

Hans Florian Zimmer

His Life and Music

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Hans Zimmer is considered by many as one of the top film score composers of our day. His music is well known, but not necessarily by name, for that is the problem with film score composing. But the movies he has composed for are well known and are quite popular. Though he received no formal education with music, he said music became his best friend. Hans Zimmer is well liked as a film score composer because of his style of combining orchestra and electronic music together seamlessly.

Early Life

Hans Zimmer was born in Frankfurt, Germany on September 12, 1957, where he lived until 1971 when he moved to London with his family. He attended school at the Hurtwood House School in London, England. He enjoyed playing piano as a child, but only received a few piano lessons because he did not like the formality and discipline of the lessons. Hans Zimmer said in an interview with ZDF (a German television station) in 2006 "My father died when I was just a child, and I escaped somehow into the music and music has been my best friend."
(Zimmer, 2006)

Early Career

Hans Zimmer first started his music career by writing television commercial jingles in the early 1970's. In 1977 Hans Zimmer started playing electric keyboard and synthesizer for the New Wave band The Buggles. He played the synthesizer in their music video "*Video Killed the Radio*

Star"(1979), which made the band kind of famous when it was the first music video played on MTV in 1981. Shortly after Zimmer left The Buggles and joined another New Wave band called Krisma, who featured Zimmer on keyboards in their third album titled "*Cathode Mamma*". He continued to write advertising jingles which included jingles for the company Air-Edel Associates, where he worked with film score composer Stanley Myers. Myers and Zimmer then formed Lillie Yard Studio and collaborated on movie soundtracks such as Jerry Skolimowski's "Moonlighting" or "My Beautiful Laundrette" by Stephen Frears. Zimmer then left Lillie Yard Studios in 1987 to do some composing on his own. Zimmer's first score that he composed on his own was for the mystery thriller "Double Exposure" in 1987. In England he composed the theme song for the British TV show "Going for Gold".

Film Score Composing

Zimmer's film score composing really reached it's turning point in 1988 with his nomination for the Academy Award for Best Original Score for "Rain Man". He continued to write music for several movies, such as the catchy tunes from "Driving Miss Daisy" (1989) and "Days of Thunder" (1990). In 1994 he reached another large milestone in his career as a film score composer when he received a Golden Globe, two Grammys, as well as an Academy Award for best Original Score for "The Lion King" (1994). After finishing the score for "As Good As It Gets" (1997) he accepted the job as DreamWorks head of the music department. While he was working at DreamWorks he composed the scores for "The Prince of Egypt" (1998), "The Road To El Dorado"(2000), and "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron" (2002). Other notable movies that he composed for include: "The Da Vinci Code" (2006), "Batman Begins" (2006), "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" (2006), "Pirates of the Caribbean: At Worlds End" (2007), "The Simpsons Movie" (2007), "The Dark Knight" (2008), "Sherlock Holmes" (2009), "Inception"

(2010), "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides" (2011), "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows" (2011), and "The Dark Knight Rises" (2012) to name a few. In 2003 Zimmer scored his 100th film with the movie "The Last Samurai". Hans Zimmer continues to be sought out by directors because of his successfulness with a wide variety of styles of movies, from action to romantic comedy or mystery to animated. Though there are, and always will be, people who criticize Zimmer's work in different films, overall he never disappoints.

Time-Inception

This song starts off slow with a low and deep reverberation in the background. The slowness and the rhythm reminds one of slow waves on the ocean, or the tide coming in, which is fitting as that is the opening and closing scene to Inception. The slow melancholy style of the song makes one think of a secret sadness. The electric guitar joining in only adds to that image by making it seem not only like a secret sadness, but like walking away from the past with a purpose, not looking back, but not letting go of your burdens. The French Horn's note progression in the background change it from being just a moving forward song, to a song of change. A letting go of your old self, but still remembering who you are. As the music fades the piano into the empty hangover of the song leave a mysterious feeling, an unsettled feeling for things to be finished.

Batman Could be Anybody-The Dark Knight Rises

The intro of the strings start the song off in a melancholy mood. It makes one think of hope slowly fading. The winter slowly growing darker and colder. The empty echo in the background add an air of mysteriousness to the song, causing the listener to wonder if things will ever be resolved, to wonder if the dawn of spring will ever come again.

Discombobulate- Sherlock Holmes

The intro of a slightly out of tune keyboard starts the song off in a mysterious mood. The cellos repetitive line adds a sense of urgency to the song as it progresses. The general air of the produced by the harmonizing of the keyboard and the cello is one of anxious mystery. As the song morphs into a more electrical dissonant type of song the air of mystery is changed into more of a confusion. When the song returns to the original theme it feels more complete as the theme is shared by a more balanced sound of instruments. As it closes it returns to the out of tune keyboard again and closes with that mysterious feeling returned.

One Day- Pirates of the Caribbean: At worlds end

The string intro starts the song off with a touch of sadness. Then as the 1st violins come in it adds a touch of happiness. As the French Horn's come in with the familiar theme of Pirates, the listener immediately notices the difference. The slower rise of the note progression gives a sense of finality. Then as the themes change and the French Horn's play along with male voices singing it adds a note of finality. As if the song is saying that this adventure is over. The violin and French Horn and violin mix adds a sense of farewell to the song. A sad goodbye, but an expected and accepted one. The final crescendo at the end of the songs adds a touch of hope that one day the adventurers could be rejoined, but the quick fade takes some of that possibility away.

Chevaliers de Sangreal- Da Vinci Code

The violin and the French Horn intro start the song off in a mysterious, yet still slightly happy, tone. As the cellos come in and build up a theme of their own, a feeling of finality, of finally being finished comes over the listener. The slight crescendo by the different parts adds a sense of accomplishment to the song, a feeling that a large obstacle has been overcome. The

slight minor change in places though recognizes the losses that were taken while fighting for that accomplishment. The French Horns, violins, a violas combine quite nicely into a well written harmonious sense of peace. Of finally being able to walk away, feeling all the better and stronger for who you became because of what you just accomplished. The sense that what you just did was worth it.

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