

The right piece of music can enhance and sometimes even change a viewer's perception of what is taking place onscreen. Just try to imagine replacing John Williams' "Jaws" theme during the first swimming casualty in the movie with a calm piece of music. In an instant, the mood would change from inherent fear to a tranquil swim in the ocean. Most of the time, music is used to underscore the action on screen, enhance the mood of a scene, foreshadow action that is about to take place or even convey the interior emotion of a character. While composers and filmmakers don't usually want to overpower a film, in many instances the emotional power of the visuals would not be as great were it not for the music.

## Musical Vocabulary

**Tempo:** The speed of the music—Fast (Allegro) Slow (Largo) Moderate (moderato)

**Dynamics:** The volume of the music—Loud (Forte) Quiet (Piano) Gradually getting louder (Crescendo) Gradually getting quieter (Diminuendo).

**Tonality:** The character of a piece of music as determined by the key i.e. Major=Happy sounding. Minor=Sad sounding.

**Instrumentation:** What instruments are being used in the piece.

**Leitmotif:** Theme tune that represents a character, mood, object or emotion.

**Ostinato:** A repeated pattern in music

**Drone:** A long held note in music

**Dissonance:** Clashing notes or chords

**Chromatic Scale:** Scale with 12 pitches right next to each other.

**Power:** The physical strength and force exerted by something or someone. OR The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events

**Holocaust:** The state sponsored mass murder of millions of Jewish people and other persecuted groups under the Nazi regime

## Schindler's List—About the film

*Schindler's List* is a 1993 American epic historical drama film directed and produced by Steven Spielberg and written by Steven Zaillian. It is based on the 1982 novel *Schindler's Ark* by Australian novelist Thomas Keneally. The film follows Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist who saved more than a thousand mostly Polish–Jewish refugees from the Holocaust by employing them in his factories during World War II.

The most successful movie composer ever, John Williams has penned some of the most emotional orchestral music of the past 40 years.

When his long time collaborator, the director Steven Spielberg, showed him *Schindler's List*, the composer felt it would be too challenging to score. He said to Spielberg, 'You need a better composer than I am for this film.' Spielberg responded, 'I know. But they're all dead!'

The great violinist Itzhak Perlman was brought in to play the heart breaking main theme. He was amazed at the authenticity of John Williams's

sound, evoking the traditional Jewish music of central Europe.

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