

REFLECTION AND INTROSPECTION IN THE FILM SCORES OF  
THOMAS NEWMAN

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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The most transformative moments in life cause us to look both backward (reflection) and inward (introspection). Likewise, reflective and introspective moments in film often align with important plot points. Separating music and dialogue from the rhythms of the image, these moments suspend time, creating a distinct temporality for the character(s) and the viewer to observe the past and the present in juxtaposition. The music of film composer Thomas Newman brings to life some of the most beautiful reflective and introspective moments in cinema. In this thesis, I approach Newman's understudied, but highly successful film scores from narrative, musical, and audiovisual perspectives. Recognizing time as a linear common denominator between the multimedia elements of film, I examine case study scenes in *Little Women* (1994), *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), and *American Beauty* (1999). Additionally, I present Kofi Agawu's method of generative analysis as a tool well-suited to Newman's unique harmonic language.

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To my child self, who dreamed of being a physicist so she could study time.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The complexity of film is one of its greatest marvels. Its literature spans disciplines as diverse as the human experience, ranging from social sciences to mechanical engineering. This complexity both challenges and enriches the studies of film scholars. Music falls within a specialized area of film research known as film sound studies. Film sound studies consider all audible aspects of a film including sound effects, dialogue, and the musical soundtrack. Alongside its sonic sisters, music vitally alerts the viewer to the film's setting, its characters' thoughts and emotions, and the trajectory of the narrative.

Two musical disciplines that approach the cinematic score are musicology and music theory. Musicology examines how history, cultural signification, gender identity, and many other frameworks impact the way we engage with music. Peter Franklin, Marcia Citron, and Daniel Goldmark are among the prominent musicologists studying film. Their research represents film music's overlap with gender studies, other musical forms (such as opera), and the role of particular genres (such as comedy) in the development of film music practices. Peter Franklin is a professor at Oxford University and the author of *Seeing Through Music: Gender and Modernism in Classical Hollywood Film Scores*<sup>1</sup> as well as several articles on mass-entertainment film, including "A Farewell, a Femme Fatale, and a Film: Three Awkward Moments in Twentieth-Century Music"<sup>2</sup> and "Underscoring Drama – Picturing

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Franklin, *Seeing Through Music: Gender and Modernism in Classical Hollywood Film Scores*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Peter Franklin, "A Farewell, a Femme Fatale, and a Film: Three Awkward Moments in Twentieth-Century Music," *Musical Meaning and Human Values*, (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2009).

Music.”<sup>3</sup> Franklin’s 2011 book argues for film music analyses that embrace film music’s historic origins in Western classical art forms such as opera and symphonic works. Particularly, Franklin illustrates the importance of film music in modern musical art forms by considering film with respect to gender studies and trends in modernism.

Marcia Citron, whose research is also informed by studies of gender identity in music, focuses on the relationship between opera and film.<sup>4,5</sup> She contributed a chapter on this subject to *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*.<sup>6</sup> The first part of this chapter examines opera-films (operas recorded in VHS or DVD formats) that have served as prominent case studies for film and opera scholars. She next considers how opera is used in mainstream film. This second inquiry leads to three categories of the opera scenes in modern film. The first, which Citron deems “The Opera Visit,” includes any scene in which film characters attend an opera. Citron discusses the dramatic function of opera scenes in the Marx Brothers’ *A Night at the Opera* (1935), in Coppola’s *The Godfather: Part III* (1990), and in Forster’s *Quantum of Solace* (2008). Citron notes that in each of these cases, “The Opera Visit” is used to solve or accelerate conflict between characters.<sup>7</sup> Citron’s second category, “Opera on the Soundtrack,” observes the use of opera music in the soundtrack. Citron examines the famous scene from Darabont’s *The*

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Franklin, “Underscoring Drama – Picturing Music,” in *Wagner and Cinema*, ed. Jeongwon Joe and Sander L. Gilman (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Marcia J. Citron, *Opera on Screen* (New Have, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Marcia J. Citron, *When Opera Meets Film* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Marcia J. Citron, “Opera and Film,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, ed. David Neumeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-59.

*Shawshank Redemption* in which the prisoner Andy hijacks the warden's office and broadcasts the Letter Duet from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* to the inmates of Shawshank prison. In this scene, as in a similar scene from Demme's *Philadelphia*, opera in the soundtrack is used to suspend time. Citron's third category, "The Opera-Imitation Score," usually occurs in films that contain an opera visit. The opera-imitation score may even recontextualize motives from the visited opera's score to serve dramatic functions elsewhere in the film. Citron looks to Huston's film *Prizzi's Honor* (1985) for prime examples of composers reworking operatic cues to serve as soundtrack.

Daniel Goldmark brings to film music studies a background in American popular music and the industry of film music. His chapter, "Drawing a New Narrative for Cartoon Music," in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*<sup>8</sup> (Goldmark's article contains the single mention of composer Thomas Newman in the entire handbook), focuses on the way early musical cartoons influenced the role of music in animations of the 1930s and comedic shorts of the next three decades. He traces cartoon music through its transition to mainstream television in the 1950s and examines musical style in the revival of Golden-Age cartoons in the late 1980s. Goldmark concludes with making a critical connection between the evolution of cartoon music and its impact on modern scores for mainstream animated films.<sup>9</sup> The diversity of film music research showcased among Franklin, Citron, and Goldmark illustrates at once the vast inquiry faced by film and film music scholars and the invaluable interdisciplinary perspective of musicological studies.

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel Goldmark, "Drawing a New Narrative for Cartoon Music," in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Music theory investigates the mechanics of the music itself. How is it organized? What wires lie behind the surface? How and why does the music affect us the way it does? Film music may be one of the least approached genres from the music-theoretical perspective, but there is a growing group of scholars who are turning their attention to the cinematic score. These theorists primarily use motivic, tonal, and transformational tools of analysis.

Matthew Bribitzer-Stull is one of the most prominent music theorists to approach film music through motivic analysis. Other theorists to take this approach include James Buhler, David Neumeyer, Rob Deemer,<sup>10</sup> Scott D. Paulin,<sup>11</sup> and Mitchell Morris.<sup>12</sup> Bribitzer-Stull's book, *Understanding the Leitmotif From Wagner to Hollywood Film Music*,<sup>13</sup> provides an in-depth study of the development of the leitmotif and its place in modern film. Bribitzer-Stull focuses on the leitmotif's bilingual quality of eliciting both musical structure and musical meaning. Particularly, he compares Wagner's treatment of the leitmotif with that of modern film composers. He addresses the specific techniques of thematic mutation, change of mode, harmonic corruption, thematic truncation, thematic fragmentation, change of texture, thematic evolution, contextual reinterpretation, associative transposition, thematic complex, and thematic

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<sup>10</sup> James Buhler, David Neumeyer, and Rob Deemer, *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Scott D. Paulin, "Richard Wagner and the Fantasy of Cinematic Unity: The Idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk in the History and Theory of Film Music," in *Music and Cinema*, ed. James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and David Neumeyer (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Mitchell Morris, "The Order of Sanctity: Sound, Sight, and Suasion in *The Ten Commandments*," in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew Bribitzer-Stull, *Understanding the Leitmotif From Wagner to Hollywood Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

irony.<sup>14</sup> As Bribitzer-Stull navigates the music of John Williams, Howard Shore, James Horner, and others, he observes how these transformative techniques work within the film to convey narrative meaning. He joins Nicholas Cook,<sup>15</sup> Michel Chion,<sup>16</sup> Annabel Cohen,<sup>17</sup> and many other audiovisual scholars advocating for film music analysis that treats music as one component of the larger, multimedia film structure.

Other theorists focus on long-range tonal structures in film music. Does the film begin and end in the same key? Does the tonal trajectory reflect aspects of the film's narrative? David Neumeyer is one of the most prominent theorists to approach tonal analysis in film. His article "Tonal Design and Narrative in Film Music: Bernard Herrmann's 'A Portrait Of Hitch' and 'The Trouble With Harry'" explores both challenges and possibilities of analyzing large-scale tonal design.<sup>18</sup> Neumeyer observes that in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Trouble With Harry*, composer Bernard Herrmann uses large-scale tonal relationships that parallel the film's narrative trajectory (Figure 1.1).

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 170.

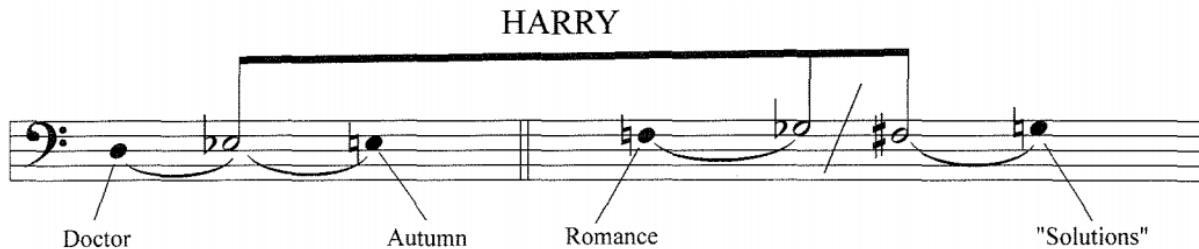
<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Cook, *Analyzing Musical Multimedia*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> Annabel J. Cohen, "Congruence-Association Model of Music and Multimedia," in *The Psychology of Music in Multimedia*, ed. Siu-Lan Tan *et al.* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> David Neumeyer, "Tonal Design and Narrative in Film Music: Bernard Herrmann's 'A Portrait Of Hitch' and 'The Trouble With Harry,'" *Indiana Theory Review* 19 (1998): 87-123.





**Figure 1.1.** Neumeyer's tonal trajectory of Bernard Herrmann's *The Trouble With Harry*

The two primary tonal centers in the score (Eb minor and Gb major) share a traditional tonal relationship of being relative keys and serve as stable positions in the larger tonal structure. As circumstances arise that propel the plot forward, so do chromatically-related keys. Although Neumeyer extracts this large-scale tonal design, he does not ignore the more complex array of tonal centers from which the larger design is drawn. As acknowledged by many film theorists, tonal design in film is met with challenges of conforming to the structures of the film itself. For example, themes may require transposition to tonal areas that better serve a timbre that has narrative significance, or to interact with diegetic music (music heard by the characters). In spite of these challenges, some film composers do create overarching tonal designs. This practice is currently the subject of an in-depth study by music theorist Tahirih Motazedian.<sup>19</sup>

Rather than asking how music conforms to a particular tonal model, transformational theory examines the process of harmonic change. This type of analysis is compatible with the less traditional tonal structures of film music. Transformational analysis of film music has been touched on by theorists like Jamie Lynn Webster<sup>20</sup> and Guy Capuzzo,<sup>21</sup> and is gaining

<sup>19</sup> Tahirih Motazedian, "Tonal Design in Film Music," Ph.D. diss., Yale University (2016).

<sup>20</sup> Jamie Lynn Webster, "The Music of Harry Potter: Continuity and Change in the First Five Films," Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon (2009).

momentum in the field through the work of Scott Murphy and Frank Lehman. Scott Murphy, who authored the chapter on transformational theory in the *Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*,<sup>22</sup> devotes much of his transformational research to “tonal-triadic progression classes” (TTPCs) in film scores. A TTPC consists of two triads: one which serves as “tonic” and one which creates tension or unrest.<sup>23</sup> TTPCs are expressed as “MnM,” where the first “M” represents the “tonic” triad, the “n” is the number of half steps between the chord roots, and the second “M” represents the tense triad. Murphy has found this system of analysis powerful, for instance, in studying the depiction of loss in film. In a recent article,<sup>24</sup> he examines M4m (a major triad tonicized alternating with a tension-ridden minor triad four semi-tones higher) and its tonal inverse, m8M (a minor triad tonicized alternating with a tension-inducing major triad eight semi-tones higher [or four semi-tones lower]). Finding that this harmonic change occurs widely in association with loss in several film scores as well as pieces from the classical canon, Murphy deems it “the loss gesture.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Guy Capuzzo, “Neo-Riemannian Theory and the Analysis of Pop-Rock Music,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 26.2 (2004): 177-199.

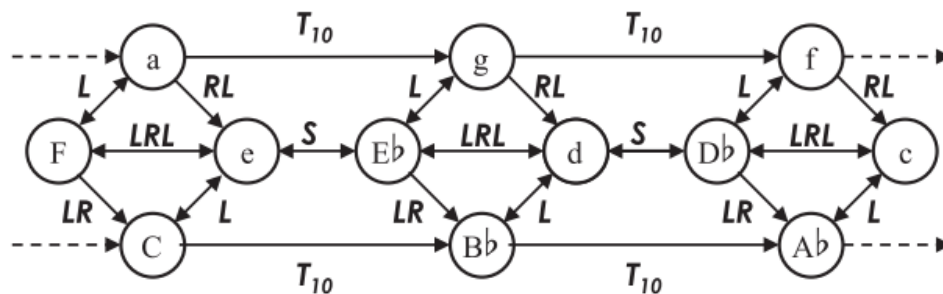
<sup>22</sup> Scott Murphy, “Transformational Theory and Film Music,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, ed. David Neumeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

<sup>24</sup> Scott Murphy, “Scoring Loss in Some Recent Popular Film and Television,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 36.2 (2014): 295-314.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

Frank Lehman is a transformational theorist who studies harmonic associativity and the hermeneutics of transformation in modern film scores.<sup>26</sup> In his article “Transformational Analysis and the Representation of Genius in Film Music,”<sup>27</sup> Lehman uses neo-Riemannian operations to analyze James Horner’s score for *A Beautiful Mind* (2001). He shows that Horner’s harmonic choices for underscoring moments of genius travel through a slice of the pitch-space generated by the quaternary operator LSLR (Figure 1.2). Although earlier neo-Riemannian literature dismisses the practicality of cycles generated by quaternary operators,<sup>28</sup> Lehman maintains that the cycle generated by LSLR is a noteworthy exception that has relevance in film and concert music.



**Figure 1.2.** Lehman’s SLIDE-line in “Horner-Space”

This is one of many examples Lehman offers to illustrate the opportunity film music holds for theorists.<sup>29</sup> By engaging with a new repertoire of tonal and formal conventions, film music

<sup>26</sup> Frank Lehman, “Reading Tonality Through Film: Transformational Hermeneutics and the Music of Hollywood,” Ph.D. diss., Harvard University (2012).

<sup>27</sup> Frank Lehman, “Transformational Analysis and the Representation of Genius in Film Music,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 35.1 (2013): 1-22.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Cohn, “Neo-Riemannian Operations, Parsimonious Trichords, and Their ‘Tonnetz’ Representations,” *Journal of Music Theory* (1997).

<sup>29</sup> Frank Lehman, “Music Theory through the Lens of Film,” *Journal of Film Music* (2012).

provides theorists with the opportunity to expand, develop, and clarify the discipline of music theory.

We have now discussed kinds of analysis that have been applied to film music, but we have not closely examined which film composers the literature analyzes. The composers mentioned above (John Williams, Howard Shore, James Horner, and Bernard Herrmann) are among many classic and modern Hollywood composers to pervade current analyses.<sup>30</sup> Almost completely absent from modern film music analysis, however, is the music of composer Thomas Newman.<sup>31</sup> Known for scores such as *American Beauty* (1999), *Finding Nemo* (2003), *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events* (2004), and, most recently, *Bridge of Spies* (2015), Thomas Newman is the most nominated living film composer who has yet to receive an award for Best Original Score from the Academy. Perhaps both music theorists and the Academy are challenged by Newman's sparse scoring, non-traditional compositional process, and transcendent tonality; herein lies one purpose of this thesis: to begin an overdue dialogue on the music of Thomas Newman. Before delving into analysis, a survey of the current (but limited) literature on Thomas Newman is in order.

The current literature on Thomas Newman exists largely in the form of film and soundtrack reviews and interviews with the composer. Film and soundtrack reviews, while

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<sup>30</sup> In "Transformational Theory and Film Music" from *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies*, Scott Murphy also refers to the scores of Michael Giacchino, Randy Newman, Hans Zimmer, Elliot Goldenthal, Jerry Goldsmith, Alexander Courage, and David Arnold to illustrate analytic concepts. In "Music Theory through the Lens of Film" from the *Journal of Film Music*, Frank Lehman also turns to James Newton Howard. Composers whose music is analyzed in Matthew Bribitzer-Stull's *Understanding the Leitmotif* include Danny Elfman and Erich Korngold.

<sup>31</sup> In addition to the literature discussed in the following paragraphs, Frank Lehman included an excerpt of Thomas Newman's music for *WALL-E* (2008) in the presentation "Temporal and Psychological Aspects of Wondrous Chromaticism in Film" at the Society for Music Theory Annual Meeting (2016).

giving an impression of the film's success and soundtrack's reception, offer little more than surface descriptions of the music. For instance, consider this review of the *American Beauty* soundtrack on filmtracks.com:

*American Beauty* is defined by the marimba, xylophone, tablas, bird calls, dulcimer, banjo, ukulele, detuned mandolin, phonograph, steel guitar, ewi, and, of course, Newman's own piano performances. The tone of these instruments is often harmonic and surprisingly relaxing [...]. The score has the characteristics of new age world music, which effectively conveys the alienation that suburbia inflicts upon the film's characters. With the touch of each instrumental deviation carrying the score, it's easy to get the feeling that the music requires several listens at a high volume to fully appreciate. [...] There is no *American Beauty* theme, which makes sense in the context of the film. But Newman's clunky rhythmic scores live or die on how well the instrumentation and pacing can function as the necessary glue.<sup>32</sup>

The review points to timbre, makes a connection with Newman's style and the broad category of "new age world music," and claims that the soundtrack has "no *American Beauty* theme," by which the author likely means *no main theme that we associate with the title and end credits* as the album *does* contain the title (and thematically significant) track "American Beauty."

Additionally, the music excerpted on soundtracks is often altered from the music preserved in the film and rarely represents the entirety of music used in the film. For example, the *American Beauty* soundtrack contains 37:29 minutes of music,<sup>33</sup> but the film itself contains 53 minutes of musical cues.<sup>34</sup> Discrepancies like this carry weight for those seeking to perform detailed analysis. Mainstream interviews, likewise, tend to shed light on the collaborative process between Newman and various directors, rather than the musical structures of a score or

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<sup>32</sup> "American Beauty: Editorial Review," [http://www.filmtracks.com/titles/american\\_beauty.html](http://www.filmtracks.com/titles/american_beauty.html), (Accessed 5/8/16).

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Newman, *Original Motion Picture Score: American Beauty*, SKG Music (2000).

<sup>34</sup> Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 40.

the ways that score interacts with the image. In short, the majority of text on Thomas Newman exists in forms that seek not to analyze, but to qualify, praise, or criticize his music.

Newman is, however, the brief subject of a few text-books designed to teach aspects of film scoring. *On the Track: A Contemporary Guide to Film Scoring*<sup>35</sup> cites Newman's style as one up-and-coming film composers should be familiar with in order to have informed discussions about stylistic preferences with directors.<sup>36</sup> Particularly, it mentions Newman's use of "color" (by which the authors mean texture and timbre) as a model for blending music with the tones (by which the authors mean narrative style and dramatic design) of the film.<sup>37</sup>

More in-depth treatment of Newman's music appears in Peter Rothbart's *The Synergy of Film Music: Sight and Sound in Five Hollywood Films*,<sup>38</sup> an introductory text to the workings of music in film. Rothbart devotes a chapter to detailed discussion of Newman's score for *American Beauty*. In this chapter's introduction, Rothbart claims that Newman's score synthesizes "two seemingly opposite approaches to film music composition, a leitmotif-based approach and an atmospheric-based gestalt."<sup>39</sup> He then proceeds to list and describe Newman's leitmotifs, which "apply to abstract personality traits or moral statements intended by the filmmakers." These leitmotifs are summarized in Table 1.1 below.<sup>40</sup> Rothbart does not define

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 21-22

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Rothbart, *The Synergy of Film Music: Sight and Sound in Five Hollywood Films* (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2013).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>40</sup> Rothbart describes other motifs in the body of the text, but does not associate them with director intent or primary dramatic roles.

the specific musical characteristics of each leitmotif, leaving the reader to surmise these from the guided viewing of the film that proceeds for the remainder of the chapter. Although detailed musical analysis is absent from Rothbart’s “guided tour,” he does track the leitmotifs through the film narrative, making important observations about their narrative function. Leitmotivic analysis is not the aim of this thesis, but it is important to acknowledge Rothbart’s study as the first that approaches the unique case of the leitmotif in Newman’s music.

**Table 1.1.** Selections from Newman’s leitmotifs in *American Beauty*, identified by Rothbart.

Leitmotif	Description
<i>mental boy</i>	“biting social commentary on our society’s idea of normal and abnormal behavior.”
<i>American beauty</i>	“commentary on our contemporary society[‘s] concepts of beauty.”
<i>dead already</i>	“the emotional state of whomever [ <i>dead already</i> ] is underscoring”
<i>lunch with the real estate king</i>	“concept of empowerment”
<i>power of denial</i>	“subconscious denial of reality”
<i>arose</i>	“optimism and self-fulfillment”

Finally, a single dissertation, authored by composer Adam Schoenberg at Juilliard in 2010, treats Newman’s music with academic rigor. “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman”<sup>41</sup> traces some of Newman’s influences, specifies aspects of Newman’s compositional process, and discusses Newman’s musical style. The following will provide a brief overview of Schoenberg’s dissertation as I will reference this

<sup>41</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman,” Ph.D. diss., Juilliard (2010).

work in detail in the discussion of Newman's compositional background in the latter part of this chapter.

The dissertation contains four chapters. The first is a five-page biographic section that situates Newman in the film music industry; lists his early, lesser-known works; and discusses his academic background. The second chapter introduces us to Newman's compositional process. Schoenberg coins the term "conceptual composition" to describe Newman's approach to film scoring. Though not overtly defined by Schoenberg, the essence of "conceptual composition" lies in Newman's concept of the film score as "music for a recorded medium."<sup>42</sup> This "recorded medium" is not the isolated soundtrack, but the final version of the film in its entirety. Since the aesthetic of the composite film is the result of many collaborations, Newman's conceptual process embraces both collaboration and experimentation.

Schoenberg discusses Newman's musical style in the third chapter. He begins by identifying five markers of the Newman's signature sound: short, chord-based motives; repetition; additive layers; pedal point; and timbres such as piano, electronic and experimental sounds, world instruments, and high-pitched percussion. Schoenberg then studies Newman's writing for piano and strings. Newman's piano writing, which is certainly identified with his signature sound, is defined by "three-note chords that do not function in a traditional western-theoretical way."<sup>43</sup> The quintal chords and modally ambiguous triads that infuse Newman's harmonic language will be considered in greater detail in the final section of this chapter. While Newman's string writing sometimes takes on the fuller sonorities associated with classic

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 37.



Hollywood scores, often he uses strings in less overt roles:<sup>44</sup> to provide an ambient backdrop for the piano, to add layers that complicate harmony, or to highlight rhythmic motives.<sup>45</sup>

Schoenberg's fourth and final chapter reviews the earlier chapters, but emphasizes the importance of Newman's unique sound. Schoenberg maintains that of the many elements that define Newman's style, harmony is most central. Behind formal organization, rhythmic variation, and motivic designs in Newman's music lies a generative harmonic idea. Although Schoenberg describes Newman's harmonic ideas with theoretically informed language, the dissertation does not serve as a theoretical analysis. My thesis approaches Newman from the perspective of a music analyst and theorist using tools uniquely compatible with the compositional approaches and stylistic elements outlined by Schoenberg. Before proceeding to these analytic methods, however, we will discuss Newman's development as composer.

Thomas Newman was born on October 20, 1955 in Los Angeles, California. His parents were actress Martha Louis née Montgomery (1920 – 2005) and Hollywood composer Alfred Newman (1901 – 1970). Thomas Newman was born into a highly musical family and one largely associated with the film music industry. His uncle Emil Newman (1911-1984) served as a music director and conductor for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Studios, Universal Pictures, and Warner Bros.<sup>46</sup> His uncle Lionel Newman (1916-1989) succeeded Alfred Newman as the director of Fox

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<sup>44</sup> The film score for *Little Women* is an exception as strings are used prominently to blend with period music from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 44-45.

<sup>46</sup> "Emil Newman: Music Department," [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0006212/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0006212/?ref=fn_al_nm_1), (Accessed 5/8/2016).

Music.<sup>47</sup> Thomas Newman's siblings, David Newman (b. 1954)<sup>48</sup> and Maria Newman (b. 1962)<sup>49</sup> are also composers. His cousin, Randy Newman, is a well-known film composer and singer-songwriter, famous for music in *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*, and *Monsters, Inc.*<sup>50</sup> In the film music industry, the Newman family has become known colloquially as the "Newman Dynasty."

Although Thomas Newman grew up surrounded by the business of film music, he was not pressured to pursue film music as a career. When Newman was fourteen, however, his father passed away and he was moved to study composition more seriously.<sup>51</sup> In 1973, he entered the composition program at University of Southern California and studied with Frederick Lesemann and David Raksin. During this time, he also studied independently with George Tremblay. Both Raksin<sup>52</sup> and Tremblay<sup>53</sup> had studied with Arnold Schoenberg. Two years into the program at USC, Newman was accepted at Yale. In an interview conducted by Adam Schoenberg, Newman

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<sup>47</sup> Adam Schoenberg, "Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman."

<sup>48</sup> "David Newman: Composer," [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0628056/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0628056/?ref=fn_al_nm_1), (Accessed 5/8/2016).

<sup>49</sup> "Maria Newman, Composer," <http://www.marianewmanmusic.com/marianewmancomposer.html>, (Accessed 5/8/2016).

<sup>50</sup> "Biography," <http://randynewman.com/1966/01/biography/>, (Accessed 5/8/16).

<sup>51</sup> Adam Schoenberg, "Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman."

<sup>52</sup> Aljean Harnetz, "David Raskin, the Composer of 'Laura,' Is Dead at 92," *The New York Times* (August 11, 2004).

<sup>53</sup> "George Tremblay Collection," *Special Collections in Performing Arts*, University of Maryland Libraries, (Accessed 5/8/2016).

recalled, “I didn’t want to go [to Yale]. But there was part of me that knew I should[.]”<sup>54</sup> At Yale, Newman studied with Jacob Druckman, Robert Moore, and Bruce MacCombie.<sup>55</sup>

Druckman had studied notably with Aaron Copland.<sup>56</sup> Newman’s score for *Little Women* may bear some of Copland’s influence.

Newman did not feel that he fit in with Yale’s composition department.<sup>57</sup> While his professors and peers were interested in extended serialism, indeterminacy and chance, and other *avant garde* techniques, Newman was drawn to tonal forms and musical theater.<sup>58</sup> In 1978, Newman graduated from Yale with an MM in Composition.

His post-Yale period (1978-1984) proved to be formative for his career path. Soon after graduating from Yale, Newman met Stephen Sondheim who became his “greatest mentor.”<sup>59</sup> In 1979, he wrote his first and only musical, *Three Mean Fairytales*, which was unsuccessful.<sup>60</sup> During this period, Newman played in two bands. He was the keyboardist for the new wave band “The Innocents,” which released one self-titled album through the label Boardwalk in 1982.

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<sup>54</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).

<sup>55</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman.”

<sup>56</sup> Anthony Tommasini, “Jacob Druckman, 67, Dies; A Composer and Teacher,” *The New York Times* (May 27, 1996).

<sup>57</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman.”

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).

The same year, the band was featured on the television show “American Band Stand.”<sup>61</sup> The band members were Tony Kawalksi (lead guitarist), Chris Kaye (drummer), Michael Hurt (lead vocals), and Marten Ingle (bass).<sup>62</sup> Newman and Hurt co-wrote the band’s repertoire. Newman also began playing with the experimental electronic group “Tokyo 77.”<sup>63</sup> The four-person band includes George Budd (who is credited with Budd Box phonograph, sampler, and synthesizer on the album), Rick Cox (who played electric guitar, alto saxophone, and contra-alto clarinet on the album), Chas Smith (who played pedal steel guitar, Pez Eater, and Guitarzilla), and Thomas Newman (who played violin and clay flutes in addition to piano). Tokyo 77 released a self-titled album in 2002 that contained recordings of live performances from 1989 to 1992 and a live radio broadcast from 2000.<sup>64</sup> The process of improvisation and experimentation with electronic timbre central to Tokyo 77 is a style marker that has carried over to Newman’s music as a film composer. Additionally, he collaborates with all of the members of Tokyo 77 in the improvisatory phases of his compositional process.

In 1983, John Williams invited Newman to orchestrate the cue for Vader’s death scene in *Return of the Jedi*.<sup>65</sup> The following year, Newman finally broke into the film industry with his

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<sup>61</sup> “Dick Clark Interviews The Innocents – American Band Stand 1982,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqmUOmPi5\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqmUOmPi5_I), (Accessed 5/8/16).

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman.”

<sup>64</sup> *Tokyo 77* (IN TONE Music, 2002).

<sup>65</sup> Tim Greiving, “When John William Can’t Go, Whom Does Spielberg Call? Thomas Newman,” *Weekend Edition, NPR* (October 17, 2015).

score for James Foley's *Reckless*.<sup>66</sup> Newman scored two other films in 1984, *Grandview, U.S.A.* and *Revenge of the Nerds*. Between 1984 and 1994, Newman composed scores for seventeen films, each with different directors.<sup>67</sup>

Newman's second big break came in 1995 when two of his 1994 film scores, *Little Women* and *The Shawshank Redemption*, were nominated for Best Original Score at the Academy Awards. Although Newman did not win the award, the double nomination (and premier Academy nomination for Newman) drew wider attention to his music. His collaboration with director Frank Darabont on *The Shawshank Redemption* led to a later collaboration on *The Green Mile* in 1999. This same year, Newman composed the score for which he is most widely known, *American Beauty*. This was the first of many films Newman would score for director Sam Mendes. Newman has since scored all but one of Mendes's films, including *Road to Perdition* (2002) and both Bond films – *Skyfall* (2012) and *Spectre* (2015).

Two other collaborations are particularly worth noting in Newman's career to present: his work with director Andrew Stanton and, recently, with Steven Spielberg. Newman scored Andrew Stanton's *Finding Nemo* in 2003. Their second collaboration was the animated film *WALL-E* (2008). Newman's score for *WALL-E* is noteworthy for the unique role of music in the film.<sup>68</sup> *WALL-E* is unusual in that the main characters are robots who communicate through series of sound effects rather than words. As a result, Newman's music serves a prominent

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<sup>66</sup> According to Adam Schoenberg (2010), casting agent Scott Rudin employed Newman as a musical assistant and his initiative promoted him to the role of composer.

<sup>67</sup> "Thomas Newman: Composer," <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0002353/>, (Accessed 5/8/2016).

<sup>68</sup> Thomas S. Hischak, "Thomas Newman," *The Encyclopedia of Film Composers* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 503.

narrative role that engages with audiences of all ages while interacting with a non-traditional soundscape. Most recently, Newman scored Steven Spielberg's *Bridge of Spies* (2015). This collaboration was a first not only for Newman, but also for Spielberg whose films have been scored by John Williams<sup>69</sup> since their 1985 collaboration on *Jaws*.<sup>70</sup> In fact, when he declined to score *Bridge of Spies* due to illness, Williams recommended Newman to Spielberg.<sup>71</sup> While the score for *Bridge of Spies* contains the dramatic flourishes we associate with a Spielberg film, it also unmistakably carries the mark of Newman.

Adam Schoenberg and Newman himself describe three elements that are truly central to Newman's mature style. First, his music is based in the repetition of small harmonic modules.<sup>72</sup> The organization of these modules recalls Stravinskian block structure. Newman develops the modules through a non-traditional compositional process that occurs in three main phases. To begin, Newman starts from a point of "color." For Newman, "color" is both timbre and harmony. Alone or with one or two collaborators, he develops harmonic modules, motives, and concepts for timbre through improvisation and experimentation. In the second phase, he brings these ideas to a small recording session. This recording session consists of three to six collaborators with whom Newman shares a similar aesthetic. Often the performers don't start with written-out cues, but within minutes transcribe any unnotated music and begin to work through a process Newman calls "directed improvisation in a prescribed harmonic

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<sup>69</sup> With the exception of *The Color Purple* (1985).

<sup>70</sup> Tim Greiving, "When John William Can't Go, Whom Does Spielberg Call? Thomas Newman."

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).

environment.”<sup>73</sup> With direction from Newman, the small ensemble (which includes Newman himself) records a pallet of improvisations on Newman’s harmonic, motivic, rhythmic, and timbral germs. Since Newman starts with these smaller generative elements, repetition is a key improvisatory tool that explores musical possibilities through small variations. The cues generated in the small-ensemble session will be manipulated and paired with orchestra in the following sessions. Newman’s third phase (and last, depending on the film’s budget) is the orchestra recording session. Using developed material from the small-ensemble recordings, Newman decides where to add orchestra to the cues then records the orchestra on its own tracks to maintain flexibility in the final product. Unlike the first two phases, this phase is not improvisatory. Once the orchestra has been recorded, Newman makes final decisions about cues’ musical content and has a hand in mixing the completed musical soundtrack. If the budget permits, Newman may conduct a fourth phase before mixing. The fourth phase returns to small ensemble improvisation to enrich cues with layers of newly directed timbres.<sup>74</sup>

Newman’s harmonic language is another central element of his style. He often creates the “prescribed harmonic environment” in which he and his collaborators improvise using a technique he calls “modal stretching.” For Newman, “modal stretching” is frequently accomplished by pedal point using modally ambiguous ambient drones.<sup>75</sup> Often these ambient

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<sup>73</sup> Thomas Newman, email message to Adam Schoneberg (January 16, 2008).

<sup>74</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman,” 14-30.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).

tones are not notated.<sup>76</sup> In the following excerpt (Figure 1.3 on page 22) from *The Shawshank Redemption* (1999), we see the ambient tones A, E, and G stacked together in a synth drone. Maintaining modal ambiguity, Newman omits a mode-defining third in the first piano voicing. The opening series of chords, A-E dyad -> CM -> bm -> AM -> C-G-D quintal -> FM, then weaves around the A-E-G ambient pedal, “stretching” between A minor and A major, but never truly confirming either. This harmonic language, like Newman’s improvisational approach to composition, is explorative and results in a unique sound.

Finally, Newman describes his writing as “scaled back.”<sup>77</sup> Schoenberg describes it as “reduced.”<sup>78</sup> Others have said “introspective.”<sup>79</sup> This key characteristic of Newman’s style is perhaps most exposed in his distinct writing for piano. Newman’s three-note piano style provides no more information than is necessary to define or obscure a harmony. With respect to this aspect of his style, Newman says, “If I use three notes to make harmonic activity, I want to make sure that every note matters.”<sup>80</sup> Although Newman plays many instruments, the piano is his primary instrument. When we hear piano in his scores, we are typically listening to a performance by the composer himself. Schoenberg makes the important observation that

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<sup>76</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman,” 19.

<sup>77</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).

<sup>78</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman,” 37.

<sup>79</sup> “Bridge of Spies: Editorial Review,” [http://www.filmtracks.com/titles/bridge\\_spies.html](http://www.filmtracks.com/titles/bridge_spies.html), (Accessed 4/21/2016).

<sup>80</sup> Thomas Newman, interviewed by Adam Schoenberg, The Julliard School, New York, NY (September 2, 2008).



Newman “tends to use the piano in calmer and more *reflective* moments” (emphasis mine).<sup>81</sup>

Such moments elevate not only the nuances of this composer’s style but also the way this style interacts with film in pivotal dramatic moments.

The image displays a musical score for the A-Section of "Brooks Was Here" from the film *The Shawshank Redemption*. The score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes an "Ambient tones" staff with a single chord and a "Piano" section with two staves. The second system, starting at measure 5, features a "Pno." section with two staves. The third system, starting at measure 8, also features a "Pno." section with two staves. The music is in 4/4 time and consists of a simple, reflective piano accompaniment.

**Figure 1.3.** “Brooks Was Here” A-Section from *The Shawshank Redemption* (transcription mine).

<sup>81</sup> Adam Schoenberg, “Finding Newman: The Compositional Process and Musical Style of Thomas Newman,” 36.

In summary, the field of film music studies is young with many opportunities to develop and expand its literature. It holds unique, interdisciplinary challenges that require academic dialogue between vastly different fields. At the same time, it offers music theory the opportunity to develop new, compelling tools of analysis. We have seen that existing literature on film, particularly from the music-theoretical perspective, overlooks film composer Thomas Newman. Newman's music bears a distinct and mature style. As a composer, he employs non-traditional but successful approaches to film scoring. Additionally, his music works with the moving image in a way unlike that of any other Hollywood composer. This music merits deeper analysis. To that end, we now turn to analytic methods that are highly compatible with Newman's style and compositional approach. We will see that Kofi Agawu's method of generative analysis is particularly well-suited to structures that arise in Newman's music through improvisatory composition. David Bordwell's three dimensions of film narrative will guide us through narrative structures that converge in the introspective and reflective moments in which Newman's music most shines. Finally, Michel Chion's approach to audiovisual analysis will allow us to see how Newman's "scaled back" writing interacts with the visual structures of the moving image.

## CHAPTER II

### ANALYTIC METHODS

The methods of analysis used in this thesis reflect film as the result of multiple disciplines. I seek to understand how musical structures interact with narrative structure, and how sound and image combine to create the composite experience of viewing the film. Three branches of analysis will be employed to understand these musical, narrative, and audiovisual structures. First, we will consider a generative method of musical analysis proposed by Kofi Agawu in *Music as Discourse*.<sup>82</sup> Next, we will investigate tools of narrative analysis in David Bordwell's *Three Dimensions of Film Narrative*.<sup>83</sup> Finally, we will examine the relationship between musical sound and image as we turn to Michel Chion's *Audio-vision: Sound on Screen*.<sup>84</sup>

#### **Kofi Agawu and Generative Analysis**

Kofi Agawu is a leading music theorist in the area of music theory and semiotics. He is well known for his semiotic approach to classical music presented in *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music*.<sup>85</sup> His recent book, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*, continues this work through the analysis of 19<sup>th</sup>-century

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<sup>82</sup> Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>83</sup> David Bordwell, "Three Dimensions of Narrative Analysis," *Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>84</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, edited and translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

<sup>85</sup> Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1991).

repertoire. The book is divided into two sections, “Theory” and “Analyses.” In the “Theory” section, Agawu discusses treating music as a language and presents theoretical tools that embrace this perspective. These tools include generative analysis (discussed in detail in the next paragraph) and paradigmatic analysis. The “Analyses” section of the book demonstrates these tools in action through the analysis of works by Liszt, Brahms, Mahler, and Beethoven.

In the fourth chapter of *Music as Discourse*, Agawu proposes the generative method to musical analysis.<sup>86</sup> Agawu borrows the chapter title, “Bridges to Free Composition,” from Schenker’s metaphor<sup>87</sup> for free composition as “a continuation of strict counterpoint.”<sup>88</sup> Agawu’s generative method of analysis traces Schenker’s “bridges” between strict counterpoint and free composition using a set of tonal models or proto-structures. The method is not Schenkerian, but owes to Schenkerian analysis as Agawu describes below:

By recognizing and defining a series of voice-leading models as scaffolding for tonal composition, Schenker provided us with the single most potent tool for understanding and imaginatively reconstructing a tonal composition.<sup>89</sup>

Agawu constructs a generative analysis of Corelli’s Op. 3, No. 1 “Grave” (Figure 2.1) as an illustration of the method. As the first step of this process, Agawu divides the movement into several short formal units (Figure 2.2).

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<sup>86</sup> Kofi Agawu, “Bridges to Free Composition,” *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>87</sup> Heinrich Schenker, *Der Tonwille: Pamphlets in Witness of the Immutable Laws of Music*, edited by Drabkin, translated by Ian Bent et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 66, 13.

<sup>88</sup> Kofi Agawu, “Bridges to Free Composition,” *Music as Discourse*, 111.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

**Grave**

Violino I.  
Violino II.  
Violone,  
e Organo.

6 6 6 6 5 9 8 6 5 6 4 3 6 5 6 9 6 9 8 6

7

6 5 4 3 6 6 5 4 6 6 3 9 6 6 5 9 6 6 6 9 8 6 6 5 4

13

5 3 7 6 5 7 5 5 6 9 6 6 7 5 6 6 5 4 3 6 9 8 7 6 5 3 4 4 3

**Figure 2.1.** Corelli’s Church Sonata, Op. 3, No. 1, “Grave.”

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Bars 1–2 <sup>2</sup>                | 8. Bars 10 <sup>4</sup> –11 <sup>4</sup>  |
| 2. Bars 2 <sup>3</sup> –4 <sup>4</sup>  | 9. Bars 11 <sup>4</sup> –12 <sup>3</sup>  |
| 3. Bars 5–6 <sup>4</sup>                | 10. Bars 13–14 <sup>1</sup>               |
| 4. Bars 6 <sup>4</sup> –7 <sup>3</sup>  | 11. Bars 14 <sup>2</sup> –15 <sup>2</sup> |
| 5. Bars 7 <sup>4</sup> –8 <sup>3</sup>  | 12. Bars 15 <sup>2</sup> –17 <sup>1</sup> |
| 6. Bars 8 <sup>4</sup> –9 <sup>4</sup>  | 13. Bars 17 <sup>2</sup> –19 <sup>4</sup> |
| 7. Bars 9 <sup>4</sup> –10 <sup>4</sup> |   |

**Figure 2.2.** Agawu’s formal units for Corelli’s Op. 3., No. 1.

Agawu then proposes a generative harmonic module (Figure 2.3) appropriate in the musical language of Corelli and his Baroque contemporaries. The module begins with tonic (F major), moves to predominant (G minor in first inversion), and executes a cadential six-four en route to a perfect authentic cadence.



**Figure 2.3.** Corelli Op. 3, No. 1 “Grave” generating module.

Finally, Agawu traces bridges from this module to each unit of Corelli’s music. The generation of the second unit is excerpted as Figure 2.4 on the following page. From level a to level b, we invert the initial tonic triad. From level b to level c, we drop the bass an octave and embellish the V chord. We also truncate the opening tonic triad and elaborate the upper voices with suspensions. From here, Agawu takes us to the surface of Corelli’s music. From level c, level d splits into three staves. The bass becomes more rhythmically varied, is embellished with octave leaps, and adds a few embellishing leaps leading into the cadence. The second violin is also embellished by chordal leaps and flirts rhythmically with the bass line. The first violin is raised an octave and includes light melodic embellishments at its onset.

Figure 2.4 consists of four musical examples, labeled a, b, c, and d, arranged vertically. Each example shows a bridge from a generating module to the second unit of Corelli's Op. 3, No. 1. Examples a and b are in G minor and show a simple harmonic progression in two staves (treble and bass clef). Example c shows a more complex melodic line in the treble clef. Example d shows a full piano accompaniment with a circled '3' above a note in the second measure and a sequence of numbers (6 5 9 8 6 5 6 4 3) below the bass line.

**Figure 2.4.** Agawu's bridges from generating module to second unit of Corelli's Op. 3, No. 1.

Although Agawu focuses on the music of Romantic composers in the body of his book, he suggests that the generative method can be used with other styles of tonal music. Indeed we will see that generative analysis is extremely well-suited to the music of the modern film composer Thomas Newman. In the case of Newman, generative analysis will allow us to better understand his tonally ambiguous musical language as well as aspects of formal organization.

## David Bordwell and the Dimensions of Film Narrative

As we approach Thomas Newman's music in the special case of the introspective or reflective scene, it is important to understand the elements that define a scene that is *introspective* or *reflective*. An *introspective* moment is created by an external stimulus that causes a character to look "inward." Introspective moments in film often respond to significant events, such as loss or renewal. Brooks' release from prison in *The Shawshank Redemption*, for example, sets in motion an introspective scene narrated by Brooks, who contemplates his ability to adapt to the "outside" world. A *reflective* moment is also often a response to an external event. A character suspended in a reflective moment looks back to specific events, or perhaps even on their entire life. Such moments occur at the end of *Little Women* and *American Beauty*. Reflective and introspective moments, therefore, rely inherently on referencing other moments in the plot. They also rely on various forms of narration that disclose a character's introspective or reflective response to an event. By understanding how these moments arise in narrative, we can better understand the way music moves in these scenes; therefore, we require a language to describe the narrative structures of film.

For this language, we turn to film theorist and historian David Bordwell and to an essay from his collection *Poetics of Cinema*, "Three Dimensions of Film Narrative."<sup>90</sup> Bordwell, who takes a cognitive approach to film narrative, describes three dimensions of film narrative perceived by the viewer: the story world, plot structure, and narration.

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<sup>90</sup> David Bordwell, "Three Dimensions of Film Narrative," *Poetics of Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2007).



The story world consists of a story's "agents, circumstances, and surroundings."<sup>91</sup> It envelopes the story's setting (time and place), characters, dialogue, and other nuances of the environment. Film music theorists often categorize film music as diegetic or non-diegetic (music heard by the characters or not). Diegetic music, the music we perceive the characters can hear, is part of the story world. Non-diegetic music (such as a film's title theme) narrates the film from "outside" the story world and is only audible to the audience.

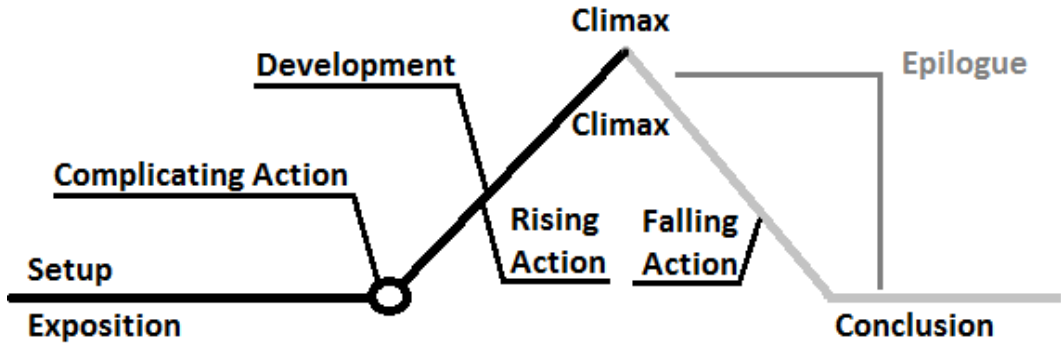
The plot structure is the path we take through the story world. It is the organization of events. To describe plot structure, Bordwell draws on Kristin Thompson's<sup>92</sup> cinematic adaptation of traditional literary plot components: Setup, Complicating Action, Development, and Climax (with an optional Epilogue).<sup>93</sup> The traditional Hollywood Setup reveals the protagonist's goal. The Complicating Action responds to the protagonist's goal and may completely alter the path to the goal or the goal itself. The Development jeopardizes and challenges the goal. The Climax confirms or denies the completion of the goal. An Epilogue may follow the Climax and shows the story world as altered by the Climax. If graphed on the classic narrative arch, Thompson's plot structure bears the parallels illustrated in Figure 2.5 (Thompson's labels above the plot line).

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>92</sup> Kristin Thompson, *Storytelling in the New Hollywood: Analyzing Classical Narrative Technique* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); and Kristin Thompson, *Storytelling in Film and Television* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>93</sup> David Bordwell, "Three Dimensions of Film Narrative," 105.



**Figure 2.5.** Thompson’s model for plot structure in film juxtaposed above classic plot structure.

We will have this broader narrative structure at the back of our minds as we analyze case study scenes; however, we will focus on plot events that are specifically tied up in introspection or reflection. These events may very well create their own, smaller narrative arcs, which will be prioritized in selected scenes.

The third dimension of film narrative, *narration*, is the manner in which we receive information about the story. We tend to associate narration with a human agent whom we call the narrator. When a character serves as the narrator in film, voiceover is a common technique. Often, we enter or exit a film listening to the voice of a character explaining some part of the story. There are also more likely to be moments of introspection or reflection when a character serves as the narrator, as opposed to an omniscient voice who, like non-diegetic music, is divorced from the story world. However, in film, narration is not restricted to the agent of human voice. Sometimes it appears in the form of text on the screen. It also includes the style of filming. Fast, jerky images might narrate the experience of a character in a chase scene. A full pan around a room as seasons gradually change in the background might tell us with no voice or text that time has passed. Narration in film contains auditory and visual agents.

In a sense, the three dimensions of film narrative may be compared to visiting a museum. The story world is an inventory of all the exhibits and architectural features of the museum. The plot structure is the particular path your tour guide chooses to navigate the museum. The narration is the way you receive information along the tour – through your guide, through text at exhibits, etc. While examining introspective and reflective moments in Newman’s film scores, we will draw primarily on Bordwell’s conception of plot structure as the sequence of narrative events to understand what constitutes a reflective or introspective scene, but we will also consider some scenes from the dimensions of the story world and style of narration.

### **Michel Chion and *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen***

Michel Chion, a composer and filmmaker who teaches at the Université de Paris, is largely concerned with the relationship between sound and image in film. He is famous for purporting that “there is no soundtrack”<sup>94</sup> on the basis that cinema is an experience whose elements are interdependent – isolating sound or image tells an incomplete story. We turn to Chion’s *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*<sup>95</sup> to understand how Thomas Newman’s music works with the image (and other sound components) to convey the narrative in an introspective or reflective scene. Film director Frank Darabont, who collaborated with Newman on both *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994) and *The Green Mile* (1999), describes the mystery of Newman’s music at work:

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<sup>94</sup> Michel Chion, *La voix au cinéma* (Brussels: Editions de l’Etoile, 1982), 13-14.

<sup>95</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, edited and translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

Newman sneaks into a scene on little cat feet and weaves his magic in a way that leaves the listener unaware that the spell is being woven at all[.]<sup>96</sup>

Newman's music works with the image in a unique way. Chion's approach to sound and image will illuminate Newman's spell-binding path through the audiovisual scene.

Underlying Chion's approach to audiovisual analysis is an assumption he calls the *audiovisual contract*. When viewing a film, we as viewers assume that sound and image are working together for the same purpose. In other words, we don't walk into a movie theater expecting to hear a voiceover of the local news station while watching James Bond outwit a super-villain. By subconsciously accepting the mutual purpose of sound and image in cinema, we agree to the *audiovisual contract*. Audiovisual analysis, therefore, "aims to understand the ways in which a sequence or a whole film works in its use of sound combined with its use of images."<sup>97</sup>

Chion's method of audiovisual analysis as proposed in the final chapter of *Audio-Vision* prioritizes sound and consists of a three-phase model:

1. Dominant Tendencies and Overall Description
2. Spotting Important Points of Synchronization
3. Comparison

In identifying dominant audiovisual tendencies and generating an overall description, Chion's first step is to list and qualify different elements of sound and image.<sup>98</sup> Sounds may be itemized as speech, music, or noise. If a sound is identified as "speech," it may be further categorized as *theatrical*, *textual*, or *emanation*. Theatrical speech is diegetic, or part of the story

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<sup>96</sup> Frank Darabont, CD jacket, *Music by Thomas Newman from the Motion Picture 'The Green Mile'* (Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Records, 1999).

<sup>97</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, 185.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

world. It consists of the dialogue characters have with each other or themselves, but not with the audience. Textual speech occurs as voiceover narration by a character or omniscient narrator, often at the beginning or end of a film (or both). Textual speech may address the audience directly and may or may not use the second-person grammatical voice. Emanation speech is speech used as sound effect to alert us to presence of characters on the screen. This often takes the form of background whispers or the collision of several conversations in a large crowd. Emanation speech, like theatrical speech, is diegetic, but unlike theatrical speech, will often be unintelligible.<sup>99</sup>

If a sound is identified as “music,” it may be further categorized as *empathetic* or *anempathetic*. Empathetic music will take on the visual “rhythms, tone, and phrasing” of a scene. Empathetic music often occurs in scenes of comedy, emphasizing ridiculous events.<sup>100</sup> In fact, the technique that results in empathetic music has roots in comedy and is known as “Mickey-Mousing,” or synching the music directly with the image. Anempathetic music, then, moves in its own rhythmic dimension, creating a “backdrop of ‘indifference.’”<sup>101</sup>

This juxtaposition of a scene with indifferent music has the effect not of freezing emotion but rather of intensifying it, by inscribing it on a cosmic background. [...] The anempathetic impulse in the cinema produces those countless musical bits from player pianos, celestas, music boxes, and dance bands, whose studied frivolity and naiveté reinforce the individual emotion of the character and of the spectator.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 171-177.

<sup>100</sup> Daniel Goldmark, “Drawing a New Narrative for Cartoon Music,” In *The Oxford Handbook of Film Music Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>101</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision*, 8.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

Chion seems to describe some of the very markers of Newman's compositional style. We will see that in introspective and reflective scenes, Newman's music is anempathetic, creating the "effect of cosmic indifference"<sup>103</sup> and that this quality of the audiovisual scene is essential to a sympathetic response in the viewer.

Chion does not offer a specific approach to itemizing the elements of the image, but we might imagine categorizing visual elements based on action, stillness, and perspective. Active visual elements might include characters and any objects identified as having motion. Still visual elements might include stationary background objects, ground and floors, or anything that gives relief to motion. Lastly, we might consider various camera angles and perspective shots and ask what the position of the camera emphasizes. Do we see through the eyes of a character? Is the perspective angled upward or downward? Is the image focused on something nearby, far away?

Once audio and visual elements are itemized and characterized, consider which elements may be "foregrounded." For example, in the case of the introspective or reflective scenes studied in this thesis, we will see that textual speech and anempathetic music are most prominent. Anempathetic audiovisual organization in scenes with no voiceover narration will highlight the important role of the music.

The next step in Chion's three-phase audiovisual analysis is *spotting important points of synchronization*. Chion states that "The primary synch points [...] are crucial for meaning and dynamics."<sup>104</sup> In the climax of a film, for instance, a salient motion in the music may synchronize with an expression of realization on the protagonist's face. Spotting important

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 190.

points of synchronization provides a framework for Chion's final phase of audiovisual analysis, *comparison*.

The *comparison* phase consists of perceiving the sound and image separately with respect to the same variable. This variable might be a narrative framework informed by the important points of synchronization from the previous phase. Comparison would then entail tracing what information is supplied about the narrative by elements of sound and by elements of image. Chion suggests that this process could employ *masking*, a technique he uses to describe listening to the film without the image or watching the image without the sound. While it is not the goal of this thesis to trace sound-image relationships in acute detail, I will be considering the way music works with the image and dialogue to convey narrative structure. In this process, I will make reference to Chion's categories of audiovisual organization presented in the first phase of audiovisual analysis and draw from the comparison phase of analysis when determining the narrative signification of musical elements.

The following chapters present three case studies of introspective and reflective moments in films scored by Thomas Newman. I have chosen the 1994 films *Little Women* and *The Shawshank Redemption* because their scores received recognition at the 1995 Academy Awards as Thomas Newman's debut nominations. The score for *Little Women*, a film set in 1860s Concord, MA, is also special because it bears 19<sup>th</sup>-century stylistic influences that illustrate some of the diversity in Newman's style. *The Shawshank Redemption* was also nominated for Best Picture and led to a future collaboration between Thomas Newman and director Frank Darabont on *The Green Mile* (1999). I have chosen *American Beauty* (1999) because its score is one of Newman's most celebrated. The film received the award for Best Picture at the 2000 Academy Awards and Newman's music for the film was nominated both at the Oscars and at the

Grammys. The score received the Grammy for Best Score Soundtrack Album. These films contain music that is recognized inside and outside the film industry and tell compelling stories that connect with wide audiences.

In each of the following case studies, we begin with the story. Through narrative analysis, we will find that introspective and reflective scenes often occur at structural plot points. We will examine where the music in these scenes reappears elsewhere in the film and trace these moments along the dramatic plot structure. Using musical analysis, we will look for musical relationships between separate appearances and dig into the structure of the music itself. This will reveal not only how the music moves, but also how it serves the narrative. Finally, we will consider audiovisual organization as a narrative device for introspection and reflection.



## CHAPTER III:

### LITTLE WOMEN

In 1994, Christian Bale, Claire Danes, Susan Sarandon, Winona Ryder, Trini Alvarado, and twelve-year-old Kirsten Dunst starred in the film *Little Women*, directed by Gillian Armstrong. The film is based on Louisa May Alcott's (1832-1888) semi-autobiographical novel of the same name that tells the story of four sisters growing up in 1860's Concord, Massachusetts. At the 1995 Academy Awards, the film received three nominations, including one for Thomas Newman's music in the category Best Original Score. Though overshadowed by other nominees (such as his own score for *The Shawshank Redemption* and Hans Zimmer's winning score for *The Lion King*), Thomas Newman's music for *Little Women* is a gem of period writing and emotional complexity that works through narrative, musical, and audiovisual dimensions to convey this touching story to the audience.

As we examine these dimensions in detail, the following film synopsis may be useful:

*Little Women* begins in the middle of a Civil War winter in a small house in Concord, Massachusetts. Orchard House, as it is called by its residents, is the home of the March family. Marmee (Susan Sarandon) is the mother of four daughters, Amy March (Kirsten Dunst), Beth March (Claire Danes), Jo March (Winona Ryder), and Meg March (Trini Alvarado) (from youngest to oldest). Marmee and her "little women" prepare for Christmas without Mr. March, who is away at war. We learn that Amy is an artist. Beth is quiet, shy, and loves to play the piano. Jo is an active writer and tomboy who befriends their neighbor, Theodore Lawrence (whom the sisters nickname Lawry). Meg struggles with desires for frivolities not permitted in wartime economy and strives to set a good example for her younger sisters.

As the sisters grow up, a few main events shape their lives. The first of these arrives in a telegram informing them that their father has been injured. Marmee leaves to assist him and the girls must manage the household and finances on their own. During this time, Beth visits a poor family of German immigrants whose children have contracted scarlet fever. Beth becomes ill and her condition worsens, drawing Marmee back home to care

for her. Beth survives the fever, but is permanently weakened. The following Christmas is also significant: Beth receives the gift of a piano from the Lawrence family; Mr. March finally returns home to his family; and the oldest sister, Meg, becomes engaged.

Four years later, the girls reach a parting of ways as Meg marries Mr. Brook, Amy goes to Europe to study art, and Jo departs for New York to further her career as a writer. Here, she meets Professor Frederick Bhaer who critiques her writing and challenges her to write something more personal. Jo answers this challenge later in the film with her first novel, *Little Women*. While in New York, Jo receives word that Beth is ill again. Jo returns home to be with Beth and finds Meg also at home and expecting. Beth passes away with Jo at her bedside. Receiving news of Beth's passing and Meg's entering confinement, Amy returns from Europe to be with her family.

Between Beth's death and the birth of Meg's children, Jo finds herself in the attic of Orchard House. She opens a trunk labeled "Beth" and memories begin to envelope her. Finally inspired to write from her own life, she drafts the novel that will become *Little Women*. Following this scene, we meet Meg's newborn twins in the same room of Beth's departure. The film ends with Prof. Bhaer arriving in Concord to deliver the news to Jo that her novel will be published.

To understand the way Newman's music works within the film to convey this moving story, we will begin with narrative analysis to illuminate the narrative's plot structure.

The plot structure of *Little Women* centers on events that unite or divide the four March sisters. The *setup* reveals the goal of familial unity. The opening scene reveals this goal of familial unity as we meet the March sisters and Marmee together in Orchard House. Jo's introductory voiceover also emphasizes the sisters' togetherness (bolded text is associated with unity):

**My sisters and I** remember that winter as **our childhood's** coldest. A temporary poverty had hit **our family** some years before. [...] Somehow in that dark time, the **March family** created **its own** light. (Jo March, *Little Women*, 1994)

The *complicating action*, which responds to the goal of familial unity, arrives in the form of the eldest March sister's wedding. Meg's marriage marks the beginning of a new life with her own family, but it simultaneously means a division in the lives of the March sisters. As she departs

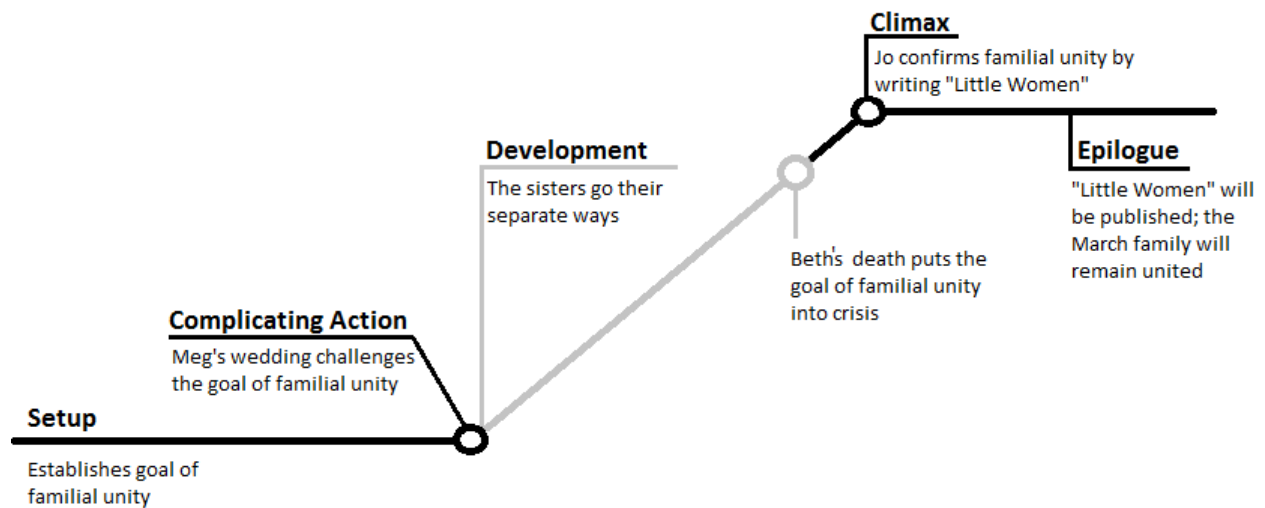
from Orchard House, she leaves their childhood behind. Meg's wedding initiates the plot's *development*, which further challenges familial unity. Following Meg's wedding, the youngest March sister, Amy, leaves Orchard House to study art in Europe. Jo, who becomes restless at home, travels to New York to pursue her writing. Only Beth remains at home. During this phase of the plot, the March sisters are least unified.

The development culminates in an event that pulls the goal of familial unity into crisis. This event is the death of Beth March. Without Beth, it would seem that the March family can never be complete. But in another sense, it is Beth's passing that draws her family together again: Jo returns from New York to be with Beth in her final stages of illness; Meg, who is expecting twins, also returns to Orchard House and enters confinement; Amy, now wed to their childhood friend Lawry, returns from Europe with her husband to celebrate the birth of Meg's children and to mourn the loss of Beth.

Although Beth's death scene has many qualities that match those of a plot's climax, the true climax responds to Beth's death and ultimately confirms the sisters' unity. The climax occurs as a pivotal scene between Beth's passing and the birth of Meg's children. In this scene, Jo rediscovers items from childhood stowed away in the attic of Orchard House. Inspired by the physical evidence that the sisters were once together, Jo begins to write and by the end of the scene, she has completed the novel that will become *Little Women*. Her novel preserves the March sisters' childhood, ensuring that in some way, the sisters *will* always be together. *This* confirmation of familial unity serves as the true climax of the film.

In the film's *epilogue*, we learn that the three March sisters will remain close. Amy and Lawry take up residence next door to Orchard House, keeping Amy's promise to Jo that she would "always live close by." Meg and her young family are to remain in Orchard House until

she recovers from childbirth, and live nearby thereafter. We also learn that Jo's novel will be published. She receives the publisher's manuscript from her own love interest, Professor Frederick Bhaer, who had initially challenged her to write more personally. Jo and Professor Bhaer also remain in Concord to begin a school. The plot structure is summarized in Figure 3.1 below:



**Figure 3.1.** Plot structure of Gillian Armstrong's *Little Women* (1994).

Examining the plot structure reveals two powerfully introspective and reflective events. The first is Beth's death scene (the grey circle above) at the culmination of the development. This moment is reflective because it causes both the characters and the audience to *look back* on Beth's life and the lives of her sisters. At the same time, this scene is *introspective*. Both Beth and Jo express *inward* thoughts about their personal qualities as they consider what the future holds for them. The climax, which reunites the March sisters in the pages of Jo's novel, is the second significant introspective and reflective moment. In this moment, Jo again *reflects* on the sisters' lives. At the same time, her writing *introspectively* retraces her own steps from

childhood to the young woman she has become. The way music interacts with plot structure is one element that makes these introspective and reflective scenes so powerful.

To understand how music interacts with the film's plot structure, it is important to understand both the structure of the *musical narrative* and the process of *musical narration*.<sup>105</sup> *Musical narrative* is a term I will use to describe the way music is organized over the course of the film. It answers the question, "What music is present at which point?" *Musical narration* is a term I will use to indicate the process through which music communicates information about the dramatic narrative. Beth's death scene and the writing scene prompt us to construct a musical narrative that primarily concerns two pieces of music: the hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" and Thomas Newman's title theme, "Little Women."

The theme "Little Women" makes an appearance in Beth's death scene under the title "Valley of the Shadow" (the first eight measures transcribed as Figure 3.2 on the following page). The theme enters just after Beth passes away. Transformed from the jubilant, brassy fanfare of the opening credits, the theme mourns Beth through the timbre of the piano in a hymn-like style. The simplicity and elegance of this arrangement is striking, but the sound of the piano is moving because it is a sound that undoubtedly belongs to Beth.

This timbre connects us to Beth in the first scene of the film as she plays "Ding Dong Merrily on High" at the piano with her sisters gathered together singing on Christmas Eve. Later in the opening scene, Beth plays the piano to prompt Jo to come downstairs for Christmas breakfast. In the scene where Beth first takes ill, Jo finds her leaning over her piano. In a later Christmas scene, after Beth's initial recovery, Beth receives a piano as a gift and plays carols as

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<sup>105</sup> These terms are inspired by David Bordwell's definitions of narrative (the story) and narration (the way the story is told) and I have adapted and qualified them to indicate the musical parallel.

her family sings around her. In Beth's death scene, we even see the piano next to Beth's bed in her final conversations with Jo, the keys *uncovered*. Following Beth's death, the theme completes one "verse" before the camera cuts to flower petals dropping over Beth's belongings. The first petals touch the *closed* key cover of her piano. Petals continue to fall as the hymn-like theme repeats, joined by a subtle "ooo" in the timbre of the March sisters' child voices (Figure 3.3). The specific timbre of the March sisters' younger voices evokes the March sisters' childhood unity. The hymn-like style and the juxtaposition of the piano and voice connects us not only with Beth, but with moments when she played the piano surrounded by the voices of her family.

The image displays a musical score for the title theme of Thomas Newman's "Valley of the Shadow." It consists of two systems of music. The first system is labeled "Voice" and "Piano." The "Voice" part is a single staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, containing four measures of whole rests. The "Piano" part is a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, also in 4/4 time, containing four measures of music. The second system is labeled "Pno." and contains five measures of music, starting with a measure number "5" above the first measure. The piano part in the second system features a more active melody in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

**Figure 3.2.** The title theme as it appears in Thomas Newman's "Valley of the Shadow," mm. 1-8 (transcription mine).

The image shows a musical score for the title theme of Thomas Newman's "Valley of the Shadow." The score is divided into two systems. The first system, starting at measure 9, features a single melodic line in the treble clef and a piano accompaniment in the grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the bass clef and chords in the treble clef. The second system, starting at measure 13, introduces a string section. The melodic line continues in the treble clef, with the label "(Strings)" above it. The piano accompaniment continues in the grand staff, with the bass clef providing a steady accompaniment and the treble clef playing chords.

**Figure 3.3.** The title theme as it appears in Thomas Newman’s “Valley of the Shadow,” mm. 9-16 (transcription mine).

The title theme, “Little Women,” (Figure 3.4) also appears at the end of the writing scene. As Jo finishes her novel and ties the cover on it, the theme sounds in its original timbre (the English horn). In this form (transcribed on the following page), the theme recalls the first seconds of the film containing the title script “Little Women.” By returning us to “where” it all began, the theme at the end of the writing scene represents closure. The theme reiterates this closure in the epilogue when Jo receives the publisher’s manuscript of her novel.



**Figure 3.4.** Thomas Newman’s title theme “Little Women” (transcription mine).

The hymn “For the Beauty of the Earth” appears twice in the film: first at Meg’s wedding and later in the writing scene. At Meg’s wedding, close friends and family sing the hymn in celebration of her union with John Brooks, but Jo’s sullen expression also tells us this is the last time she and her sisters will be together. Overlapping with the hymn at the beginning of Meg’s wedding scene, Jo’s voiceover captures this sentiment (bold text associated with change):

**Change** comes like the **seasons**, and twice as quick. We make our peace with it as best we can. Or, as Amy once said, “We’ll all **grow up** someday. We might as well know what we want.” (Jo March, *Little Women*, 1994)

The hymn gathers us in a bittersweet moment that remarks on the sisters’ cherished childhood and the reality that nothing will be the same again.

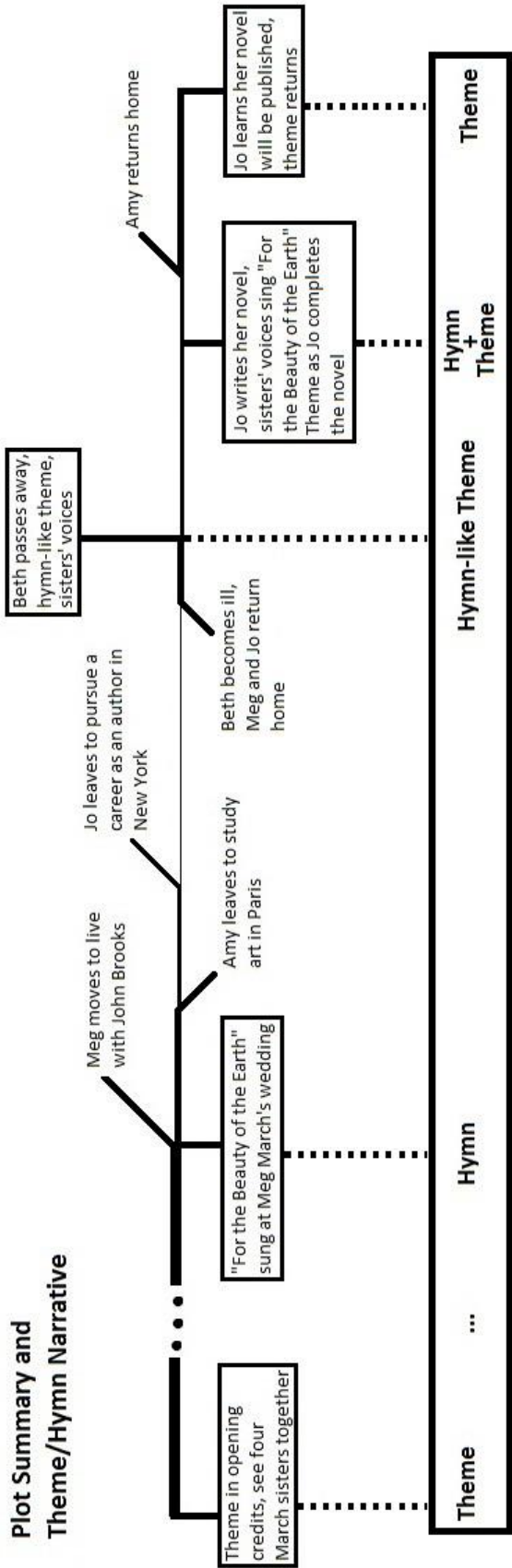


In the climax, the hymn and the theme are joined, expressing both the beauty of change and the sisters' unity. The hymn fades in after Lawry's voice illuminates his own words on Jo's page: "Nothing's going to **change**, Jo." (emphasis mine). The hymn's presence at this moment, however, recalls the celebration of Meg's wedding – the very moment when everything *did* change. The hymn in the writing scene also uses timbre to communicate striking information about the dramatic narrative. Although we first heard the hymn sung in the voices of close friends and family at Meg's wedding, it is the March sisters' child voices that deliver the hymn in the climax. As in Beth's death scene, this evokes their unity as children. Through the hymn, this also reminds us of the significance of four sisters celebrating together for the last time. As the hymn fades out, the "Little Women" theme fades in, supplying the confirmation of unity in the face of change.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider the hymn's text. The first verse appears partially in Meg's wedding scene and completely in the writing scene (words associated with unity in bold, words associated with immersion in beauty in italics):

For the *beauty* of the earth,  
For the *glory* of the *skies*,  
For the **love** which **from our birth**,  
*Over and around us* lies,  
Lord of all, to Thee **we** raise,  
This **our hymn** of *grateful* praise.

The hymn itself contains a message about embracing beauty in the face of change, which is amplified by its position in the film's narrative structure. Because of the hymn's placement in the narrative, we might also hear the last four lines of text illuminating the love that always has and always will unite the March sisters. The dramatic placement of the hymn and theme are summarized in Figure 3.5:



**Figure 3.5.** Plot summary juxtaposed with the musical narrative of the hymn and the theme. Note that the thickness of the timeline corresponds to the sisters' unity. When any of the sisters leave Orchard House, the line becomes thinner. When any of the sisters return to Orchard House, the line becomes thicker.

Figure 3.5 reveals significant narrative relationships between the hymn and the theme.

The hymn and theme appear alternately at major plot points: the theme occurs at the setup; the hymn narrates the complicating action; the theme appears at the culmination of the development, dressed as a hymn; the hymn immediately precedes the theme in the climax; and the theme finally narrates the epilogue. The theme and hymn are undoubtedly bound together in the dramatic narrative, but there are also significant musical relationships between these two pieces that lend them (and the film) dramatic cohesion.

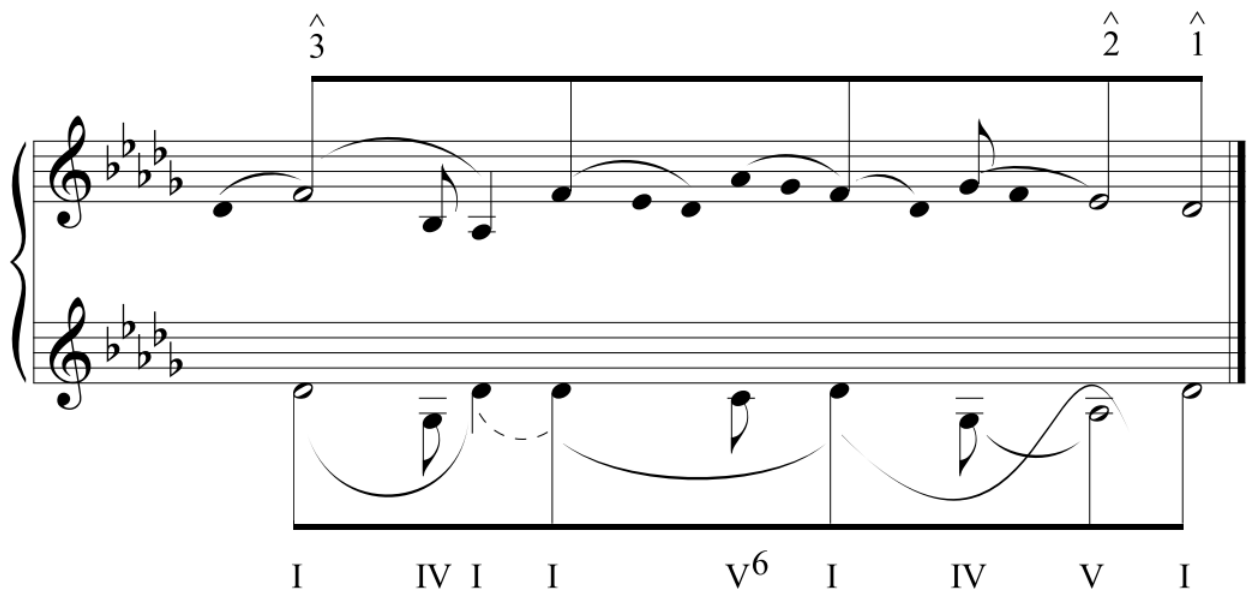
First, consider the juxtaposition of their melodic structures in Figure 3.6 below.

The figure displays three systems of musical notation. The first system is labeled 'Hymn' and 'Theme' on the left. The Hymn is written in the upper staff (treble clef) and the Theme in the lower staff (bass clef). Both are in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The Hymn melody is: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The Theme melody is: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The second system is labeled '5' on the left and shows the Hymn melody in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The third system is labeled '9' on the left and shows the Hymn melody in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The Hymn melody is: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The Theme melody is: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4.

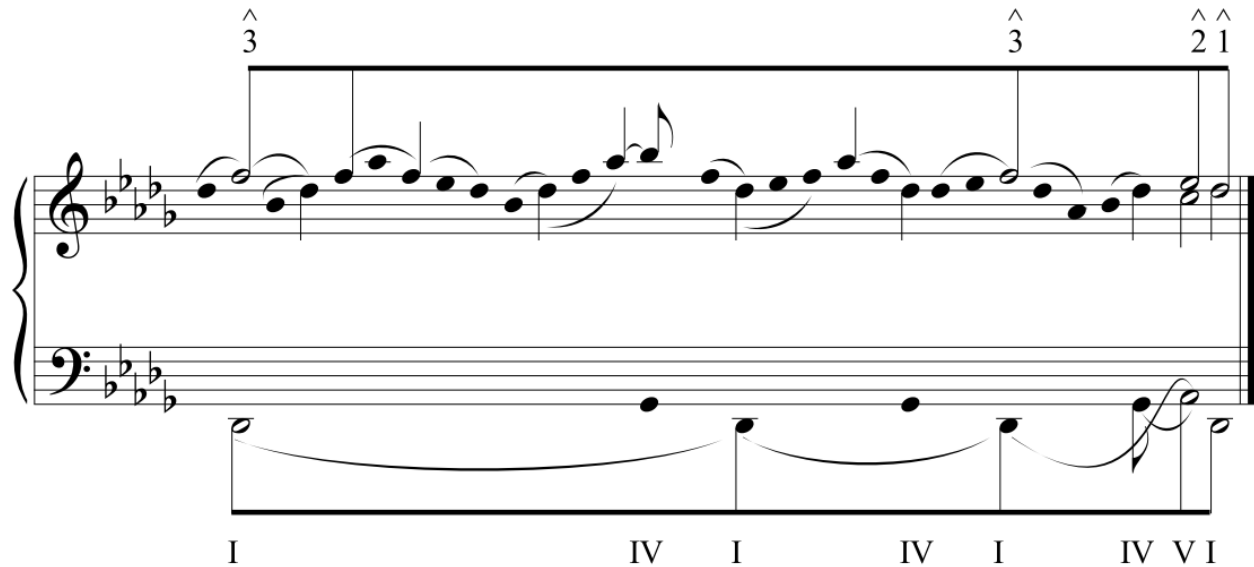
**Figure 3.6.** “For the Beauty of the Earth”/”Little Women” melodic juxtaposition.

We see the melody for the main theme can be extracted from the hymn melody with minimal alteration. In the fourth measure, for instance, we see the theme repeats *do* instead of moving to *sol*. The theme does, however, replicate the rhythmic duration of the half note. Not shown in Figure 3.6, the theme melody continues by repeating the melodic content derived from the third and fourth measures.

Schenkerian analysis allows us to see more deeply into the musical parallels between the hymn and the main theme. In Figures 3.7 and 3.8, we see that both have three-line background structures. Both open by embellishing this structure with a do-mi leap followed soon after with the descending, stepwise embellishment mi-re-do. Plagal prolongation of tonic is prominent in both, and emphasized in the theme by la-do embellishing thirds. The salient scale degree five is also a common feature. The theme truly is an echo of the hymn, enabling the theme and the hymn to amplify dramatic cohesion.



**Figure 3.7.** Schenkerian graph of “For the Beauty of the Earth.”



**Figure 3.8.** Schenkerian graph of “Little Women.”

A yet undiscussed musical element in these selected scenes is their audiovisual organization. In both Beth’s death scene and the climactic writing scene, the music is organized in an *anempathetic* relationship with the image. As discussed by Michel Chion,<sup>106</sup> anempathetic audiovisual organization divorces the movements of the music from those of the image. In Beth’s death scene, the hymn-like theme does *not* fall into synchronization with Jo’s slow footsteps towards Beth. It does *not* match Jo’s measured then convulsive breaths of grief. When the camera cuts to flower petals falling over Beth’s belongings, the music does *not* reflect the visual transition. *Neither* do the theme’s rhythms match the falling flower petals. The effect of this disjunction is the suspension of time. Chion maintains that sound governs our perception of movement and, therefore, time. As the music moves separately from the image in Beth’s death scene, we are moved into a perception of time that is *not* “here-and-now.” This effect lends itself

<sup>106</sup> Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, edited and translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 8.

particularly well to the experience of introspection, which suspends time in order to look inward, and reflection, which suspends time in order to look back.

This effect comes into play in the writing scene as Jo reflects on the March sisters' journey from childhood to adulthood. Both the music and the dialogue narrate Jo's thoughts and, therefore, move in a sporadic sequence acutely distinct from the camera's slow, steady pan around the attic of Orchard House. The anempathetic audiovisual organization in this scene takes us with Jo as her thoughts suspend the present moment to reflect on the past. When the camera returns to Jo after panning through the attic, we find her wearing a light-grey dress in place of the black one that signified her mourning. Jo's costume change capitalizes on the suspension of time created by anempathetic audiovisual organization to show that time has passed. While a wide range of film music falls into this same audiovisual category, the anempathetic audiovisual organization of *these* scenes creates the temporal suspension essential for introspection and reflection.

Thomas Newman's Academy-nominated score for *Little Women* works from narrative, musical, and audiovisual dimensions to communicate the moving story of the four March sisters. We saw that the musical narrative highlighted the dramatic narrative through two central pieces: the main theme, "Little Women," and the popular hymn, "For the Beauty of the Earth." The main theme corresponded with the goal of familial unity revealed in the setup. The hymn challenged this goal by celebrating change at Meg's wedding in the complicating action. In the culminating action of the development, which called the goal of unity into crisis through Beth's death, the theme returned in the style of a hymn. This transformation not only evokes earlier musical associations with Beth's character, but also recalls the hymn that initiated the development at Meg's wedding. In Beth's death scene, the narrative identity of the theme itself

seems at crisis. The hymn returns in the climax, overlapping with the theme as the goal of familial unity is resolved in the pages of Jo's novel. Their positions in the dramatic narrative endowed the theme and hymn with reciprocal narrative associations that come into unity at the climax.

Both the theme and the hymn used timbre as a device of musical narration in the introspective and reflective moment of Beth's death scene and the climactic writing scene. In Beth's death scene, the timbre of the piano recalls her character in moments of celebration with her family, such as the opening scene when she plays a carol on the piano as she and her sisters sing. Recalling these very moments, the voices of the younger March sisters join the hymn-like piano arrangement of the theme in Beth's death scene. More generally, this timbre is the sound of the childhood the March sisters shared with Beth. In the writing scene, the March sisters' child voices sing the hymn, again evoking childhood, but also reflecting on the end of childhood as marked by Meg's wedding. At the end of the writing scene, the theme returns in the same timbre as its presentation in the first notes of the film.

Purely musical relationships between the hymn and the theme further the film's dramatic cohesion. The theme melody, for instance, can nearly be extracted from the melody of the hymn. Schenkerian analysis reveals three-line background structures in both pieces and middle-ground structures that share prominent plagal prolongation of tonic, the structural scale degree three embellished by the leap of a third, and the salient scale degree five. As the theme and hymn narrate the primary structural points in the dramatic plot, these musical similarities lend dramatic cohesion by creating familiarity at dramatically significant moments.

Finally, anempathetic audiovisual organization in these scenes creates the possibility of introspection and reflection by suspending time. In Beth's death scene, the hymn-like theme

does not synchronize with the movements of characters or the motion of the camera. Rather, it detaches us temporally from the image. This suspension of time combines with musical narration in a moment that *reflects* on Beth's life. Likewise, in the writing scene, an empathetic audiovisual organization allows us to suspend the present moment to follow the sequence that narrates Jo's memories. As we look back with Jo on her life, she also looks inward. The novel is the most personal piece she has ever written and the film suspends time to show us this.

Thomas Newman's music for the 1994 film *Little Women* contributed to a truly beautiful musical-visual artwork. His writing for this film, however, exposes us to his music through the lens of the 1860s in Concord, MA. In the following chapter, we will explore introspective and reflective moments in the score Newman composed later the same year for a film of an entirely different aesthetic, *The Shawshank Redemption*.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION

Thomas Newman's second nomination at the 1995 Academy Awards was for his music in *The Shawshank Redemption*. Directed by Frank Darabont, *The Shawshank Redemption* is an adaptation of Stephen King's short story *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* (1982).

The film starred Tim Robbins as Andy Dufresne and Morgan Freeman as Ellis Boyd Redding, who goes by "Red." The majority of the film takes place at Shawshank Prison:

Andy Dufresne is a banker who is sentenced to two life terms at Shawshank after being convicted of murdering his wife and her lover. Andy, unlike other inmates at Shawshank, is innocent of his crimes. He befriends "Red," a fellow prisoner who works an underground trade system among the inmates. Unknown to Red, or even to the audience, Andy plans an elaborate escape from the prison that takes years to prepare.

During this time, we meet several characters at the prison, including Brooks Hatlen (James Whitmore). Brooks has been an inmate at Shawshank for nearly his entire life. For the past several decades, he has served as the prison's librarian. Eventually, Andy gets assigned to work with Brooks in the prison library. Earlier in the film, Brooks rescues and cares for a baby bird that he names Jake. When Andy is assigned to work with Brooks, the fully-grown Jake is their frequent companion.

One day, Brooks is granted parole and released. The film tells us that he had entered prison in 1905 and his parole is granted in 1954. Upon his release, the seventy-year-old Brooks finds that the world has changed and that there is no place for him in it. He carves the words "Brooks was here" into a cross beam at the half-way house and takes his own life.

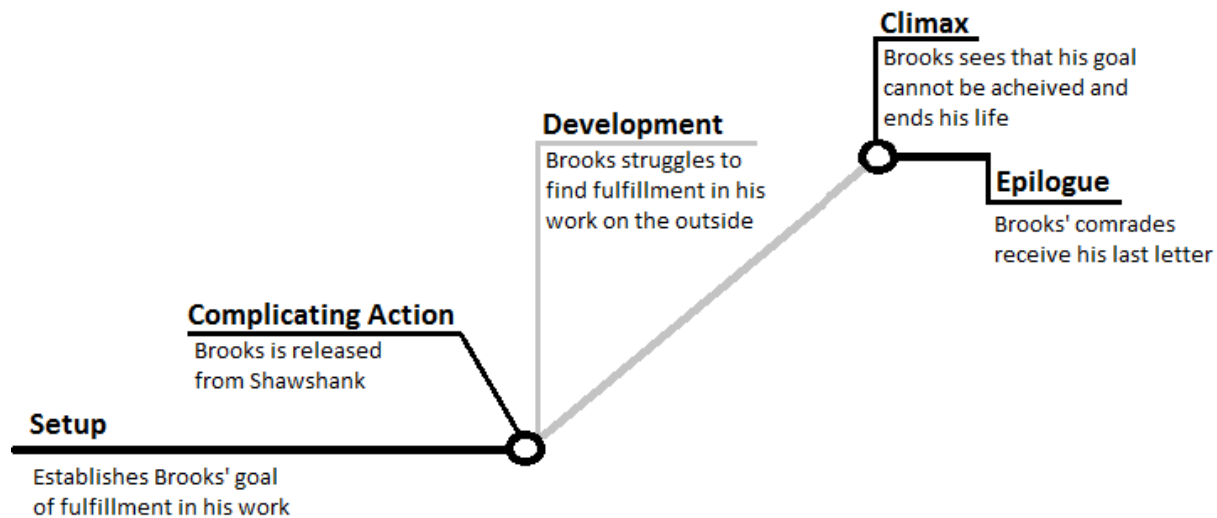
During Andy's years of preparation to escape, he discovers that the prison warden (Bob Gunton) is corrupt. When Andy escapes, he alerts authorities to the corruption, leading to the warden's downfall. Before his escape, Andy leaves instructions for Red to join him if he is ever released. The last scene of the film follows Red from his own release to the location of Brooks' death. Red carves his name next to Brooks', but then follows Andy's instructions and joins his friend, finally free.

This chapter will focus on the reflective and introspective scene in which Brooks Hatlen is released from Shawshank Prison.

Although the elements of plot structure introduced by David Bordwell are intended to apply to a film as a whole, we can trace the same dramatic elements through the subplot traversed by the character Brooks. The setup reveals Brooks' goal of fulfillment in his daily work. As the prison librarian, he has an identity that is acknowledged by his peers and his work is important to the society of Shawshank Prison. The complicating action is Brooks' release from Shawshank. This challenges Brooks' sense of fulfillment by placing him in a society where he is no longer recognized or valued. In the words of Red:

In [Shawshank], he's an important man. He's an educated man. Outside, he's nothing. Just a used-up con with arthritis in both hands. Probably couldn't get a library card if he tried. (Red, *The Shawshank Redemption*, 1994)

The development unfolds over the scene of Brooks' release. The scene shows Brooks struggling to fit into the outside world. His arthritis renders him insufficient at bagging groceries in his new job at the local market. Automobiles whiz past him at speeds he had never seen in his youth before Shawshank. This sensation complicates even the simple task of crossing a street. In the climax, Brooks provides a solution to the impossibility of fulfillment in the outside world by taking his own life. Brooks' subplot is summarized in Figure 4.1 on the following page.



**Figure 4.1.** Subplot structure of Brooks Hatlen in *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994).

Thomas Newman’s “Brooks Was Here” narrates the complicating action, development, climax, and epilogue of Brooks’ subplot. The cue begins with ambient drones as Brooks is directed from the prison’s front gate. Brooks takes a few steps forward, looking left and right. We hear the entrance of the piano on an openly voiced fifth. This begins the first of two primary musical sections.

Section A is transcribed as Figure 4.2 on the following page. The A-section provides an excellent example of the harmonic technique Newman calls “modal stretching.”<sup>107</sup> Although the ambient tones and the “bass” pitches emphasize A as a tonal center, there is never a cadence to confirm functional harmony in the key of A major or minor. F-sharps and C-sharps alternate with F-naturals and C-naturals evading even the diatonic modes. While we certainly might draw the parallel that this modal uneasiness represents Brooks’ own anxiety in the world outside Shawshank, there is also a cohesive musical structure that generates the harmonies of this excerpt. To illuminate this structure, we turn to music theorist Kofi Agawu.

<sup>107</sup> 35, Schoenberg (2010)

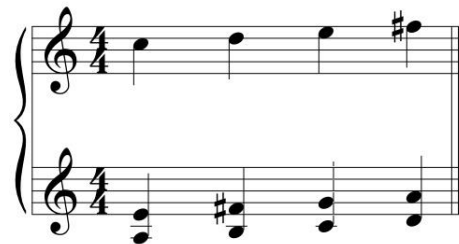
The image shows a musical score for Thomas Newman's "Brooks Was Here" from *The Shawshank Redemption*. The score is divided into three systems. The first system includes "Ambient tones" and "Piano". The second system is labeled "Pno." and the third is also labeled "Pno.". The music is in 4/4 time and features a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes, with some chords and arpeggios. The score is a transcription of a mine.

**Figure 4.2.** Thomas Newman’s “Brooks Was Here” from *The Shawshank Redemption* (transcription mine).

Kofi Agawu’s generative approach to reductive analysis begins with the question, “What modules *could* the composer have used to generate this music?” The goal of this question is not to predict or deduce an actual process, but rather to understand musical organization from a stylistically informed perspective. In the case of Thomas Newman’s style, we know that his music results from a compositional process that actually does begin with small modules, which

he develops through repetition and improvisation. Agawu's generative method of analysis, therefore, is especially compatible with Newman's music.

For the first musical section of "Brooks Was Here," I propose the following generative module of step-wise, ascending, openly-voiced triads (Figure 4.3):



**Figure 4.3.** Generating harmonic module for "Brooks Was Here," A section.

The arrangement of these harmonies parallels voice-leading structures found frequently in Newman's piano writing.<sup>108</sup> In "Brooks Was Here," the proposed generative harmonies appear in the same voicings (with the exception of the implied third of the first chord). Figure 4.4 replicates the excerpt with the four triads labeled sequentially and marked with solid boxes. Repetitions are marked with dashed boxes.

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<sup>108</sup> Other examples include "Just The Feller" and "Ghosts" from *The Road to Perdition* (2002); "American Beauty" and "Any Other Name" from *American Beauty*; and "A Tour of Pleasures" from *Scent of a Woman* (1992)

The figure displays a musical score with three systems. The first system includes 'Ambient tones' (treble clef, 4/4 time) and 'Piano' (grand staff, 4/4 time). The Piano part has two measures marked '1.' and '2.' with solid black boxes. The second system includes 'Pno.' (grand staff, 7/4 time) with measures marked '3.' and '4.' also boxed. The third system includes 'Pno.' (grand staff, 7/4 time) with a boxed measure. The score uses various musical notations including chords, single notes, and rests.

**Figure 4.4.** Harmonic elements of generating cell marked in transcribed score.

Agawu’s second question is, “How do we generate the piece from the selected module(s)?” Reading from the top level to the bottom, Figure 4.5 (on page 64) illustrates a stylistically-informed, hypothetical generation. The first level presents the generative module. The second level elaborates the module with neighbor figures, expands it rhythmically, and sets it in six-four time. Level three alters the harmonic content in order to “stretch” the mode. This is done by omitting the third from the first chord and replacing it with the root (creating modal

ambiguity). Next, we raise the melodic neighbor in measure 2 a half step (which disputes the C-natural harmonic neighbor of measure 1). Finally, we replace the harmonic support for the D at the end of measure 2 with the fifth that supported the first neighbor tone in measure 1. This results in a quintal harmony that amplifies the modal ambiguity achieved by the melodic C-sharp in the previous chord.

Level four interrupts the generative module's ascent by inserting a false ascent of collapsed parallel fifths. Level five revises the insertion of level four. First, it approaches the insertion by restating the full A minor triad of the generative module (measure 3). Next, level five adds a lower neighbor to the insertion after the penultimate C-G-C dyad and proceeds to realize the *complete* D major harmony down the octave. Voicing the D major harmony in this register expands the range of the approach to the generative D major triad in the following measure, exposing its salience. Level five repeats the revised insertion as measures 7, 8, and 9. The chromatic embellishment in measure 7 calls the modally restless C-sharp and C-natural into overt juxtaposition.

Level six presents the music in its final form. Measures 5 and 9 delay the D major harmony by an eighth note. Measures 3 and 7 stretch the mode by replacing support for C-natural with an F major triad. In the subsequent measures, the left hand is recast to emphasize contrary motion with the melody. The contour of the resulting harmonies dips to a low F-natural, which reemphasizes the F-natural of measures 3 and 7. This reinforcement creates greater contrast for the melodic F-sharp in measures 5 and 9.

The image displays a musical score for six parts, numbered 1) through 6). Each part is written on a staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. Part 1) shows a single chord in the first measure. Parts 2) through 4) show a sequence of chords in the first measure, with part 4) including a second measure. Parts 5) and 6) show a sequence of chords across six measures, with part 6) including a second measure. The score illustrates the harmonic progression from the opening chord to the climactic D major triad in measure 6.

**Figure 4.5.** “Bridges” from the generating unit to the surface of “Brooks Was Here.”

This analysis allows us to consider the overall shape of the A-section. We can trace the teleological path from the opening chord to the excerpt’s most salient moment (the D major triad in measure 6). We are drawn to the way this path is elaborated. We see, for instance, that the climactic D major triad is emphasized by voicings down the octave: the lower D major triad in measure 5 creates immediate contrast while the D major triad in measure 9 solidifies this contrast in the larger context. We can also say more than, “tension arises from modal ambiguity.” Specifically, we see how the initial open fifth A-E-A invites C-natural and C-sharp into the



harmonic dialogue. The bass is free to assert C-natural in the first complete harmony. Yet, when the left hand returns to its opening position, the melody claims C-sharp with equal freedom. The F-naturals of measures 3 and 4 not only work to stretch the mode, but also to set into relief the salient D major triad of measure 6.

The A-section dissolves into the B-section as Brooks is directed to his room at a halfway house. The section consists of an ostinato pattern in five-four time that continues over the A-E-G-A ambient drones presented at the beginning of the piece. The first four bars, which repeat for the duration of the section, are transcribed as Figure 4.6 below. In the third measure, the left hand of the piano adds the pitch D to the last chord, which is then sustained in the background drones. The addition of this pitch references the salient D major triad of the A-section and supports the triad's third and fifth embedded in the melody of the B-section.

**Figure 4.6.** Ostinato B-section of “Brooks Was Here” (transcription mine).

The B-section's more active and repetitive rhythmic structure lends it a directed sense of anticipation. As though pacing back and forth, the melody oscillates between elaborations of chord tones E and A. The metric subdivision 2+2+3+3 emphasizes the melodic division between the embellished chord tones. E is embellished by F# in duple subdivision while A is embellished by B in triple subdivision. The asymmetry of the subdivisions pushes the oscillation forward.

The A- and B-sections of “Brooks Was Here” serve the scene’s dramatic narrative in close relation with the voiceover of Brooks reading his last letter. The voiceover begins in the first iteration of the A-section. In the following transcription, no emphasis has been added to text that occurs over the A-section. Text that occurs over the B-section is bolded.

Dear Fellas,

I can’t believe how fast things move on the outside. I saw an automobile once when I was a kid but now they’re everywhere. The world went and got itself in a big damn hurry.

**The parole board got me into this halfway house called The Brewer, and a job bagging groceries at the Foodway. It’s hard work and I try to keep up but my hands hurt most of the time. I don’t think the store manager likes me very much.**

Sometimes after work I go to the park and feed the birds. I keep thinking Jake might just show up and say, “hello,” but he never does. I hope wherever he is he’s doing ok and making new friends.

I have trouble sleeping at night. I have bad dreams like I’m falling. I wake up scared. Sometimes it takes me a while to remember where I am.

Maybe I should get me a gun and rob the Foodway so they’d send me home. I could shoot the manager while I was at it, sorta like a bonus.

**I guess I’m too old for that sorta nonsense anymore. I don’t like it here. I’m tired of being afraid all the time. I’ve decided not to stay. I doubt they’ll kick up any fuss. Not for an old crook like me.** (Brooks Hatlen, *The Shawshank Redemption*, 1994)

The B-section aligns with text in the letter that describes transition. The section first appears when Brooks mentions the halfway house and trying to adapt to his new job. Likewise, the section underscores the words “I’ve decided not to stay.” In this second and final appearance, the ostinato section follows Brooks until he finishes carving his name into the cross beam.

The A-section appears three times in the scene, two of which underscore Brooks’ letter. The section first appears with text in the letter that is reflective. Brooks compares the world as he knew it in the past (“I saw an automobile once when I was a kid but now they’re everywhere.”) with the world now (“The world went and got itself in a big damn hurry.”). The

second time we hear the A-section, Brooks' words describe the trials of the present ("I have trouble sleeping at night.") and then playfully look to the future ("I could shoot the manager while I was at it, sorta like a bonus."). The third and final iteration enters as Brooks smiles after carving his name into the cross beam. The section continues as Brooks hangs himself from the crossbeam, as the camera pans across the carved words "Brooks was here," and as the camera fades to Andy holding the letter and reading aloud the final lines. After the piano articulates the section's final D major chord, the camera pans to Red who says, "He should have died in here." The sustained D major chord dissipates. The A-section becomes the sound of Brooks' suicide and his epilogue. This creates the effect through musical recollection that Brooks was destined to this fate from the beginning.

While we have seen that the image, dialogue, and music are all coordinated in the narrative processes of this scene, we have yet to address the audiovisual organization of these elements. As in the writing scene from *Little Women*, the music and the dialogue narrate from a temporal dimension that is separate from the present time implied by the image. Through anempathetic audiovisual organization, both Brooks' narration and Thomas Newman's music suspend time to create the introspective and reflective quality of the scene itself. When we first hear Brooks' words, we cannot attach them directly to a source in the image. This is because they come from the letter written after the events portrayed in the image. We return to the present only when Brooks' narration ends and the camera follows the actions of the climax and epilogue.

Newman's music, however, maintains its distance from the rhythms of the image for the duration of the scene. The ambient drone that accompanies Brooks' first footsteps from Shawshank is nothing like Brooks' uncertain shuffle. The slow, metrically vague phrases of the

A-section do not illustrate his jostling bus ride to the city and take no notice of the car that slams on its brakes as Brooks attempts to cross the street. Neither does the music cut to silence as the stool falls from beneath Brooks' feet. Rather, the music provides a still surface against which the chaotic motions of Brooks' life – and death – are crystalline.

The music for Brooks' final scene occurs nowhere else in the film. However, it is worth mentioning that the scene of Brooks' release is referenced in an important way near the end of the film. The film ends with Red finally being granted parole. Like Brooks, he finds himself without a place in the outside world. Immediately, however, the music tells us that Red's fate is more optimistic than Brooks' fate. Red remembers that Andy had described the location of a letter that would contain information about how to locate him. Red finds Andy's letter and follows his directions, but first he goes to Brooks' room at the halfway house. In a camera angle parallel to Brooks' last scene, Red opens a pocket knife and carves on the crossbeam. The camera cuts to the inscription: next to "Brooks was here," Red has carved, "So was Red."

Thomas Newman's music in the introspective and reflective scene of Brooks' release in *The Shawshank Redemption* traces a structural subplot. "Brooks Was Here" alternates between two musical sections. The A-section underscores the complicating action, climax, and epilogue, creating the sense that the climax was inevitable from the onset of the development. The A-section alternates with the B-section in the development according to the content of Brooks' voiceover. The B-section appears when Brooks describes transition. It takes on an asymmetrical ostinato pattern that is forward moving. At the same time, the B-section's harmonic content references the opening harmony of the A-section and the embellishing tones in its melody refer to the A-section's salient and final D major triads. Through Kofi Agawu's generative approach to analysis, we traced a "bridge" from a stylistically informed generative module to Newman's

fully elaborated score. This allowed us to consider a point of salience (the D major triad in measure 6) and to understand the specific ways “modal stretching” established and thwarted expectations. Finally, we saw that, as in *Little Women*, an empathetic audiovisual organization was a key element of conveying introspection and reflection to the audience. In our final case study, we will consider introspective and reflective scenes in Thomas Newman’s famous score for the film *American Beauty* (1999).

## CHAPTER V

### AMERICAN BEAUTY

*American Beauty* (1999) won five Oscars at the 2000 Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Although Thomas Newman did not receive the award for Best Original Score, his music for the film was nominated. The score for *American Beauty* is, allegedly, one of the most popular choices for temp music<sup>109</sup> among filmmakers and may be the most widely recognized representation of Newman's musical style.<sup>110</sup> The following film synopsis will contextualize scenes case studied in this chapter:

Lester Burnham is a forty-two-year-old man from suburbia on the cusp of a midlife crisis. The film begins by illustrating his cold, sexually stagnant relationship with his wife, Carolyn, and his distant relationship with their only child, Janie. We meet his new supervisor at work who informs him that they are planning to down-size.

After surveying his bleak life, Lester decides change is in order. He becomes infatuated with his daughter's best friend, Angela Hayes. He over-hears Angela tell Janie that she might find Lester attractive if he worked out. Lester starts lifting weights and jogging.

At a real estate convention for his wife's job, Lester meets their new next-door neighbor, eighteen-year-old Ricky Fitts. His father is an abusive, retired colonel and his mother is beginning to show signs of Alzheimer's. At the convention, Ricky is working as a caterer, but invites Lester to join him for a joint out back. While Lester smokes with Ricky, his wife flirts with a rival real estate agent.

Ricky frequently videotapes the world around him. He finds beauty in the seemingly mundane and, occasionally, even the grotesque. Janie catches him filming her from next door one evening and although her friend Angela dismisses him as a creep, Janie and Ricky show an interest in one another.

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<sup>109</sup> "Temp music" is music used by filmmakers as a temporary musical track against an image *before* the composer scores the film. Temp tracks are often used to explore concepts for a score *before* it is written.

<sup>110</sup> Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 27.

In one of the film's most famous scenes, Ricky shows Janie a plastic bag he filmed dancing in the wind and describes the beauty he sees in it. This is the beginning of a romantic relationship between Ricky and Janie.

Carolyn begins an affair with the rival real estate agent while Lester continues to fantasize about Angela. Lester quits his job, continues working out, gets a new job at a fast food chain, and starts buying weed from Ricky. He learns that Ricky's father, Colonel Fitts, hates homosexuals.

Lester discovers Carolyn's affair when she and her lover pull up to the drive-thru at his new job. The same day, Janie invites Angela to spend the night at her house. Ricky, who has been alone with Lester at various points in the film to sell him marijuana, is assaulted by his father who suspects him of performing sexual favors for Lester. Ricky decides to leave and finds Janie to ask her to come with him.

While Carolyn is away from home deliberating about how to approach her husband regarding her affair, Lester is working out in the garage. Colonel Fitts confronts Lester in the garage and kisses him, finally revealing his own homosexuality. Lester does not return Colonel Fitts' affection and the Colonel disappears.

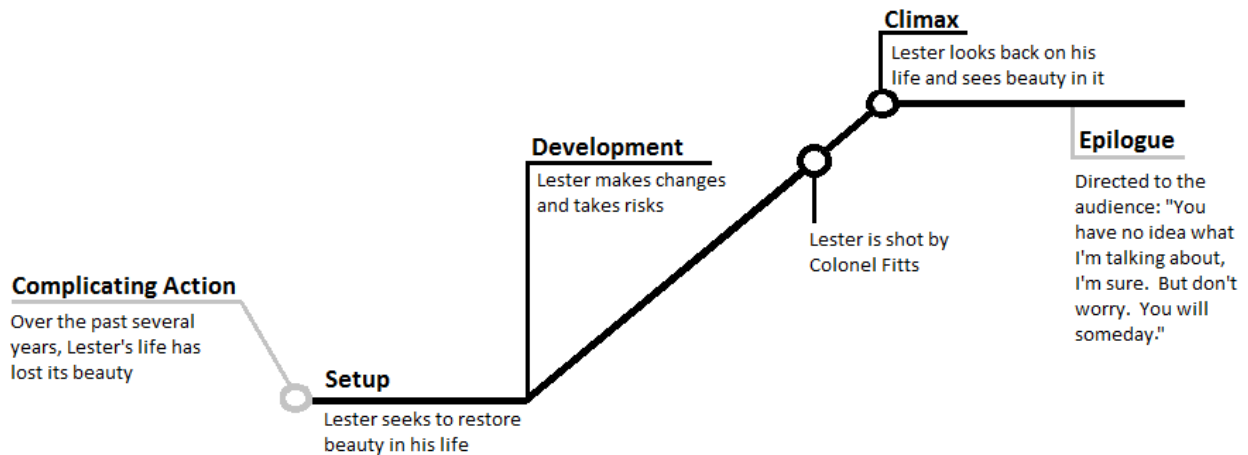
Meanwhile, Janie and Angela get into a fight. Angela leaves Ricky and Janie together in Janie's room and finds Lester alone in the living room. Finally, Lester is free to realize his fantasies. Instead of consummating the sexual tension, however, Lester realizes that Angela is just a child. He makes her a sandwich and they talk for a while. She excuses herself to go to the bathroom.

Alone in the kitchen, Lester looks at a photograph of himself, Carolyn, and Janie and smiles. The tip of a gun enters the frame behind Lester and fires, ending Lester's life. The montage that follows reveals some of Lester's most cherished memories. Interspersed with the montage, the scene of his death replays from the perspective of the other characters. The film ends with Lester's voice describing his gratitude for his life.

The majority of the narrative of *American Beauty* may be seen as the development of a larger plot structure implied to extend outside the film. Lester's goal is to find beauty in his life again. There is not a complicating action that sets him in this position, but rather, the film begins with the understanding that his life already lacks beauty. This is apparent in Lester's opening voiceover:

My name is Lester Burnham. This is my neighborhood. This is my street. This... is my life. I'm forty-two years old. In less than a year, I'll be dead. Of course, I don't know that yet. And in a way, I'm dead already. [...]I have lost something. I'm not exactly sure what it is, but I know I didn't always feel this... sedated. But you know what? It's never too late to get it back. (Lester Burnham, *American Beauty*, 1999)

The complicating action has gradually occurred for years before we enter the narrative of the film. This opening narration also tells us that the plot's climax will likely be tied to Lester's death. Figure 5.1 summarizes this plot structure. In Figure 5.1 *only*, grey lines correspond to plot elements that are implied to occur outside the film.



**Figure 5.1.** Plot structure for *American Beauty* (1999).

It is atypical that the complicating action *precedes* the setup, but the most unusual feature of this plot structure is that it begins and ends outside the film itself. As mentioned in the earlier chapter on analytic methods, not every film narrative contains an epilogue. *American Beauty* does, but it is directed to take place in the lives of the audience. After describing his most salient memories, Lester's final voiceover concludes, "You have no idea what I'm talking about, I'm sure. But don't worry. You will someday." The voiceover overtly breaks the fourth wall and places the epilogue in the hands of the audience.



The most iconic and striking music in the film occurs during the famous plastic bag scene. The scene is preceded by Ricky asking Janie, “Do you want to see the most **beautiful** thing I’ve ever filmed?” (emphasis mine). Thomas Newman’s ambient drones enter in the background and we find ourselves seated behind Ricky and Janie watching footage Ricky captured of a plastic bag dancing in the wind. The bag moves unpredictably, floating over a cement sidewalk scattered with dead leaves. An unadorned redbrick wall serves as a backdrop for the bag’s movements. Contemplative, openly voiced piano triads enter over the ambient drone. Ricky *reflectively* describes the day he filmed the bag and shares *introspective* thoughts about the way he sees beauty in the world. The musical excerpt, entitled “American Beauty” on the soundtrack, is transcribed as Figure 5.2 on the following page. Over the course of the scene, the score repeats the transcribed excerpt with slight variation, such as adding further drone layers and occasionally doubling an ambient tone in the piano.

Turning again to Kofi Agawu’s analytic “bridges,” we consider a stylistically informed generative module. The module presented in Figure 5.3 consists of three harmonies. The first two are open, parallel fifths and the final chord achieves a complete triad through contrary motion. The initial open fifth and wide, three-note voicings are typical of Newman’s style. We find the cell itself appears in full at the beginning of the piece. I will refer to it as the generating cell, G.

Piano

(Ambient drones)

5

(Ambient drones)

10

(Ambient drone...)

**Figure 5.2.** Thomas Newman’s “American Beauty” (transcription mine).

**Figure 5.3.** Generative harmonic cell, G, for “American Beauty.”

I propose that G generates four formal units as marked in Figure 5.4 below. Unit A begins in the fourth measure. Unit B begins in the sixth measure. Unit C begins in the eighth measure. Unit D begins in the fifth measure and repeats.

The musical score is presented in piano and consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 1-4) shows a piano introduction with 'Ambient drones' in the right hand. Unit A is marked from measure 4 to the end of the system. The second system (measures 5-8) begins with measure 5. Unit B is marked from measure 6 to 7, Unit C from measure 8 to 8, and 'Ambient drones' are indicated in the right hand from measure 8 to 8. The third system (measures 10-13) begins with measure 10. Unit D is marked from measure 10 to 11 and again from measure 12 to 13. The score features various time signatures including 4/4, 5/4, 6/4, 3/4, and 2/4, and includes notes with accents and slurs.

**Figure 5.4.** Formal units in “American Beauty.”

We will proceed by tracing the bridges from the generating cell, G, to the four formal units, beginning with Unit A (Figure 5.5 on the following page).

The image displays five levels of musical development, labeled G), 1), 2), 3), and 4), arranged vertically. Each level consists of a single melodic staff and a piano accompaniment of two staves. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. Level G) shows a generating cell with a melodic line of two notes and a harmonic accompaniment of two chords. Level 1) extends the duration of the final chord. Level 2) maintains the rhythmic extension but substitutes a return to the initial C-G-G dyad. Level 3) revoices this harmony on the downbeat of measure 2. Level 4) inserts the F-C-F dyad, supporting neighbor motion in the outer voices.

**Figure 5.5.** “Bridges” from G to Unit A.

From the generating cell, G, we first extend the duration of the final chord. This level appears in the score immediately preceding the final version of Unit A and seems a plausible precursor. In level two, we maintain the rhythmic extension of level one with slight truncation and substitute a return to the initial C-G-G dyad instead of lingering on the final harmony. At the third level, we revoice this harmony on the downbeat of measure 2 in favor of contrary motion between the outer voices. We then insert the F-C-F dyad, supporting neighbor motion in

the melody that elaborates the first chord of the generating harmonic cell. As shown in the score transcription, the final level delays the entry of the left hand and re-meters Unit A.

The musical score consists of four systems. The first system is labeled 'G)' and shows a treble staff with a chordal melody and a bass staff with a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system is labeled '1)' and shows a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a more complex accompaniment. The third system is labeled '2)' and shows a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a complex accompaniment. The fourth system is labeled '3)' and shows a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a complex accompaniment, including a fermata and a change in meter to 3/4.

**Figure 5.6.** “Bridges” from G to Unit B.

In Figure 5.6. above, the first level of the bridge to Unit B alters the generating cell rhythmically by shifting the half note duration of the initial C-G-G dyad to the final F-C-A harmony. Level two discards inner voices and adds anacrusis neighbor tones that approach the downbeat in contrary motion. The third level extends the anacrusis gesture by two beats. This is

done through linear, step-wise motion in the bass and contrary motion in the melody that traces the generating cell in reverse. At this level, we restore and sustain an inner voice on G and ornament the melody. The final level shows Unit B as metered in the transcription.

**Figure 5.7.** “Bridges” from G to Unit C.

Unit C (Figure 5.7) departs from the generating cell by truncating the duration of the first dyad. Level two adds a return to the C-G-G dyad sustained over four beats. The third level substitutes a non-harmonic tone as the second pitch of the melody to achieve temporary contrary motion with the bass. The second measure abandons its inner voices at this level. As notated in

the transcribed score, the final level is altered metrically and adds an undulating electronic drone as an inner voice.

The musical score for Figure 5.8 is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of five systems. The first system, labeled 'G)', shows a single treble clef staff with a chord. The second system, labeled '1)', shows two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a melodic line and a bass line. The third system, labeled '2)', shows two staves with a melodic line and a bass line. The fourth system, labeled '3)', shows two staves with a melodic line and a bass line. The fifth system shows two staves with a melodic line and a bass line, with a change in time signature from 4/4 to 3/4 in the second measure.

**Figure 5.8.** “Bridges” from G to Unit D.

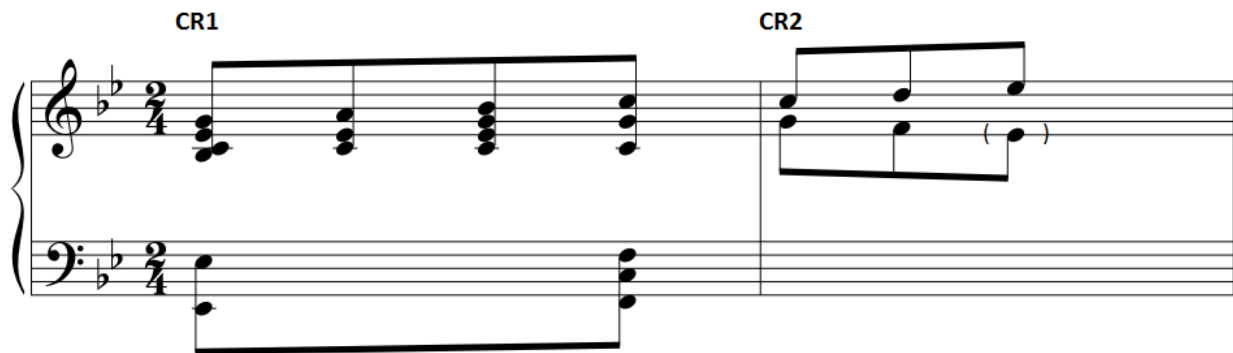
In Figure 5.8, the first level of the bridge between the generating cell and Unit D displaces the cell metrically and extends the rhythmic duration of the final C-F-A harmony. Level two shifts the bass voices a quarter note earlier while maintaining the measures’ rhythmic

structure. The additional melodic B $\flat$  mirrors beat four on the down beat. Level three restores and sustains an inner voice and ornaments the melody. The final level shows Unit D embellished by an electronic drone and metered as it appears in the transcribed score.

Over the course of the plastic bag scene, the units take on the following formal organization:

**G A B C D D | A B C D D | CR1 G A CR2 D D | A B C D D**

That is, the generating cell, G, begins the piece followed sequentially by Units A, B, C, and twice D. The scheme then repeats with some ambient additive layers. On the third repetition, I have added the labels *CR1* and *CR2* to indicate two sections of music that interrupt the scheme. Both connect harmonically with the material that surrounds them and both ascend. “CR” abbreviates “connecting rise,” which describes that function. A reduction of the two connecting rises appears as Figure 5.9 below:



**Figure 5.9.** Reduction of “connecting rises” (CRs 1 and 2) in “American Beauty.”

The path from CR 1 through CR 2 glances in the direction of Eb. Eb does not replace the tonic, but at these two moments is emphasized through linear motion. If we consider a moment of centricity on Eb, then the effect of these expansive rising lines leans towards Eb Lydian,



containing #4 (A-natural). In Thomas Newman’s harmonic language, #4 is often associated with a notion of something “heavenly.”<sup>111</sup>

This prompts us to consider the narrative content of Ricky’s voiceover. Ricky begins to describe his experience the day he recorded the bag. The text that occurs over the connecting rises is bolded:

It was one of those days when it's a minute away from snowing. And there's this electricity in the air, you can almost hear it, right? And this bag was just... dancing with me. Like a little kid begging me to play with it. For fifteen minutes. That's the day I realized that there was this entire life behind things, and this incredibly benevolent force that wanted me to know there was no reason to be afraid. Ever.

**Video's a poor excuse, I know. But it helps me remember...** I need to remember...

Sometimes there's so much **beauty in the world I feel like I can't take it...** and my heart is going to cave in. (Ricky Fitts, *American Beauty*, 1999)

The CRs occur *in response* to Ricky’s description of an “entire life behind things” and an “incredibly benevolent force.” Newman’s cosmic emphasis of Lydian perhaps responds to Ricky’s recollection of the transcendent encounter at the same time that we as listeners respond. The CRs, however, also bring us into the present moment. Ricky’s narration moves from describing a past event (“[...]there **was** no reason to be afraid. Ever.”) to the present (“[...] it **helps** me remember.”). Ricky’s isolation of the word “ever” emphasizes the shift in tense by implying “all times,” not just the past, present, or future. This implication transcends time. When the CR returns (as CR2), it underscores words that describe beauty *beyond* measure. The CRs, therefore, emphasize transcendence in the voiceover narration. The fuller “American Beauty” cue reappears to underscore transcendent beauty elsewhere in the film, but before we examine those moments, let’s first examine the audiovisual organization of the plastic bag scene.

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<sup>111</sup> Thomas Newman, interview by Under the Maintitles (2011).

Newman's "American Beauty" bears many of the same qualities of the image on Ricky's screen. The bag twirls unpredictably. Likewise, the metric organization of "American Beauty" shifts between 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4 meters without adhering to a particular pattern. The playful ornamentations of the melody resemble the occasional flicker in the bag's movement. Although these parallel relationships between the music and the image exist, they are not synchronized. The melody's flickering grace notes do not align with the flickers of the bag. The meter changes do not correspond to the shifting phrases of the bag's movement. Newman's music, along with Ricky, Janie, and the audience, observes the plastic bag from a separate time and place. This anempathetic audiovisual organization attends to the bag and, perhaps, even elevates it in our frame of perception. It allows us to *reflect* with the characters on the screen.

"American Beauty" appears for the second time soon after the plastic bag scene in another intimate moment between Ricky and Janie. This moment is set into relief by an argument Janie has with her mother. The argument ends with her mother hitting her across the face and storming out. Janie examines her face in the mirror then turns to look out her window. She finds Ricky with his camera, waiting for her at his own window and waves. Prefaced by ambient drones, Newman's "American Beauty" enters the scene. Earlier in the film, we see Janie researching breast augmentation surgery and learn that she is disappointed in her body. In this moment with Ricky, however, she abandons her fears. As Janie removes her shirt and bra, she transcends her judgement of her body. The music anempathetically suspends time as Ricky and Janie watch one another. Suddenly, Ricky's father enters the frame and assaults him violently, sending the video camera flying. "American Beauty" ends. For a moment, both Ricky and Janie transcended the abusive reality of their lives by sharing a moment of beauty with each other.

This music's third and final appearance is in the film's climax. In *American Beauty*, as in *Little Women*, the climax is prefaced with an event that throws the achievement of the goal into crisis. This event is Lester's death, which ends the possibility that he may continue to restore beauty in his life. Only moments before he is shot, we see him holding a photograph of his family and smiling. While this leads us to believe that he has found beauty in his life again, we cannot yet be sure. I argue that the climax, which ultimately confirms that Lester has achieved his goal, occurs in the sequence that follows his death.

Having heard the gunshot that took Lester's life, Janie and Ricky descend the stairs cautiously. The ambient drones of "American Beauty" enter the stairway with them.<sup>112</sup> They push the kitchen door open to see blood pouring off the kitchen table. Janie stops, whispers, "Oh God," and leans against the doorway. As Ricky continues into the room, we hear the chords of the generating cell, G, in the piano. Ricky turns to look at Lester. Blood runs over Lester's forehead and his eyes are motionless, but a slight smile is frozen on his face. Ricky sinks to the level of the table and tilts his head to look into Lester's eyes. Lester's smile comes to life on Ricky's face. This is the moment, witnessed by the transcendent chords of "American Beauty" and confirmed through the character of Ricky Fitts, the seer of beauty, that we know Lester succeeded. "Wow," Ricky breathes in awe.

An earlier conversation between Ricky and Janie also supports the reading of this moment as the climax. The conversation occurs during a scene in which Ricky and Janie are walking home together and encounter a funeral procession. "Have you ever known anybody who died?" Ricky asks her. Janie says she hasn't and Ricky reveals the same, but then he continues:

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<sup>112</sup> The soundtrack title for this cue is "Any Other Name."

RICKY: [...] I did see this homeless woman who froze to death once. Just lying there on the sidewalk. She looked really sad. I got that homeless woman on video.

JANIE: Why would you film that?

RICKY: Because it was amazing.

JANIE: What was amazing about it?

RICKY: When you see something like that, it's like God is looking right at you, just for a second. And if you're careful, you can look right back.

JANIE: And what do you see?

RICKY: Beauty.

*(American Beauty, 1999)*

When Ricky looks into Lester's eyes at the climax, we witness just this moment – transcendent beauty looking back.

As Lester's closing voiceover begins, the music shifts to an ostinato pattern. Hauntingly, the ostinato dances between C Dorian and Eb Lydian. Over the course of Lester's voiceover, the music returns to "American Beauty" and then ends with the ostinato pattern. I have transcribed the second instance of the ostinato as Figure 5.10 on the following page. The first measure begins with an Eb major triad. The second measure carries the melody through the raised fourth (A-natural), sustained over a C. The third measure places the Lydian tritone on the down-beat. The fourth measure recasts this interval over a C. In effect, the harmony seems to oscillate each measure from Eb Lydian to C Dorian. The fourth bar of every phrase blurs the two modalities together. When the "descant" piano melody enters in measure five, it seems at first to entertain C Dorian with the salient C of measure 6. But in its approach to the end of the phrase in measures 11 and 12, the melody descends through the first five pitches of Eb Lydian and accents Eb on the downbeat of the final bar. Immediately following on the weak beat, the melody falls to and sustains C, emphasizing Dorian. The eighth note pickups in the lower piano part at the

end of the bar, however, reach again for Eb Lydian. On subsequent repetitions, we hear the electronic drones marked in the transcription. The synth drones notably sustain the lower Eb under a third (G) opening to the raised fourth (A-natural). While there is some modal ambiguity, the influence of Newman’s transcendent Lydian mode is indisputable

**Figure 5.10.** Ostinato from Thomas Newman’s “Any Other Name” (transcription mine).

As in “Brooks Was Here” from *The Shawshank Redemption*, the ostinato seems to be correlated with a shift in tense in the vocal narration. In the voiceover transcription that follows, text underscored by the ostinato is bolded. Text underscored by “American Beauty” is without emphasis. Italicized text describes the content of images in the montage.

**I had always heard your entire life flashes front of your eyes the second before you die. First of all, that one second isn't a second at all; it stretches on forever, like an ocean of time...**

**For me, it was lying on my back at Boy Scout camp, watching falling stars...**

*Black and white: boy lays on grass, looking at sky.*

*Fades to: Ricky and Janie, curled up together in Janie's room, hear the gunshot.*

*Black and white: maple tree branches wave in the wind.*

And yellow leaves, from the maple trees that lined my street...

*Fades to: Angela, checking her makeup in the bathroom, hears the gunshot.*

*Black and white: old woman's hands fiddle with a button on a cardigan.*

Or my grandmother's hands, and the way her skin seemed like paper...

*Fades to: Carolyn, walking up to the house, hears the gunshot.*

*Black and white: sun reflects off of a 1970 Pontiac Firebird.*

And the first time I saw my cousin Tony's brand new Firebird...

*Fades to: Colonel Fitts, covered in blood, returns to his gun room.*

*Black and white: a door swings open to teenage Janie.*

And Janie...

*Black and white: a door swings open to child Janie, dressed in a princess costume.*

And Janie...

**And... Carolyn.**

*Black and white: a younger Carolyn laughs joyfully on a spinning carnival ride.*

*Fade to: Ricky's video of the dancing plastic bag.*

**I guess I could be pretty pissed off about what happened to me... but it's hard to stay mad, when there's so much beauty in the world. Sometimes I feel like I'm seeing it all at once, and it's too much. My heart fills up like a balloon that's about to burst... ..and then I remember to relax, and stop trying to hold on to it, and then it flows through me like rain and I can't feel anything but gratitude for every single moment of my stupid little life...**

**You have no idea what I'm talking about, I'm sure. But don't worry... You will someday.**

(Lester Bernham, *American Beauty*, 1999)

“American Beauty” appears in the middle of this passage, specifically associated with Lester’s most cherished memories and with the beauty of his life in spite of his death. This passage, unlike “Brooks Was Here,” concludes with the Lydian ostinato, ending the film with forward motion. This, too, illustrates transcendence.

The music works in a space correlated, but not synchronized, with the image. This combines with Lester’s out-of-body narration to remove us from the present. It places us, almost omnisciently, in a temporality that observes. We reflect with Lester on his life. We absorb his introspective memories as the image itself cuts between Lester’s memories and his death. Through anempathetic audiovisual organization, Newman’s music joins the image and Lester’s narration in a place that looks back, within, and beyond.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY

Introspective and reflective moments, when characters reexamine their past or themselves, often occur at important plot points. In these moments, music and dialogue separate from the rhythms of the image to create a distinct temporality for the character(s) and the viewer to observe the past and the present in juxtaposition. Thomas Newman's music brings to life some of the most beautiful reflective and introspective moments in cinema. In this thesis I've approached Newman's music from narrative, musical, audiovisual perspectives, acknowledging time as a linear common denominator between the multimedia elements of film.

By studying a film's narrative structure, we are able to see the geometry that supports moments of introspection and reflection. In turn, we gain insight about the role of music in a film's most important scenes. In *Little Women* (1994), we examined the introspective and reflective moments of Beth's death scene and Jo's writing scene. Using narrative analysis, we found that Jo's writing scene serves as the film's climax and that Beth's death scene acts as the pivotal event at the end of the development that accelerates the crisis solved in the climax. The popular hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" and Thomas Newman's title theme, "Little Women," play a central role in both of these scenes and in other structural moments of the plot.

In *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), we studied the introspective and reflective scene of Brooks Hatlen's release from Shawshank Prison. As the music for this scene appears nowhere else in the film, we used narrative analysis to consider the subplot structure of this scene alone. We saw that the A section of Thomas Newman's "Brooks Was Here" underscores the complicating action (Brooks' release from Shawshank), the climax (Brooks' suicide), and



continues into the epilogue of Brooks' subplot. During the development, an ostinato pattern underscores narrative transitions in Brooks' voiceover as the plot accelerates toward the climax.

In *American Beauty* (1999), Thomas Newman's title track appears in two scenes during the development that inform our reading of the climax. In the development, "American Beauty" underscores the introspective and reflective plastic bag scene and a later intimate, transcendent moment between Ricky and Janie. When "American Beauty" returns in the scene of Lester's death, it underscores the climax, revealing Lester's life ended in beauty.

Musical analysis allows us to understand structures of the music itself and, therefore, the way it transforms to serve the narrative. In *Little Women*, we noted that the title theme and "For the Beauty of the Earth" create a sense of dramatic cohesion at important plot points because they share common structural relationships, such as a three-line background structure, the la-do embellishing third, and a salient fifth scale degree. Timbre and style also play important narrative roles in the film. In Beth's death scene, for example, the piano timbre, hymn-style, and the voices of the child March sisters amplify our sense of loss by recasting the title theme in timbres that recall Beth's childhood with her sisters. The climax of *Little Women* uses the timbre of the March sisters' child voices in "For the Beauty of the Earth" to overlap ideals of childhood with the reality of change. Immediately following the hymn, the theme underscores the moment Jo completes her novel. The theme highlights the significance of this moment by appearing in the timbre of the English horn, as it did in first notes of the film.

In *The Shawshank Redemption*, we saw several musical elements forecast the inevitability of the climax. The musical form of Thomas Newman's "Brooks Was Here" places the A section at Brooks' release and at his death. Returning to the A section is a common practice in many musical repertoires, but in "Brooks Was Here," this return is also the sound of a

fate predicted. Using Kofi Agawu's method of generative analysis, we traced a stylistically informed, underlying voice-leading structure through the A section. This allowed us see how specific pitch juxtapositions obscured the mode, paralleling Brooks' lack of stability in the outside world. Generative analysis also prompted us to consider the A section's harmonic centrality on A and revealed a salient D major triad. These two harmonies come into deliberation in the ostinato pattern that underscores transition in Brooks' voiceover and particularly Brooks' decision "not to stay." The unrest of transition is further illustrated in the ostinato's asymmetrical meter.

Thomas Newman's title track for *American Beauty* was marked by unpredictable metric structures and playful melodic embellishments reminiscent of the movements of the dancing plastic bag. Through Kofi Agawu's generative analysis, we traced a generating harmonic cell beneath the music's seemingly irregular surface to expose underlying formal organization. We also discovered multiple emphases on the Lydian mode, which Newman associates with the notion of something "heavenly."<sup>113</sup> The connecting rise gestures of the plastic bag scene momentarily embrace Eb Lydian in correlation with dialogue that describes transcendent beauty. In the film's final scene, an ostinato pattern emphasizes Eb Lydian as it underscores the same footage of the plastic bag. As in "Brooks Was Here," the ostinato accompanies dialogue associated with transition; however, unlike the ostinato of "Brooks Was Here," the Eb Lydian ostinato ends the film with the essence of transition, illustrating transcendence.

Although music has a significant role in the narrative of a film, it is one of many elements that tell the film's story. Considering audiovisual relationships reveals the way music interacts with film's other audio and visual elements. In the introspective and reflective scenes we

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<sup>113</sup> Thomas Newman, interview by Under the Maintitles (2011).

examined, we found that Newman's music suspended our perception of time through anempathetic audiovisual organization. This type of organization allowed us to abandon the present moment to look inward or backward with the characters on screen.

By studying Thomas Newman's music through the interdisciplinary lenses of narrative, musical, and audiovisual analysis, we have discovered some of the ways Newman's music moves through a scene. I am reminded again of the words of Frank Darabont, director of *The Shawshank Redemption*:

Newman sneaks into a scene on little cat feet and weaves his magic in a way that leaves the listener unaware that the spell is being woven at all[.]<sup>114</sup>

We discovered that Newman's "cat feet" enter the introspective and reflective scene with ambient tones. Newman's music is often organized in Stravinskian block structures which he develops through layering and "modal stretching." His music follows conceptual transitions in voiceovers such as change in tense. He may also employ timbre as a subtle, but powerful narrative tool, as in the film *Little Women*. While these insights are meaningful, they are truly just the beginning.

Following Adam Schoenberg's 2010 dissertation, this thesis represents only the second text substantially devoted to the film music of Thomas Newman. In this thesis, I have focused on scenes scored in the composer's most intimate and sensitive style. I have looked closely at how Newman's harmonic language unfolds over the course of a scene. I've examined Newman's music as a dimension of the dramatic narrative and the dramatic narrative as a

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<sup>114</sup> Frank Darabont, CD jacket, *Music by Thomas Newman from the Motion Picture 'The Green Mile'* (Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Records, 1999).

dimension of Newman's music. Considering his music through systematized, interdisciplinary lenses of analysis has shed light on some of its most beautiful facets.

By using interdisciplinary methods of analysis, this thesis has also taken a step in the broader field of film music studies. The unique narrative, musical, and audiovisual approach presented here illustrates the value of integrating analytic methods that are as organically interdisciplinary as film itself. What German musicologist Curt Sachs once claimed of dance may also hold true for the art of film:

The dance is the mother of the arts. Music and poetry exist in time; painting and architecture in space. But the dance lives at once in time and space.<sup>115</sup>

I would argue that film, too, lives in time and space, and that we stand to learn the most about its architecture by studying its elements in concert.

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<sup>115</sup> Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance*, trans. Bessie Schoenberg, New York: New York (W.W. Norton & Compnay, Inc., 1937), 3.

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