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Musical topics in the comic book superhero film genre



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Abstract

The comic book superhero film has become a mainstay amongst Hollywood blockbuster films. However, despite their popularity and financial success, the genre has only recently begun to receive scholarly attention. In particular, there has been little research on what traits distinguish and define the genre, and even less on the music which accompanies the films. This scope of this dissertation can be divided into three parts. First, it is a study of the superhero film genre. I provide a historical overview both of the superhero comic, as well as its filmic adaptations -- delineating the semantic and syntactic traits of the superhero film genre and the ways in which it adheres to and differs from its encompassing genre of the action film. Second, it is a study of the music for superhero films. By examining the musical themes of superhero films over time, I establish what musical parameters are held in common amongst superhero films -- namely, what contributes to the comic book sound. Finally, it is a study of topic theory, and in particular, how topical analysis can function within, and enrich the study of film music. By expanding on topical theories established for the study of classical music, I further systematize the topical study of film music, using superhero films as a model for demonstrating the potential for new musical topics to be uncovered through the topical analysis of film music.

Department

Music

Description

text

Subject

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