



# Film Music: A Very Short Introduction

By Kathryn Kalinak

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## Film Music: A Very Short Introduction By Kathryn Kalinak

Film music is as old as cinema itself. Years before synchronized sound became the norm, projected moving images were shown to musical accompaniment, whether performed by a lone piano player or a hundred-piece orchestra. Today film music has become its own industry, indispensable to the marketability of movies around the world.

*Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* is a compact, lucid, and thoroughly engaging overview written by one of the leading authorities on the subject. After opening with a fascinating analysis of the music from a key sequence in Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, Kathryn Kalinak introduces readers not only to important composers and musical styles but also to modern theoretical concepts about how and why film music works. Throughout the book she embraces a global perspective, examining film music in Asia and the Middle East as well as in Europe and the United States. Key collaborations between directors and composers--Alfred Hitchcock and Bernard Herrmann, Akira Kurosawa and Fumio Hayasaka, Federico Fellini and Nino Rota, to name only a few--come under scrutiny, as do the oft-neglected practices of the silent film era. She also explores differences between original film scores and compilation soundtracks that cull music from pre-existing sources.

As Kalinak points out, film music can do many things, from establishing mood and setting to clarifying plot points and creating emotions that are only dimly realized in the images. This book illuminates the many ways it accomplishes those tasks and will have its readers thinking a bit more deeply and critically the next time they sit in a darkened movie theater and music suddenly swells as the action unfolds onscreen.

**About the Series:** Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, **Very Short Introductions** offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam.

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## Film Music: A Very Short Introduction By Kathryn Kalinak Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #377824 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2010-03-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 4.40" h x .50" w x 6.80" l, .30 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 160 pages



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"*Film Music* is hands down the most useful introduction to film music available. Students and general readers alike will appreciate this clear, comprehensive, short book, one of the first to approach music and cinema beyond the frame of western Europe and the U.S. Kalinak's scholarship is dazzling, her prose compelling. Highly recommended for anyone interested in the function, history, theory and practice of music in the movies."--Caryl Flinn, author of *Brass Diva* and *Strains of Utopia*

"Kathryn Kalinak's *Film Music* is an outstanding achievement. It is extremely concise and systematic yet still manages to engage principal issues with a wide range of useful examples, and explain detailed history with worldwide coverage. This is more than a basic primer, however, it is an excellent overview of the field of film music, while being clearly-written and accessible to both students and enthusiasts alike."--Dr. K. J. Donnelly, author of *British Film Music and Film Musicals* and *The Spectre of Sound: Film and Television Music*

"The appropriately titled *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* is to be recommended as a very first introduction to the topic...[The author's] concise depiction, which does not limit itself to the Anglo-American realm, proves to be a successful initiation to the most essential topics of this subject area." - *Song and Popular Culture*

#### About the Author

**Kathryn Kalinak** is Professor of English and Film Studies at Rhode Island College. Her extensive writing on film music includes numerous articles as well as the books *Settling the Score: Music in the Classical Hollywood Film* and *How the West was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford*.

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