating the score for *Interstellar*.
- ▶ Hans points out that electronic instruments like the synthesizer allow composers to sample acoustic instruments to create pioneering soundscapes. The first all-electronic film score was composed by Bebe and Louis Barron for the 1956 film *Forbidden Planet*. [Listen](#) to the *Forbidden Planet* soundtrack and note the ways it contrasts with other film scores of that year.

- ▶ Building From Sounds
- ▶ Creating a Sound From Scratch
- ▶ Play with Expression
- ▶ Build Your Own Abstract Instrument

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- ## NOTES

“

Sometimes, the job of the music is as simple as be entertaining.

— Hans Zimmer

”

## CHAPTER RECAP

Adding to his rule from chapter 3 on story, Hans recommends considering the entire story first to decide on the rules and instruments that are appropriate for the narrative. Establish a framework for the themes and palettes that works for the entire story, and then “whack in” something that’s completely new to bring a layer of freshness to the audience’s experience.

You’re working in an environment of total insecurity. All of your collaborators are worried that what they’re creating isn’t perfect. The actors, director, cinematographer, etc., will look to the last collaborator on the film, the composer, to help “fix” the problems they see. It’s your job to ignore their insecurities and know when music is needed and when it isn’t.

Know also when to avoid Mickey Mousing; don’t always hit the cut. By doing so, you can give the audience too much information about what emotion they should feel, which takes them out of the journey. Take them on the journey with you, don’t take it for them. And if the story is complicated, use music to your advantage to entertain them and help tell the story.

## ASSIGNMENT

- ▶ Pick one of your favorite films. Find two scenes in it—one that has music and one that doesn’t. Consider why the decision was made to leave that scene unscored. How would you approach scoring the scene that doesn’t have music? Does your potential score add to the scene or take away from it?

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Consider the Whole Story First
- ▶ Recognize When Music Isn’t Needed
- ▶ Don’t Always Hit the Cut
- ▶ Let the Audience Complete the Emotion
- ▶ Liven Up Exposition Scenes
- ▶ Help Tell a Complicated Story

## NOTES

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It doesn't matter that you've just written the nicest and most beautiful piece of music of your career. If it interferes with the story, bin it, chuck it, throw it in the trash. — *Hans Zimmer*

## CHAPTER RECAP

You may be tempted to turn the volume up or down, but Hans argues it's not volume, it's perspective. If your character or dialogue is close to the audience, and you mic your orchestra appropriately, perspective will impact perceived volume. The further away you position your mics, the more natural roll-off of higher frequencies you will have. Think about the sense of space that mic'ing your orchestra can bring. The placement of a sound source can create depth and add a new layer to your score than just increasing volume.

Hans encourages students to write for the best cinema experience possible. Your scores will be played in many different environments with varying sound quality, but you should write for the best sound systems possible.

This chapter also reminds you that story doesn't have to be told strictly through dialogue. Christopher Nolan, writer and director of *The Dark Knight*, made specific decisions about when the music would do the talking for the characters.

## TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Watch [this video clip](#) of Hans creating the score for *The Da Vinci Code*, a film with complicated exposition. How does Hans' score help take the audience on a journey through the exposition scenes?

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ It's Not Volume, It's Perspective
- ▶ Aim for the Best Sound System
- ▶ Coexist with Dialogue

## NOTES

- ## ASSIGNMENT

Share the scenes you chose with your peers in [The Hub](#), and discuss with them how they'd approach scoring and recording to those scenes.

“

The drummer for the film composer is the editor. — *Hans Zimmer*

“

## CHAPTER RECAP

Finding the right tempo might be intuitive by this point in Hans' career, but it isn't that way for everyone. Your editor will be your guide as you narrow in on the tempo that best fits the scene at hand. Use the edit as the drum for your score, and determine a BPM from which to build your score that coexists with the edit.

Hans will start composing by setting a metronome. The click is steady, reliable, and serves as your grid as you map out the pace of the drama. Hans used to watch a scene, then turn the picture off to write, and turn it back on to see if his composition and the scene matched up. Now he's able to identify common bpm's. He mentions that 80 BPM is a great starting point, as it is seductive but easily fits with faster paced scenes. 60 BPM is a bit slower and easier to get more profound, whereas 140 is a bit more energetic and dancy.

## TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Some people will calculate the tempo of a scene by using a digital tempo finder like this one. In whichever digital audio workstation you're using, set markers at the beginning and end of the scene you'd like to calculate. Put the time stamps in and the calculator will give you a range of tempos that could fit, as well as their margin of error. Try this technique and see how it works for you.
- ▶ The click of a metronome can help you score to picture. Find a metronome that works best for you, either a physical one or a digital version right in your browser.

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ The Editor is Your Drummer
- ▶ The Click is Your Friend
- ▶ Find Your Tempo
- ▶ The Film's Tempo
- ▶ Good Tempi

## NOTES

## NOTES

- ▶ Use a metronome to identify the tempo of some of your favorite scenes. Try an exposition or dialogue scene and compare it to an action scene (we recommend the Bane vs. Batman fight scene mentioned in Chapter 10: “Scoring Under Dialogue”).
- ▶ Now that you know what the tempo of that scene is, can you create a score for it in an alternative tempo? If you pick a fight scene with a fast tempo, can you score that scene with a purposefully slow tempo? How does that affect the mood of the scene?

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- ## NOTES



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- ▶ Hans tells a story of thinking about James Hunt starting a budgerigar farm after he quit racing. He used that knowledge and created his own backstory for the character when writing the music for *Rush*.
- ▶ Take a look at the [Indianapolis speech](#) given by Robert Shaw's character in *Jaws* that Hans references. Note the way it imbues Quint's actions and intentions, and how you might have used that speech to inform how you'd approach writing music for the film.

- ▶ Getting to Know a Character
- ▶ Give Them a Backstory
- ▶ Relate to Your Characters

## NOTES

## NOTES

- Think about a close friend and create a character theme for him/her. Take inspiration from Hans and try to create a backstory for your friend. Relate to him/her, come up with a trait that you share, and create a theme that builds from that trait. Thinking back to the Sound Palettes chapter, how does his/her name intimate the culture he/she comes from, and how can that knowledge help build the sonic palette behind your theme? Share your themes in [The Hub](#) and provide feedback for your classmates.

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For Jack Sparrow, Hans built on what he learned about the rules of the world for *Pirates of the Caribbean* from his conversations with Gore Verbinski. He thought about the pirates as the rock n' rollers of the middle ages, and started with a boogie. He watched what Jack was doing on screen to give himself more rules to work within and came up with keywords like "romantic," "heroic," "naughty," and "wicked." Hans wanted to create a theme that reflected the parts of Jack Sparrow that resonated with him, and in the process wrote an unforgettable piece of music.

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Hans breaks down how he approached writing the “action” scene from *The Dark Knight*. This is a pivotal moment in the movie and Hans had to decide how to create the most tension out of a situation where the explosion never happens. The scene itself is surprising for a blockbuster film, and Hans wanted to create a surprising score that gives an enormous amount of space, which helps create tension, slows everything down, and focuses the audience's attention to the story, rather than the action.

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- Imagine one of your favorite instrumentalists - your favorite guitarist, cellist, drummer, etc - and write an original cue with that person in mind. Take note of what attributes or qualities of their playing justifies what you're trying to achieve in your writing. How are you writing this cue differently than if you were to hire any other musician? Share your cues and what you observed in The Hub.

- ▶ Handpick Your Players
- ▶ Write for Specific People
- ▶ It's Not the Notes, It's the Performance
- ▶ Test the Limits of Instruments
- ▶ Write to Their Strengths

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“

If you're not clear about the emotional intention of the music, it'll sound like shit. — *Hans Zimmer*

”

## CHAPTER RECAP

The orchestra is there to support you, and your shared goal is to make the score the best it can be. Your job as the composer is to get the most out of your orchestra. You must first earn their respect, and inspire them to support your vision. Write something for them that they haven't done before and learn how to communicate with them in terms of emotion and story. Be clear and confident about the emotional intention of the piece you've written for the story.

Maximize performance and efficiency by writing the notes down on paper, creating a demo and mocking up the score. Hans discusses the importance of being in the same room as the orchestra. He says, "Music happens in real time" and you have to be there to be a part of it. You can start to train your ear to find the players in the orchestra who don't understand the emotional intent of the score. Ultimately, stop being technical, and just like with your directors, communicate in the simplest possible way.

## ASSIGNMENT

Think about your favorite cue from a favorite score. How would you imagine yourself communicating/directing a section of the orchestra to perform that cue? Write down the words and emotions that remind you of this cue; try to avoid writing down any technical words that could hinder receiving the best performance possible. How would you have communicated the emotions behind the Joker theme to the cellist?

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Earn Their Respect
- ▶ Maximize Efficiency to Get the Performance You Need
- ▶ Communicate in Terms of Emotion & Story
- ▶ Get in the Same Room
- ▶ Listen for the Players Who Aren't Telling the Story
- ▶ It's Not Theatre, It's a Recording

## NOTES

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- ▶ Create a small group with your classmates and take turns providing feedback on your piece. If you have tips for communicating with your editors and directors, share them in The Hub. If you have revising techniques that help you create better pieces, share them as well!
- ▶ One of the scariest parts of the process is getting a “no” from your director. Pick a favorite cue that you’ve written for the class so far, and imagine your director has rejected it. Write an alternative version for that cue from scratch that still achieves the emotion and tells the story you set out to relate when you wrote the original cue.

- ▶ Make Revisions a Collaboration
- ▶ Revise Early and Often
- ▶ Show it to Your Music Editor First
- ▶ Getting a Yes or No From Your Director



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## NOTES

“

“Anybody's got access to something that they can go and make a great score with.” — *Hans Zimmer*

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### CHAPTER RECAP

Hans suggests several ways to help you begin the process of writing a film score. Confront the terror of a blank screen by starting a music diary in which you write for imaginary scenes. Experiment with combinations of different instruments for a single piece; transform a piano solo into a string quartet as a way to explore character and themes. While brainstorming, sit on your hands to keep your fingers from straying to the keyboard and playing the same old same old. Think of your musical task as a question and seek different ways to ask it. This might take the form of making an unusual musical choice that the audience isn't expecting, but one that makes sense. When writing, keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to give the audience an interesting experience.

Hans emphasizes that composers shouldn't be limited by budget, but that you should always fight for the appropriate budget to be able to write the music that serves the director's vision. But figure out how to tell the story, and if it's a big blockbuster movie, remember that it could benefit from modest instrumentation, much like the solo violin in the *Sherlock Holmes* explosion scene. At the end of the day, all you need is the passion to start writing.

### TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ In this chapter, Hans references John Powell, a fellow film composer. Read [this interview](#) with Powell to gain insight into another professional's perspective on the industry. Learn about the challenges and rewards of scoring a film, and explore further many of the concepts that Hans covers in this lesson such as working with a budget and collaborating with directors.

### SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Write Every Day
- ▶ Start When They Start
- ▶ Write in Diary Form to Figure out the Movie
- ▶ Stay Organized
- ▶ Ask New Questions With Your Work
- ▶ Break Rules (Elegantly)
- ▶ Don't Rely on Muscle Memory
- ▶ Find Your Story to Beat Writer's Block
- ▶ Don't Be Limited by Budget
- ▶ You Only Need Passion to Start

### NOTES

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- ▶ A 12 year old Hans snuck into a theater in his hometown to see Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West*. He was deeply affected by Ennio Morricone's score, which he cites as the initial impetus for his career choice. Listen to Morricone's score [here](#). Share your own story with your classmates on [The Hub](#); post a link to your favorite film score or describe the first time you remember being deeply impacted by the music in a film.

- ▶ Falling in Love with Movies
- ▶ Growing as a Storyteller
- ▶ Getting to Los Angeles
- ▶ Learning in the Real World
- ▶ Balancing Family & Work

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"Anybody's got access to something that they can go and make a great score with." — *Hans Zimmer*

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## CHAPTER RECAP

Hans breaks down the one quality that makes a musician great: the ability to listen. Learning how to listen can unlock new opportunities, new paths for your music to explore. Listening is about communicating, and not reacting to just the words but trying to hear music when you're speaking with your director. When you're listening to your fellow musicians, listen beyond just the notes they're playing, and listen for how they play those notes, what emotions they're expressing in their performance.

Hans gives us his biggest musical influences and what he listens to in his downtime when he's taking a break from working on a score. If you need inspiration for music to learn from, start with the B's: Berlioz, Bartok, The Beatles, and banjo music.

## TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Hans continually revisits and dissects Gustav Mahler's "Symphony No. 2", which you can watch an orchestra perform [here](#). He also greatly appreciates Hector Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique", specifically its 5th movement, "Dies Irae," which begins at 42:30 in [this video](#). Listen to these pieces and identify the elements that make them fascinating for Hans. Hans hears Bernard Herrmann, as well as John Williams' "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," in "Dies Irae." What other film scores or composers does the movement evoke for you?
- ▶ Hans says there's no better way to learn than by listening to an orchestra. Treat yourself to a concert or opera ticket and bring a notebook to the theater. Take notes about specific movements that spoke to you and elements of the music that struck you as

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Learn How to Listen
- ▶ Dissect Music
- ▶ How to Watch Films for Their Music
- ▶ Hans' Musical Influences
- ▶ Find Music that Touches You
- ▶ Hans' Recommended Film Scores

## NOTES

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► Hans recommends the following films scores: Midnight Express by Giorgio Moroder, Once Upon a Time in America by Ennio Morricone, and Hanna by Chemical Brothers.



“

There is no plan B. — *Hans Zimmer*

“

## CHAPTER RECAP

Hans talks about life as a musician and what to expect if you want a career in music. He is quick to point out that it is not for everyone, and you have to be willing to struggle if you want to succeed.

Getting in the door and getting noticed is half the struggle, but sometimes originality is all it takes. Don't focus too much on what other people might want to listen to. Rather, make sure that the music you're creating gets you excited.

Test the limits of yourself and your talents. Take risks. Constantly push past the boundaries that other people have imposed on you. Be passionate about your work and ask questions.

## TAKE IT FURTHER

- Hans was inspired by the “crazy behavior” and passion that Werner Herzog brought to his filmmaking. He watched *Burden of Dreams*, a documentary about the making of one of Werner’s earliest films, *Fitzcarraldo*. Watch *Burden of Dreams*, and live by their example: you aren’t wasting your life if you believe in what you’re doing, and you’re willing to live in brutal conditions in the jungle to get it done.

## SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ There is No Plan B
- ▶ Have the Courage to Struggle
- ▶ Watch Movies and Talk to the People That Made Them
- ▶ Getting in the Door
- ▶ Take Risks
- ▶ Listen to Your Voice
- ▶ Test the Limits of Your Talent
- ▶ An Artist's Life

## NOTES

“

Here's what old guys like me know: The seconds of your life are ticking away, and they're better spent [making music] than listening to me. — *Hans Zimmer*

”

## NOTES

Congratulations!

You've finished your MasterClass with Hans Zimmer. We hope you feel inspired to go out and score your own films. We want to make sure that your experience with Hans and your peers doesn't end when you finish watching the video chapters. Here are a few ways to stay in touch:

- ▶ Contribute to the lesson discussions after each video lesson and read what others have to say
- ▶ Upload your relevant assignments to the Hub for peer feedback
- ▶ Submit an Office Hour question to Hans Zimmer

We'd love to see you in our live Twitter discussions. Make sure to follow @MasterClass on Twitter and check [The Hub](#) for announcements of any future live discussions.