

**JONNY GREENWOOD SCORES THE WESTERN:  
MUSIC AS GENERIC SUBVERSION IN PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON'S  
*THERE WILL BE BLOOD***

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

at

Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
June 2017

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## ABSTRACT

Of all film scores composed by popular musicians, Jonny Greenwood's score for Paul Thomas Anderson's western drama, *There Will Be Blood* (2007), is one of the most counter-intuitive and significant. Greenwood draws on his experience as both the guitarist of the monumentally successful rock group, Radiohead, and as a successful contemporary classical composer to create an iconic and genre-defying score. In tracing recurring musical traits through Greenwood's three career streams (Radiohead, classical composition, and film scoring), I outline a musical identity in Greenwood's works that is genre-bending and entirely idiosyncratic. Furthermore, through contextual and musical analysis of Greenwood's pre-existing and original music used in the film, as well as music by other composers including Arvo Pärt and Johannes Brahms, I highlight the indispensable role of the film's score in creating generic subversions in *There Will Be Blood*.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The trajectory of this project over the course of two years has changed significantly. What began as a vague analysis of the film music of Trent Reznor quickly (or painfully slowly) became a detailed study of musical continuity in the works of Jonny Greenwood, and eventually led to a thorough analysis of what has since become my most liked (and most watched) film: *There Will Be Blood*. It may have been my love of Nine Inch Nails that set the wheels in motion, but it was my love for Radiohead that drove me to the finish line. The project was co-supervised by Jennifer Bain who undoubtedly spent far too many hours reining in my ever expanding discussions, but without whose guidance I would still be citing sources, as well as Shannon Brownlee whose constant encouragement and enthusiasm made even the most banal tasks worthwhile. It was nurtured by remaining faculty at the Fountain School of Performing Arts who graciously donated their time and energy in fielding countless questions. Thank you to Radmila, Dalibor, Slavko and Slaven for their unwavering support and life-long guidance, and thank you to Breanne who has provided me endless motivation, encouragement, and love. Now, after two years of thorough research and writing, I am tasked with summarizing my experience and labour in one concluding sentence. Ironically, the only thing that comes to mind are the words of Daniel Plainview forever etched into my mind:

“I’m finished.”

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

“Anybody, even a novice, can identify a Western within a few minutes’ viewing time—and almost everyone knows, or thinks they know, what makes a Western a Western.”<sup>1</sup>

In his 1975 publication, *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music*, contemporary classical composer Irwin Bazelon firmly states, “you don’t have to be a film composer to write film music.”<sup>2</sup> This statement contradicts the notion of the film scorer as a separate entity from, say, a performer or classical composer, and effectively validates the medium of film music regardless of the experiences or background of the composer. Of particular interest in this regard are performers who have not only crossed into the domain of film music, but remain firmly rooted in both fields. Jonny Greenwood—iconic guitarist of alternative rock group Radiohead—is, in a way, the modern day patron saint of these musicians. Greenwood’s career exemplifies a complex, sophisticated, and ongoing relationship not only between the realms of rock stardom and film scoring, but of contemporary classical composition as well. Though his fame is largely attributed to his work with Radiohead, to identify Greenwood as a mere rock guitarist, or any other single sub-category of musician for that matter, is not only inaccurate, but unjust. Greenwood has established himself firmly and successfully in all three streams and continues to remain active and relevant in each of these musical contexts. Despite the disparate nature of these fields, Greenwood’s body of works exhibits a logical—albeit subtle—

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Langford, *Film Genre: Hollywood and Beyond* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 54.

<sup>2</sup> Irwin Bazelon, *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music* (New York: Arco Publishing, Inc., 1975), 8.



progression wherein certain idiosyncrasies of his musical style and identity can be traced from his beginnings in Radiohead, through his initial and continual exploration of the contemporary classical, to culminate in his newest foray: film scoring. My arguments are rooted in the connection between Greenwood's contrasting but parallel careers in order to view these influences through the lens of *genre*. Specifically, I aim to investigate how Greenwood's musical identity and how his capacity for bending and even defying genre have manifested in his most iconic and critically acclaimed film score: Paul Thomas Anderson's *There Will Be Blood* (2007).

While *There Will Be Blood* is Greenwood's second film score (Simon Pummell's 2003 art documentary *Bodysong* being the first), it is undeniably his most significant both musically and critically. Greenwood's score, and the film itself in some ways, strays from the traditional tropes and style of the western genre. Given that Edwin S. Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) is frequently cited as both cinema's first narrative film and its first western, the genre "has a fair claim to be the longest-lived of all film genres, as well as the most prolific."<sup>3</sup> As such, its iconography and symbolism have been reiterated, expanded upon, and codified for over a century. But as with all rules—and the conventions influencing *There Will Be Blood* are no exception—they were meant to be broken. I argue that it is the score itself that is largely responsible for bending (or breaking) genre, perhaps even more so than the atypical narrative subject matter, and is a large reason for the film's overall success. Through his iconic score, Greenwood (very) successfully established himself as a strong and knowledgeable contender in the film scoring industry, particularly due to his unique experiences as a performing musician and composer.

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<sup>3</sup> Langford, *Film Genre*, 54.

While the score itself could very well be analyzed in isolation—a frozen moment in Greenwood’s career—I believe that Greenwood’s musical background serves as the impetus for his genre-bending capacity. Indeed, Greenwood’s entire career has been defined by genre bending. It is the diverse tools that he developed throughout his prior experiences that would ultimately shape his score for *There Will Be Blood*. Musicologist Miguel Mera propounds this very notion in his publication, “Materializing Film Music,” claiming that “it was [Greenwood’s] position as a film-music outsider, coupled with Anderson’s independent filmmaking spirit and unconventional working practices, that allowed an embodied, dirty, and haptic music aesthetic to be created in *There Will Be Blood*.”<sup>4</sup> For Mera, this point is secondary to his greater goal of discussing the haptic nature of the music, so he reduces the entirety of Greenwood’s pre-existing work to a single sentence. Such has been the trend in Greenwood scholarship, identifying “Greenwood the composer” or “film composer” as mutually exclusive, rather than “Greenwood the musician.” I intend to fully dissect Mera’s statement and build upon the notion that Greenwood’s experiences, which originated in Radiohead and were nurtured through his classical compositions, were not only important in the creation of his score, but *crucial*.

In the context of Greenwood’s work in both Radiohead and classical composition, *There Will Be Blood* represents an entirely different compositional medium, and arguably serves as the dependent variable in the audio-visual collaboration. This audio-visual relationship is largely the subject of my analysis as it is, after all, this relationship which emboldens, and indeed *creates*, many generic discrepancies present in *There Will Be*

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<sup>4</sup> Miguel Mera, “Materializing Film Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 158.

*Blood*. My discussion hinges on the premise that Greenwood, as a genre bender by both career and nature, exerts the same genre-bending force onto *There Will Be Blood*, and does so with the deft hand that only one well versed in contrasting musical spheres can achieve. Contextual analysis of the audio-visual relations in the film, along with some musical analysis of works from the three streams of Greenwood's career, form the backbone of my discussion. A musical analysis of *There Will Be Blood*'s score features three distinct categories—(1) pre-existing Greenwood music; (2) Greenwood's original music for the film; and (3) music by composers other than Greenwood. My analysis is strictly musical and, as such, it will not address the remaining components of the film's soundtrack (i.e., dialogue and sound effects). It is not that these aural features play an unimportant role in the film (quite the contrary, actually), but rather that dialogue and sound effects are largely detached from the film's music, and thus, their discussion is wholly removed from the primary figure of my analysis, Jonny Greenwood.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, given the inherently diegetic nature of these aural phenomena, they lack the capacity to challenge the western's tropes as they are bound and dictated by the visual elements present in the film which are largely in line with western iconography. It is the *music*, and music alone, that challenges the film's western elements, and it is Greenwood who deliberately instigates this bending of genre. In order to understand the complexity of Greenwood's music, one must first understand the genre-defying nature of the musician himself.

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<sup>5</sup> For commentary on the dialogue and vocal qualities, as well as some discussion of the film's sound effects, see Mera, "Materializing Film Music," 157 – 172.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A Brief History of Jonny Greenwood

“[His] involvement in the classical tradition further signals that Greenwood is a respected and popular composer in his own right – so it’s tempting to position his solo compositions as a departure from his involvement in Radiohead’s music. But [his] contributions to Radiohead, recently and in the past, paint a more complex picture.”<sup>1</sup>

Radiohead is five-piece alternative (alt) rock band from Oxfordshire, England, formed in 1983. Their classification as an *alt-rock* band is clearly derived from their traditional rock instrumentation (i.e., electric guitars, electric bass, drums, and vocals), while the “alternative” aspect of their genre designation stems from the band’s experimentation with, and expansion of, typical rock tropes such as form, metre, modality, instrumentation, and more. While Radiohead’s instrumentation over the years has expanded beyond that of a standard rock band to include instruments such as drum machines, xylophones, synthesizers, transistor radios, and the ondes martenot, their fundamental lineup remains the same: Thom Yorke on vocals, keyboards, and tertiary guitar; Jonny Greenwood on lead guitar (herein referred to simply as “Greenwood”, not to be confused with his older brother, Colin); Colin Greenwood on bass guitar; Philip Selway on drums; and Ed O’Brien on rhythm guitar.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, producer Nigel Godrich, who has worked with the band as an engineer and producer since 1994, is often

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Woolfrey, “Music (For A Film): Jonny Greenwood of Radiohead Interviewed,” *The Quietus* (February 18, 2014), [www.thequietus.com/articles/14514-jonny-greenwood-radiohead-interview](http://www.thequietus.com/articles/14514-jonny-greenwood-radiohead-interview) (accessed March 14, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> While many of the band members will double or triple roles on other instruments, this simplification illustrates the most frequent roles of each band member.

referred to as the “sixth Radiohead” due to his close relationship with the band.<sup>3</sup> Their journey began when they were five high school students in a band called On A Friday—cheekily named for their standard rehearsal date at the Abingdon School in Oxfordshire. Interestingly enough, the band’s name could very well have been On A *Sunday* until the headmaster of Abingdon School sent the teenagers a bill for using one of the school’s music rooms as a rehearsal space over the weekend!<sup>4</sup> Over the following three decades, the band would mature both musically and personally, eventually becoming the world-touring, stadium-filling headliners that they are today.<sup>5</sup>

After nearly a decade as On A Friday, performing and gaining traction in the local Oxford music scene as well as garnering interest from record labels, the band was finally signed to major record label EMI in 1991. There was, however, one stipulation for the six-record contract, which was to change their name; thus, *Radiohead*—a nod to the *Talking Heads*’ song of the same title—was born.<sup>6</sup> To date, Radiohead has composed and recorded a vast catalogue of music featuring nine studio albums with over 100 individual tracks, more than thirty B sides, numerous live and unplugged concert recordings, and even a rejected title track for the 2015 James Bond feature film, *Spectre*.<sup>7</sup>

Over the band’s vast career, its individual members (beyond Jonny Greenwood) have continually pursued other creative avenues. Yorke, in particular, has received

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<sup>3</sup> Toby Earle, “Nigel Godrich interview: ‘Radiohead and I have a very deep and profound relationship’,” *Evening Standard* (July 6, 2016), [www.standard.co.uk/stayingin/music/nigel-godrich-interview-radiohead-and-i-have-a-very-deep-and-profound-relationship-a3283096.html](http://www.standard.co.uk/stayingin/music/nigel-godrich-interview-radiohead-and-i-have-a-very-deep-and-profound-relationship-a3283096.html) (accessed April 12, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> Alex Ross, “The Searchers: Radiohead’s unquiet revolution,” *The New Yorker* (August 27, 2001), [web.archive.org/web/20070525102645/http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/04/mahler\\_1.html](http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/04/mahler_1.html) (accessed April 20, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Doll, “Radiohead,” *Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 2nd edition (2014), [www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed September 10, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Doll, “Radiohead”.

<sup>7</sup> Larry Bartleet, “Radiohead’s Rejected 007 Theme ‘Spectre’ – And 5 Other Unjustly Shelved Soundtrack Songs,” *New Musical Express* (December 27, 2015), [www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-rejected-007-theme-spectre-and-5-other-unjustly-shelved-soundtrack-songs-12658](http://www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-rejected-007-theme-spectre-and-5-other-unjustly-shelved-soundtrack-songs-12658) (accessed April 12, 2017).

noteworthy acclaim for his solo work and side band, Atoms for Peace, as well as with his handful of film and documentary scores. Most recently, Yorke composed the extraordinarily long 432-hour (!) composition, “Subteranea.” Drummer Phil Selway has also pursued a solo career with two solo albums, *Familial* (2010) and *Weatherhouse* (2014). These albums, despite several similarities to Radiohead’s work, explore more pop-oriented song structures, less dense timbral textures, and reverb-laden atmospheres. Guitarist Ed O’Brien recently announced a solo project, making him the fourth member of Radiohead to pursue substantial individual endeavors and leaving Colin Greenwood as the only band member not to release solo material. This individual divergence from the “compositional, collaborative beast” that is Radiohead is understandable, as any output that the band produces is attributed to all members of the band equally, rather than distributing credit hierarchically.<sup>8</sup>

Given the broad and ever-changing range of experiences each individual member of Radiohead possesses, the collective product of their experiences is often extremely diverse as well. Even certain examples of Radiohead’s repertoire, such as “Let Down” and “Fitter Happier” from the 1997 album *OK Computer*, could be interpreted as coming from two entirely different artists. One can thus ask, if the range of their influences is constantly shifting, what is it specifically that makes a Radiohead song recognizable as a Radiohead song? Is there even a firm set of criteria that defines the Radiohead sound? Firstly, it must be understood that the musical identity of Radiohead is the *collective* identity of its members, rather than the product of a single visionary. Each member brings their own ever-evolving influences and ideas to the table and it is the confluence of these

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<sup>8</sup> Louis Pattison, “King of Limbs [February 18, 2011],” *UNCUT Ultimate Music Guide: Radiohead* (2015), 108.

ideas that creates Radiohead's aural signature. As a result, it is rather difficult to pinpoint a uniform musical identity for Radiohead. The vast difference between the heavily pop-influenced "Stop Whispering" (*Pablo Honey*, 1995), and the more ambient, dense, and cacophonous "Ful Stop" (*A Moon Shaped Pool*, 2016), solidifies the key musical features of the band as exploration, adaptation, and evolution.

Conversely, each member's individual artistic endeavors give insight into their personal musical influences in isolation from that of the band. In analyzing the enormous volume and generic breadth of Greenwood's output—both within and outside the context of Radiohead—including, but not limited to, free jazz, graphic notation, and Penderecki-inspired sound walls, we find a musical language unique to Greenwood as an individual. As a child, Greenwood recalls finding music in the most mundane of situations such as the rhythm of a car engine on the highway.<sup>9</sup> His exposure to a wide scope of music is largely a result of the Abingdon School's music teacher, Terence Gilmore-James, who "immersed his students in twentiethcentury [sic] classical music, avant-garde music of the postwar era, classic jazz and film scores."<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, his early musical involvement in *On A Friday* exposed him to the harmonica and recorder, before he picked up a guitar, strictly as a means to fulfill the instrumental needs of the band.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, some of his earliest serious music study began on the viola, which undoubtedly ignited to his passion for stringed instrument composition later in his career. In 1991, the band's record contract with EMI, helped launch them into stardom, but it

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<sup>9</sup> Jason Anderson, "Jonny Greenwood: Solo Albums [n.d.]," *UNCUT Ultimate Music Guide: Radiohead* (2015), 100.

<sup>10</sup> Ross, "The Searchers".

<sup>11</sup> Today, Greenwood is number forty-eight in Rolling Stone's 2015 list of the "100 Greatest Guitarists," ousting even the iconic Delta blues pioneer Muddy Waters by one position. Rolling Stone, "100 Greatest Guitarists," *Rolling Stone* (December 18, 2015), [www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/100-greatest-guitarists-20111123](http://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/100-greatest-guitarists-20111123) (accessed April 2, 2017).

also put an abrupt stop to Greenwood's university studies at the Oxford and Brookes University where he was studying music and psychology.<sup>12</sup> This academic interest in two different fields of study mimics Greenwood's investment in two drastically different musical genres. Furthermore, his interest in psychology relates to his curiosity regarding the psychological effects music may have on the listener, particularly pertinent given his strong liking and emulation of the physically unsettling music of Krzysztof Penderecki.<sup>13</sup> In 2007—the same year Radiohead released their acclaimed album, *In Rainbows*, as well as the year Greenwood scored *There Will Be Blood*—he curated a compilation album titled *Jonny Greenwood is the Controller* for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of reggae label Trojan Records. The album itself is a collection of reggae tracks released by the label and compiled by Greenwood which, by virtue of the collaboration, displays yet another genre of music with which he is well acquainted. *In Rainbows* itself was even a divergence in the Radiohead canon and was described as “a very different kind of Radiohead record,” one that was stripped of distorted guitars and made way for more transparent and accessible Radiohead.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, during this creative outburst Greenwood still maintained an appreciation of, and a keen interest in, the music of Debussy, Messiaen, and Ligeti, and continued to hold the music of Pendercki in particularly high regard.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, “Jonny Greenwood: Solo Albums,” 100.

<sup>13</sup> Penderecki and Greenwood have established a relationship of mutual respect and friendship. The two composers were featured on a joint album in 2012 which included Greenwood's *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* and Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. Aukso Orchestra, *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima, Popcorn Superhet Receiver, Polymorphia, 48 Responses to Polymorphia*, conducted by Marek Mos (Nonesuch, 2012).

<sup>14</sup> Mark Pytlik, “Reviews: Radiohead: In Rainbows,” *Pitchfork* (October 15, 2007), [www.pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/10785-in-rainbows](http://www.pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/10785-in-rainbows) (accessed April 10, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Ben Dyer, “Nonesuch Journal Exclusive: An Interview with Jonny Greenwood,” *Nonesuch Journal* (December 6, 2007), [www.nonesuch.com/journal/nonesuch-journal-exclusive-an-interview-with-jonny-greenwood](http://www.nonesuch.com/journal/nonesuch-journal-exclusive-an-interview-with-jonny-greenwood) (accessed December 9, 2016).



Above all, Greenwood's diverse listening habits and influences played an important role in his development as both a classical and film composer.

Despite this consistent eclecticism throughout his career, the year 2004 marks an important shift. At this time, Greenwood began to independently diverge from the guitar-heavy and electronic-laden ambiences of Radiohead, and explore the acoustic nuances of contemporary classical music in a meaningful way. Following the release of Radiohead's sixth studio album, *Hail to the Thief* (2003), Greenwood composed his first concert work, *Smear*, for two ondes martenot and a chamber group of nine players, in 2004. Having fulfilled his contract with EMI, and with touring for *Hail to the Thief* complete, Greenwood began delving into a genre of music which had interested him since first experiencing a Penderecki concert in the early 1990s: contemporary classical music.<sup>16</sup> This is not to say that Greenwood wrote music solely for Radiohead until this point, but now he had a certain flexibility in his schedule, without looming pressure from the label to constantly write new music and tour relentlessly. Now with time to fully explore composition, Greenwood's success as a classical composer was swift. In 2005, during his artistic residency at the BBC—an achievement which unto itself attests to Greenwood's total immersion in the classical sphere—he composed his most notable work, *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, for string orchestra.<sup>17</sup> *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* was the key to a plethora of opportunities that arose for Greenwood in the film scoring industry. The most notable of these is an enduring professional relationship with acclaimed director Paul

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<sup>16</sup> Alex Pappademas, "Radiohead's Runaway Guitarist," *The New York Times* (March 9, 2012), [www.nytimes.com/2012/03/11/magazine/jonny-greenwood-radioheads-runaway-guitarist.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/11/magazine/jonny-greenwood-radioheads-runaway-guitarist.html) (accessed March 28, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Greenwood's acceptance to the artist residency program at the BBC certainly warrants its own discussion. His role in Radiohead undoubtedly played a significant part in his acceptance as his adoption by the BBC was prompt, given that his earnest public exploration of the classical style began just a year prior.

Thomas Anderson. *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* formed the basis of Greenwood's score for Anderson's 2007 western frontier-drama, *There Will Be Blood*.

Greenwood has composed a number of other film scores in his career including Paul Thomas Anderson's *The Master* (2012), and *Inherent Vice* (2014), as well as Tran Anh Hung's *Norwegian Wood* (2010), and Lynne Ramsay's *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (2011). In typical Greenwood fashion, each of these film scores features a unique scoring approach to the point that the audience, regardless of familiarity, experience or knowledge, would experience difficulty in attributing all of these scores to Greenwood using strictly aural criteria. The fundamental influences that exist between his scores, however, are that of Greenwood's style and experience as a member of Radiohead, and, by extension, his more recent and more individual voice as a contemporary classical composer. Furthermore, Greenwood's three career streams are not so much linear in relation as they are triangular, that is to say, that nuances and idioms from each of these career streams are constantly moving from one field to the other, oftentimes creating recognizable musical features that are inherently "Greenwoodian." It is often the case, however, that various music written by Greenwood can be difficult to attribute to him by sonority and cursory listening alone, attesting to his generic malleability and musical adaptability.

Greenwood's capacity to adapt is undoubtedly a key feature of his musical identity as his compositional output amongst the three streams of his career is astounding in regards to both breadth and quantity. Table 2.1 displays the distribution of Greenwood's work amongst his career streams. Even upon first glance, the overlap and close proximity of most works promotes the idea of influences crossing between genres

YEAR	RADIOHEAD ALBUM	CONCERT WORK	SCORE
1993	Pablo Honey (EMI)		
1995	The Bends (EMI)		
1997	OK Computer (EMI)		
2000	Kid A (EMI)		
2001	Amnesiac (EMI)		
2003	Hail to the Thief (EMI)		Bodysong (Simon Pummel)
2004		Smear Piano for Children	
2005		Arpeggi Popcorn Superhet Receiver	
2007			There Will Be Blood (Paul T. Anderson)
2010		Doghouse	Norwegian Wood (Tran Anh Hung)
2011	King of Limbs (Self-Released)	Suite from Norwegian Wood	We Need to Talk About Kevin (Lynne Ramsay)
2012		Suite from There Will Be Blood 48 Responses to Polymorphia	The Master (Paul T. Anderson)
2014		Microtonal Sketches Water Skip Loop Self-Portrait with Seven Fingers Miniature Loop Fight with Cudgels Setting Up Arrows	Inherent Vice (Paul T. Anderson)
2015		88: Sketch	
2016	A Moon Shaped Pool (Self-Released)		
2017			*Phantom Thread (Paul T. Anderson)

**Table 2.1** An outline of Greenwood’s musical works in his three career streams. *Phantom Thread* is yet to be released at the time of my writing.

Paul Thomas Anderson, Jonny Greenwood & The Western:  
Crossing Generic Boundaries

While Paul Thomas Anderson's critically acclaimed frontier drama, *There Will Be Blood* (2007), represents an early success in Greenwood's film scoring career, Anderson had already established himself as a prominent Hollywood director a decade prior. With his earliest amateur film, *The Dirk Diggler Story*, dating back to 1988, his first major breakthrough in filmmaking came in 1998 with his drama, *Boogie Nights*, based on the Los Angeles pornography industry in the 1960s. Anderson directed several notable films over the subsequent decades, including *Magnolia* (1999), *Punch-Drunk Love* (2002), *The Master* (2012), *Inherent Vice* (2014), and of course, *There Will Be Blood* (2007). His career boasts countless more short films, music videos, television shows, and a documentary, but his feature films remain the most important creations of his career.

Though the Anderson-Greenwood collaboration began in 2007 with *There Will Be Blood*, it has since flourished into an ongoing and almost expected pairing of the two creative minds. Anderson's documentary *Junun* (2015) explores the composition and recording process of an album in Rajasthan, India, and features Greenwood (accompanied by Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich), the Israeli-born composer Shye Ben Tzur, and the Rajasthan Express ensemble. Most recently, Anderson collaborated with Radiohead by directing the music video for "Daydreaming" from the 2016 album, *A Moon Shaped Pool*, as well as directing two live performance videos of the songs "Present Tense" and "The Numbers" from the same album. The collaboration continues,

as Greenwood is the confirmed composer for Anderson's latest film, *Phantom Thread*, scheduled for release in 2017.<sup>18</sup>

As a film director, Anderson has explored a wide array of subject matter, from the intricately woven plotlines of primary characters in the drama *Magnolia* (1999), to the romantic comedy *Punch-Drunk Love* (2002), to the dramatic relationship between an alcoholic seaman and cult leader in *The Master* (2012).<sup>19</sup> Despite ties with other dramatic films in Anderson's past, *There Will Be Blood* marks his only foray into the western genre. As attested by its eight Oscar nominations including Best Motion Picture of the Year and Best Achievement in Directing, Anderson's venture into this foreign genre was undoubtedly successful.<sup>20</sup> Thus, in a way, Anderson's approach as a director is similar to Greenwood's as a musician; each of them explores, adapts, and experiments, moving adeptly between genres. Furthermore, each creator leaves behind a watermark of their own unique creative identity that is subtle, yet tangible. Film scholar Matthew Rodrigues states that "[t]he fascination and vitality of Anderson's filmmaking lies in... moments of risk and disobedience, [and] in continued engagements with the possible and unforeseen."<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, film scholar Michael Slowik notes that "all of [Anderson's] films explore two components of human existence: the isolation one can feel from the rest of the world, and the inherent difficulty – yet potential rewards – of forging

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<sup>18</sup> Sam Sodomsky, "Jonny Greenwood Scoring New Paul Thomas Anderson Film," *Pitchfork* (February 1, 2017), [www.pitchfork.com/news/71289-jonny-greenwood-to-score-new-paul-thomas-anderson-film/](http://www.pitchfork.com/news/71289-jonny-greenwood-to-score-new-paul-thomas-anderson-film/) (accessed February 2, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> Matthew Rodrigues, "Anything Goes: The Erratic Cinema of Paul Thomas Anderson" (MA thesis, Carleton University, 2012), 2.

<sup>20</sup> The film's remaining nominations include: Best Writing, Adapted Screenplay, Best Achievement in Art Direction, Best Achievement in Film Editing, and Best Achievement in Sound Editing. The film *won* two Oscars for Best Achievement in Cinematography and Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role.

<sup>21</sup> Rodrigues, "Anything Goes," 2.

relationships with others.”<sup>22</sup> This observation is particularly true of *There Will Be Blood*, as it plays (rather darkly) on the traditional western trope of “formation... of family and community ties.”<sup>23</sup> But in the well-established codification of the western genre, domesticity is only one of many tropes.

Aside from the stereotypical iconography of cowboys on horseback, revolver pistols, sharp-shooting protagonists, train and bank robberies, confrontations with indigenous populations, and more, the identity of the western lies largely in its interconnection with American identity. Film scholar Steve Neale comments on this interconnection, stating that the very fabric of the western is born not only of “its dress, its decor and its landscape, but also of its generic world—its use of language, its modes of transport, and so on.”<sup>24</sup> Thus the western genre is represented by audio-visuals that are not derived *ex nihilo*, but are rather dictated by *history*, thus creating a genre that is almost instantly identifiable.

When analyzing these types of films, however, one must take into account the sheer historical span of the genre and its vast sub-categorization. Beginning with “cinema’s first Western,” *The Great Train Robbery* (Edwin S. Porter) in 1903, the western has seen countless reiterations for over a century.<sup>25</sup> John Ford’s *Stagecoach* (1939) marks another seminal piece in the genre’s history, as it “revived the genre as a prestige product” after a lull in interest. Later still, the Italian-directed “spaghetti westerns,” best encapsulated in Sergio Leone’s *Dollars Trilogy*, rekindled interest in the

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<sup>22</sup> Michael Slowik, “Isolation and connection: unbounded sound in the films of Paul Thomas Anderson,” *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 13, no. 2 (2015): 150.

<sup>23</sup> Robynn Stilwell, “The Western,” in *Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 216.

<sup>24</sup> Steve Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000), 134.

<sup>25</sup> Rick Altman, *Film/Genre* (London: British Film Institute, 2000), 34.

genre once more. The later introduction of space westerns such as Peter Hyam's *Outland* (1981) marked another significant milestone in the genre. Undoubtedly, the western has seen significant internal change, yet it still remains easily identifiable. This is entirely due to its persisting generic tropes that are recognizable even if dismantled and reassembled in new ways. Lee Clark Mitchell observes: "Each film brought new life to materials that had come to seem hackneyed and inconsequential, revising them into something refreshingly new yet generically recognizable."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps most pertinent of these sub-genres (for the discussion at hand) is the *revisionist* or *anti-western*. This genre arose in the 1960s in response to the frequent segregation of "good and evil" characters or themes most often with white American settlers representing the "good" while the indigenous populations represent the "bad." The genre blurs the lines between good and bad and challenges the notion of American settlers' actions being morally justified. Thus, anti-westerns will typically feature a protagonist with questionable moral values.

While *There Will Be Blood* does not concentrate on the representation of indigenous populations, it undoubtedly features a protagonist whose moral bankruptcy is effectively his central characteristic. *There Will Be Blood*, in its own way, references the tropes of the traditional western in its historical setting, but clearly distances itself from them narratively. It is an "A" type western, which, by musicologist Robynn Stilwell's criteria, features the "blending of high production values and weightier narratives with the action and generic tropes" of a B type film.<sup>27</sup> Despite its abandonment of stereotypical tropes, *There Will Be Blood* is still instantly recognizable as a western with its frontier setting and its emphasis on landscape. However, the film exhibits a more dark,

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<sup>26</sup> Lee Clark Mitchell, "Dismantling the Western: Film Noir's Defiance of Genre in *No Country for Old Men*," *Genre* 47, no.3 (2014), 335.

<sup>27</sup> Stilwell, "The Western," 219.

dramatic, and, indeed, *disturbing* side of the genre which is emphasized heavily by Greenwood's generically incongruous score.

Before delving into an analysis of *There Will Be Blood*'s score, an understanding of Greenwood's compositional style leading up to the score must be established so as to create a benchmark by which subversive features of the film's score can be effectively gauged. Chapter Two aims to establish this understanding with an analysis of music, as well as overarching and recurring musical traits present in Greenwood's Radiohead style and classical style respectively. Following this analysis, Chapter Three outlines key musical features present in scoring practices for the western genre—both historical and contemporary, while Chapter Four analyzes the generically subversive traits of the film's score.



## CHAPTER THREE

### Greenwood as Performer & Composer

“Composers are influenced by all the important music in their lives – and I suppose that since radio started playing popular music, that's as likely to be The Beatles or Aphex Twin as it is to be Verdi or Ravel.” – Jonny Greenwood<sup>1</sup>

Given the perceived polarity between Greenwood's music in Radiohead and the music in his score for *There Will Be Blood*, it would seem that drawing a clear connection between the two is impossible. This connection, however, is much more visible when linking the two using Greenwood's *concert music* as an intermediary. Given the diversity of his career, it is necessary to establish an understanding of Greenwood's work with Radiohead, and how that work affects—or does not affect—the compositional method and style of his contemporary classical works. From this foundation, a further connection will be drawn between Greenwood's classical compositions and his film score. Thus, I will briefly outline key features in both Radiohead's and Greenwood's individual history, as well as the musical qualities present in his corpus of works which shaped his compositional language while scoring *There Will Be Blood*.

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Woolfrey, “Music (For A Film): Jonny Greenwood of Radiohead Interviewed,” *The Quietus* (February 18, 2014), [www.thequietus.com/articles/14514-jonny-greenwood-radiohead-interview](http://www.thequietus.com/articles/14514-jonny-greenwood-radiohead-interview) (accessed March 14, 2017).

## Compositional Style in Radiohead

Being a collective of not only extremely skilled musicians, but of closely knit family and friends, Radiohead's cumulative musical product is always attributed—at least in official documentation—to all five band members equally. The compositional credits of each of their albums list either “Radiohead” as the core composer, or list the band members' names individually (e.g., “Radiohead” on *In Rainbows* [2007], and “Colin Greenwood, Ed O'Brien, Jonny Greenwood, Philip Selway & Thom Yorke” on *Amnesiac* [2001]). However, to evenly divide the creative writing process among five members for a band as prolific as Radiohead would be logistically implausible. As with many bands, certain members typically shoulder different responsibilities in the song-writing process. Both Yorke and Greenwood, as lead vocalist and guitarist respectively, occupy prominent roles in the hierarchy of traditional rock band structure. Yorke is typically seen as the face of the band—the creative auteur—and is a, if not *the*, subject of nearly all interviews with the band. If Yorke is interviewed alongside another bandmate, it is most often Greenwood.<sup>2</sup> As is typical of a lead vocalist, Yorke contributes heavily during the song writing process in the form of lyrics, melodies, harmonies, chord progressions, and more.<sup>3</sup> While his gloomy lyrics and mumbling vocals are a key component of Radiohead's signature sound, Greenwood's influence on the music can be

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<sup>2</sup> Most recently, Yorke and Greenwood were featured in two live-performance music videos directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. The videos feature “Jonny, Thom & a CR78” performing live, stripped down versions of the songs “Present Tense” and “The Numbers” from their most recent album, *A Moon Shaped Pool* (2016). By situating the two in an intimate live performance setting in which the usual complexity that is a Radiohead song is reduced to two guitars, one voice, and a dated drum machine, Anderson frames the performers as the two fundamental pillars of the band. Interestingly enough, the CR78—a vintage and outdated “rhythm machine” launched in 1978—is credited in the title along with Yorke and Greenwood implying that it—or perhaps more likely the umbrella concept of *technology*—is equally as authoritative.

<sup>3</sup> Jason Anderson, “Jonny Greenwood: Solo Albums [n.d.],” *UNCUT Ultimate Music Guide: Radiohead* (2015), 100.

heard in the more instrumental contexts.<sup>4</sup> Greenwood has humbly commented on his own song-writing abilities, stating that “[a]side from a few guitar chord sequences, I can’t really write songs.”<sup>5</sup> Despite this self-criticism, it is these very chord progressions, among other features, that form part of Greenwood’s musical stamp on Radiohead’s collective sound.

Radiohead’s classification as an alternative rock band (as opposed to the traditional, mainstream rock band) is indicative of their unique treatment of standard rock idioms. The “alternative” qualifier is best exemplified by their complication of musical features typical to the rock genre, including, but not limited, to: duple time signatures, chord progressions heavily focused on I and IV, largely pentatonic or modal melodies leaning heavily on the flattened seventh scale degree, power chords—that is, chords comprised of only a root, a fifth, and an octave above the root—played on (distorted) guitar, and verse-chorus song structures. While a considerable portion of their catalogue is grounded in these standard rock idioms, there is no shortage of outlying material.<sup>6</sup>

In Radiohead’s catalogue, *metre* is one of the most commonly altered musical elements. While many songs are in the traditional duple meter of 4/4, a significant portion deviates from the norm with more atypical time signatures, including 5/4 time in “15-step” (*King of Limbs*, 2011), or a tricky 10/4 in the case of “Everything In Its Right

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<sup>4</sup> The issue that arises with the attribution of elements and principles in the context of a musical collective is that true authorship of a particular feature often remains speculation. Thus, it should be noted that in my analysis, features that can be found in Radiohead’s music can be attributed to Greenwood through authorship *or* exposure to the elements in question. Greenwood is undoubtedly musical enough to possess the capacity to understand and implement all elements found in Radiohead’s music by virtue of having been exposed to them for decades.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, “Jonny Greenwood: Solo Albums,” 100.

<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that Radiohead were by no means the only band to push the boundaries of rock ‘n’ roll and rock-influenced genres such as hard rock, punk-rock, and grunge. Other notable alternative bands established in the 1990s include Velvet Underground, R.E.M., The Pixies, and Soundgarden (among others) all experimented with musical elements in varying capacities while maintaining connections to previously established rock idioms (e.g., four piece bands, distorted guitars, and heavy reliance on the flattened seventh scale degree).

Place” (*Kid A*, 2000) and “Go To Sleep (Little Man Being Erased)” (*Hail to the Thief*, 2003). Even songs such as *Bones* dating back to Radiohead’s second album, *The Bends* (1995), combine metres of 6/4 and 4/4 time. However, no song has warranted as much debate as that of the metrically ambiguous “Pyramid Song” from the 2001 album, *Amnesiac*. From its opening chord sequence to the introduction of the drums in the second verse, the time signature of “Pyramid Song” has represented an enigma to the Radiohead’s fan base, critics, and scholars alike. While one could argue that the song is simply in 4/4 time with extensive syncopation, there are a multitude of contrasting interpretations that constitute another paper in and of itself. Musicologist Nathan Hesselink points out that the ambiguousness of the song’s time signature is “a tacit agreement between Radiohead and its serious fans that ambiguity would form a central pillar on which they would build their collective and ongoing working relationship.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, the complexity of certain elements in Radiohead’s music is, in fact, so nuanced that there is sometimes no clear consensus on even the most fundamental of musical principles.

In addition to metre, harmony serves as a frequent site of experimentation for the band. Beyond their use of extended triadic harmonies, suspended chords, chordal additions, and quartal chords, Radiohead’s treatment of harmony is unique in the context of sequential chord progressions. The most identifiable of Radiohead’s chord progressions resides in their hit single, “Creep,” from their debut album, *Pablo Honey* (1993). “Creep” peaked at #34 on the US Billboard Top 100 charts and has since reached iconic status as the band’s most well-known single. Ironically, Yorke and Greenwood

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<sup>7</sup> Nathan D. Hesselink, “Radiohead’s ‘Pyramid Song’: Ambiguity, Rhythm and Participation,” *Music Theory Online* 19, no.1 (2013), 4. doi: 10.1017/S0261143013000536

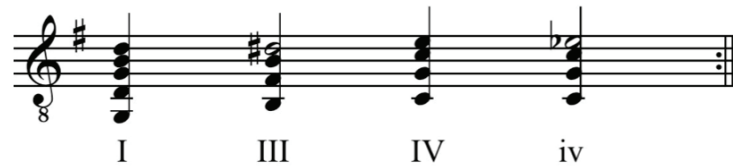
both harbour a particular distaste for the song's self-deprecating and whining tone.<sup>8</sup> The chord progression follows a recurring I—III—IV—iv pattern, which, in the key of G major, implies that both the III and iv chords contain pitches extraneous to the G major scale (D♯ in the III chord and E♭ in the iv chord as seen in Figure 3.1). These two tones are enharmonically equivalent and function as chromatic passing tones that create a perpetual movement of scale degrees 5—♯5—6—♭6—5 repeating. The origin of this unique harmonic progression stems from one of Yorke's favourite techniques: pivot tones. Pivot tones, in the context of Radiohead, are understood as a movement whereby a chord tone of one chord can be used to "pivot" to another chord. The two chords must contain at least one identical pitch to pivot on but the resulting quality of the second chord need not subscribe to the diatonic scale (i.e., G major and B major both share B as a common tone, yet the D♯ in the B major triad is not derived from a G major scale). Yorke jokes about his frequent use of pivot tones in an interview with *The New York Times* stating "[y]eah, [using pivot tones] is my only trick, I've got one trick and that's it and I'm really going to have to learn a new one."<sup>9</sup> By virtue of the band's collective nature, as well as Greenwood's tendency to write music using a series of chord progressions, this technique exceeds the confines of Yorke's psyche and influences the harmonic language of the rest of the band members. It is worth noting, however, that "Creep's" next most iconic feature—the overly-distorted, overly-loud, and overly-prominent guitar chords strummed prior to the chorus—is undoubtedly an imprint made on the song by Greenwood, who

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<sup>8</sup> Danny Wright, "Greatest hates: the bands who can't stand their most famous songs," *The Guardian* (June 23, 2014), [www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2014/jun/23/bands-hate-songs-led-zepelin-stairway-heaven-radiohead-creep](http://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2014/jun/23/bands-hate-songs-led-zepelin-stairway-heaven-radiohead-creep) (accessed March 4, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Alex Pappademas, "Radiohead's Runaway Guitarist," *The New York Times* (March 9, 2012), [www.nytimes.com/2012/03/11/magazine/jonny-greenwood-radioheads-runaway-guitarist.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/11/magazine/jonny-greenwood-radioheads-runaway-guitarist.html) (accessed March 28, 2017).

sought to sabotage the recording out of a severe distaste for the song itself. Regardless of the (positive) result of this sabotage, the role of harmony in “Creep” exhibits the very generic boundary pushing that has come to be expected from the band.

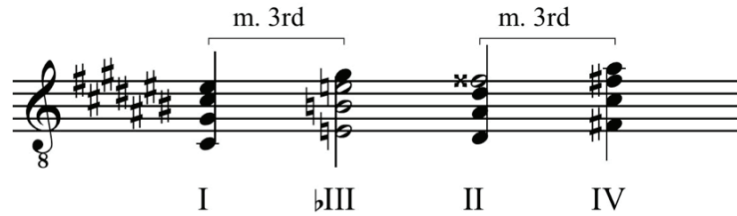


**Figure 3.1** Chord progression and voicing of Greenwood’s lead guitar part in “Creep” with non-diatonic passing tones displayed as half-notes.

Radiohead’s harmonic approach to song writing can further be exemplified in another hit single, “Just” (*The Bends*, 1995). While “Just” does not match “Creep” in popularity, it dwarfs it in musical complexity. As stated in several interviews, the song served primarily as a musical battle of the wits between Yorke and Greenwood, who attempted to incorporate as many chords as they could into a single song.<sup>10</sup> As a result, “Just” features one of Radiohead’s most explorative and complex chord progressions. Assuming C# major to be the tonic triad, the introductory chord progression is a I– $\flat$ III–II–IV sequence shown in Figure 3.2. Both the II chord and the  $\flat$ III chord (i.e., half of the chords in the sequence) contain pitches foreign to the home key. While the impetus for “Creep’s” chord progression was the use of pivot tones, the introduction in “Just” relies on what musicologist Chris McDonald refers to as “modal subversion.” That is to say, “changing chords by moving up or down in increments of a third, and usually contradicting an established modality.”<sup>11</sup> The remaining parts of “Just” are chock full of atypical chord progressions, but the introduction is sufficient in illustrating the presence of modal subversion.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, “Jonny Greenwood: Solo Albums,” 101.

<sup>11</sup> Chris McDonald, “Modal Subversions in Alternative Music,” *Popular Music* 19, no. 3 (2000): 357.



**Figure 3.2** Chord progression and voicing of Yorke’s acoustic guitar introduction in “Just” highlighting non-diatonic pitches as half-notes and chordal movement in thirds.

While the chord sequence of “Just” displays a savvy and explorative harmonic language, Greenwood contributes another significant element to the song, this time a melodic one. Similar to the prominent overdriven guitar motive in “Creep,” “Just” follows suit with its own iconic Greenwood guitar riff. Using aggressive tremolo picked octaves, Greenwood outlines a perpetually rising motive over the introductory chord sequence outlining an octatonic scale beginning with a whole step (Figure 3.3). Prior to the guitar solo—and with the help of a pitch-shifting pedal—this motive spans four octaves, “the effect [of which] is...music looming miles above [the listener].”<sup>12</sup> The construction of this octatonic scale is no coincidence, given Greenwood’s admiration of Messiaen, whose “modes of limited transposition” Greenwood was almost certainly aware of. Furthermore, an octatonic scale in the context of rock music is highly unusual and displays a level of musical competency beyond that of most rock groups.



**Figure 3.3** Greenwood’s octatonic lead guitar riff as played prior to the guitar solo in “Just.”

<sup>12</sup> Alex Ross, “The Searchers: Radiohead’s unquiet revolution,” *The New Yorker* (August 27, 2001), [web.archive.org/web/20070525102645/http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/04/mahler\\_1.html](http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/04/mahler_1.html) (accessed April 20, 2017).

Fluctuating and ambiguous chord sequences are, however, just one tool in Radiohead's boundary-pushing toolbox. In fact, the very structure and form of Radiohead's music is subject to deformation from the norm. In John Covach's *Form in Rock Music: A Primer*, he identifies several musical forms present in traditional rock music: the 12-bar blues, AABA, verse-chorus, and the compound form.<sup>13</sup> While the traditional verse-chorus form (with some minor alteration) dominates Radiohead's catalogue, and particularly their singles, such as the aforementioned "Creep" and, with slightly less clarity, "Just", the more complex *compound form* can also be found sprinkled throughout their repertory. Undoubtedly one of Radiohead's most structurally complex songs, "Paranoid Android," from the iconic 1997 album, *OK Computer*, is a prime example of the extent to which Radiohead alters and distorts traditional form, largely a result of their desire to "pack the song with as many disparate parts as possible."<sup>14</sup> Besides its asymmetrical guitar phrasing, and frequent interjections of 7/8 time in a predominantly 4/4 song, "Paranoid Android" features several distinguishable sections. Author James Doheny notes that the song is "more like the ABA model...of the Sonata form of a classical symphony, in that the first 'A' section further contains various nested subsections – real and transformed repetitions, developed bridge passages, etc."<sup>15</sup> While the different sections share aural similarities in terms of instrumentation and timbre, they contain clearly unique motivic material resulting in a track with several "episodes" rather than a more linear, narrative progression.

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<sup>13</sup> John Covach, "Form in Rock Music: A Primer," in *Engaging Music: Essays in Music Analysis*, edited by Deborah Stein (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 65.

<sup>14</sup> James Doheny, *Radiohead: The Stories Behind Every Song* (London: Carlton Books Ltd., 2012), 68.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 68.



As seen in Table 2.1, most of the key elements found in a typical rock form identified by Covach are present in “Paranoid Android” (i.e., verse, chorus, bridge). However, certain additional elements (guitar solo, outro) and peculiarity among the traditional elements can be observed. While the alternation between verse and chorus is to be expected from the verse-chorus form, the interjection of a two-bar instrumental tag in the middle of each verse serves to offset the usual symmetrical four-bar structure of this section.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the bridge consists of two distinct alternating sections identifiable predominantly by their sudden change in time signature from 4/4 in section A to 7/8 (3+3+1) in section B. Finally, an ethereal, down-tempo outro—which is aurally a strong contrast to the asymmetrical, hard-rocking choruses and bridge—comprises the largest uninterrupted section of the song at thirty-one bars in duration. What is peculiar about this outro—besides its staggering length compared to typical rock outros—is its function in the song. Rather than serving the traditional purpose of an outro and concluding the song, it is appended with another iteration of the bridge section before coming to a heavy and abrupt stop. Thus, it is perhaps counter-intuitive to refer to the section as an “outro,” but in the typical popular song format, its purpose would be undeniable. Regardless, this tendency to write in clearly defined, episodic moments is a feature which persists in Greenwood’s later career. Once again, Radiohead takes traditional musical elements found in rock, and finds new and exciting ways to bend and shape them into unique echoes of their original form. Table 3.1 more intuitively illustrates this complex form.

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<sup>16</sup> In popular music, the tag is an appendage of a few measures (usually between one and four) situated at the end of a chorus and prior to the beginning of the next verse. The tag often disrupts the typical four- or eight-bar phrasing pattern found in pop music and adds a moment of mild surprise as the expected pattern is broken. The tag’s function in “Paranoid Android” is typical in terms of length; however, its situation in the middle of a verse is highly unusual.

MEASURE NUMBER	SECTION
1—6	Introduction
7—10, <b>11—12</b> , 13—16	Verse (+ <b>Tag</b> )
17—23	Chorus
24—33, <b>28—29</b> , 30—33	Verse 2 (+ <b>Tag</b> )
34—40	Chorus
41—44, <b>45—48</b>	Bridge (Section A/ <b>Section B</b> )
49—52, <b>53—56</b>	
57—60, <b>61—64</b>	
65—74	Guitar Solo
75—106	Outro
107—110, <b>111—114</b>	Bridge (Section A’/ <b>Section B</b> )
115—118, <b>119—122</b>	

**Table 3.1** Table depicting the complex, compound form found in “Paranoid Android.”

There are many more interesting musical features that permeate Radiohead’s compositional style, including a tendency to explore more through-composed song structures. Songs such as “Fitter Happier” (*OK Computer*, 1997) and the purely instrumental “Treefingers” (*Kid A*, 2000) explore more ambient musical composition, almost akin to that of classical composition. Also from the *Kid A* album, “Motion Picture Soundtrack” features not only atypical rock instrumentation, such as the inclusion of harp, horns, and organ, but includes nearly three minutes of uninterrupted *silence*—evocative of John Cage’s *3’33*”—to conclude the track. Furthermore, the entire *King of Limbs* (2011) album was heavily criticized for its highly unorthodox nature, leaving fans “struggling to make sense of the gap between the greatness of the thing they got (*In Rainbows*, 2007) and the genius of the [album] they thought they might get.”<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Mark Pytlik, “Reviews: Radiohead: In Rainbows,” *Pitchfork* (October 15, 2007), [www.pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/10785-in-rainbows](http://www.pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/10785-in-rainbows) (accessed April 10, 2017).

The examples of Radiohead’s repertory discussed up to this point by no means represent an exhaustive list of Radiohead’s modifications of traditional musical elements, nor do they capture the full scope of the band’s musical experimentation. By analyzing this small sample of Radiohead’s music, however, I have illustrated that, above all, complexity and experimentation serve as the band’s core musical ideals and, in turn, shape their ever-evolving compositional language. Regardless of the exact extent of personal influence Greenwood exerts over Radiohead, it is undeniable that this alternative or even experimental aesthetic is a core tenet of his own musical identity.

### Compositional Style in Concert Music

As a contributing member of Radiohead for approximately twenty years before diverging into the realm of concert-classical music, Greenwood’s musical influences and “isms” established during his time in the band understandably and expectedly followed him into his next musical venture. Indeed, some Radiohead-inspired stylistic tendencies do appear in Greenwood’s concert works, but the new medium fosters adaptation and evolution, as well as implementation of previous idioms. Fundamentally, it is Greenwood’s diverse musical influences and underlying desire for experimentation that are the unifying thread between these two trajectories in his career. Furthermore, it is these very features that *instigated* the new chapter in his career once Radiohead’s contractual obligations to EMI came to a close. Greenwood’s work as a composer features the exploration of new harmonic languages—particularly the use of microtones—as well as experimentation with instrumentation and timbre. These aspects

of his concert works form the bridge between his work with Radiohead and his film scoring career.

But as with any venture into a new genre, a certain level of adaptation is necessary. When asked about the differences between writing rock music and classical music, Greenwood responded by saying “[classical music] can be a much stranger sound-world than drums and guitars – there’s access to microtones and other colours that you can’t recreate with a traditional band line-up.”<sup>18</sup> Greenwood’s classical influences are made blatantly apparent when examining the language of his concert works, which include diatonicism, minimalism, and quarter tone-music with clusters as borrowed from the works of Krzysztof Penderecki. In addition to his ongoing tendency to write works in a harmonically complex chordal fashion, experiment with metre and rhythm, and write in an episodic nature, his influences from classical composers are a hallmark of his compositional style. Indeed, one of Greenwood’s most significant external influences comes from an instrument adored by Oliver Messiaen: the ondes martentot.<sup>19</sup> A cousin to the theremin in tonal capacity, the ondes martenot is an electronic instrument which features a piano keyboard as well as a pull-wire situated beneath the keyboard. The pull wire spans the length of the keyboard and is controlled with a guide ring which the performer uses to move smoothly between pitches while using the visual layout of the keys for pitch reference. The left hand is responsible for pressing a velocity sensitive

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<sup>18</sup> Lucy Jones, “Radiohead’s Jonny Greenwood Q&A – Blending Classical Music with Rock,” *New Music Express* (February 18, 2014), [www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-jonny-greenwood-qa-blending-classical-music-with-rock-771598](http://www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-jonny-greenwood-qa-blending-classical-music-with-rock-771598) (accessed November 15, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> The instrument’s name stems from the French word “ondes” (“waves”), followed by the creator Maurice Martenot’s last name. While capitalization of the “M” in Martenot is frequent, my writing follows Richard Orton and Hugh Davies who use a lowercase “m” instead. Richard Orton and Hugh Davies, “Ondes Martenot [sic],” *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), [www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed May 3, 2017).

button which controls amplitude and attack, allowing the performer to create swelling tones which largely contribute to the instruments airy and almost voice-like quality.

Resonating with Greenwood's genre-defying tendencies, the ondes martenot is, historically speaking, genre-defying as an instrument. Similar to the theremin, the instrument was originally featured in classical music, particularly by composers such as Honegger, Milhaud, and most influentially, Messiaen in his *Turangalila-symphonie* in 1946 and was featured in over 700 concert works by the year 1990.<sup>20</sup> Greenwood's fixation on the ondes martenot is, however, not completely new to his concert work. Although it becomes abundantly clear in his early concert works, such as *Smear* (2004) and *Arpeggi* (2005), in which the instrument takes on a significant role, his experimentation with the instrument dates back years prior to the Radiohead album *Kid A* (2000). From this point onwards, the ondes martenot made recurring appearances in Radiohead's catalogue, including in songs such as "The National Anthem" (*Kid A*, 2000), "Where I End and You Begin. (The Sky is Falling In.)" (*Hail to the Thief*, 2003), "Nude" (*In Rainbows*, 2007), and more. The instrument can be heard most prominently in "How to Disappear Completely (And Never Be Found Again)" (*Kid A*, 2000) where its presence is immediately noticeable as a swooping, ethereal contrast to the percussive strumming of Yorke's acoustic guitar. The use of multi-tracked ondes martenot in the song creates a harmonically rich soundscape of swelling and fluctuating sinusoidal waves, transforming the instrument's primarily melodic function into one of harmony as well. Greenwood's dedication to the instrument is shown in certain live performances of the song in which up to three ondes martenot are simultaneously used by the band to recreate the complex

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<sup>20</sup> Orton and Davies, "Ondes Martenot [sic]".

sonic atmosphere of the studio recording.<sup>21</sup> In the context of a rock band, this heavy recurrence of the ondes martenot is highly unconventional. Greenwood almost single-handedly (re)popularized the instrument and, after years of performing, composing, and generally advocating for the instrument, is now hailed as a “champion” of the ondes martenot.<sup>22</sup>

Removed from the typically ambient context of Radiohead, and isolated from its relationship to a variety of other synthesizers, guitar, drums, and bass, the ondes martenot adopted a different role in Greenwood’s concert music. Greenwood’s first orchestral composition, *Smear* (2004), features two ondes martenot alongside nine other chamber instrumentalists, and thus reflects the importance of the instrument in his early classical career. Greenwood masterfully highlights the particular sonic capabilities of the ondes martenot, whose capacity for unwavering and sustained pitch serves as point of focus and contrast throughout the piece. Greenwood begins the piece by combining two ondes martenot in close microtonal distance, resulting in a battle of beat frequencies that sets the mood for the pieces. He exhibits the full potential of the ondes martenot, using its “pull-wire” ring for sweeping glissandi and for voice-like melodies and its keyboard for more disjunct and rhythmic moments.

While *Smear* may have allowed Greenwood to experiment playfully with the ondes martenot’s potential, his concert work *Arpeggi* (2005) featured it in its most harmonic and rhythmic role yet. *Arpeggi* (2005) is (arguably) one of Greenwood’s most

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<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that the inclusion of real ondes martenot on tour is logistically difficult, risky, and expensive. As such, Greenwood is more often seen with a digital controller known as a “French Connection” commissioned specifically by Greenwood for use during Radiohead tours. Paired with an oscillator, the French Connection becomes a more durable and portable replica of the ondes martenot with nearly identical control functions. The instrument was delivered and added to Radiohead’s tour schedule as of May, 2001. Analogue Systems, *French Connection: Review*, [www.analoguesystems.co.uk/Reviews/fconnection\\_review](http://www.analoguesystems.co.uk/Reviews/fconnection_review) (accessed March 7, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> David McNamee, “Hey, what’s that sound: Ondes martenot,” *The Guardian* (October 12, 2009).

recognized works, known for its later re-arrangement as “Weird Fishes/Arpeggi” in Radiohead’s seventh studio album, *In Rainbows* (2007). Greenwood once again defies genre with *Arpeggi*, but this time the classical genre. Despite its origin as a concert work, *Arpeggi* is largely an embodiment of Greenwood’s Radiohead style. As the name suggests, *Arpeggi* is composed of the simultaneous juxtaposition of multiple arpeggios, or “arpeggi.” Referring back to Greenwood’s self-professed tendency to write music in chord progressions, *Arpeggi* can be attributed just as easily to Radiohead-Greenwood as it can be to Classical-Greenwood. Featuring Yorke on vocals during its inaugural performance with the Nazareth Orchestra at London’s 2005 Ether Festival, *Arpeggi* has the added peculiarity of being structurally akin to a verse-chorus pop song, or, more accurately, a verse-only pop song with an extended outro. Harmonically, *Arpeggi* strays heavily away from the I—IV—V roots of rock music, and features chord qualities more often found in the jazz genre than the rock or classical. Though the tonal centre of the piece is arguable, assuming the key to be G-Lydian—the first half of the piece follows a vi<sub>7</sub>—vii<sub>7</sub>—II—I<sub>7</sub> progression (Figure 3.4).<sup>23</sup> The addition of the seventh scale degree above the root of the vi, vii, and I chords creates a subtle harmonic complexity beyond that of traditional rock power chords or triads. The rhythmic experimentation in *Arpeggi*, however, is what truly defines the piece. By juxtaposing arpeggios of varying length over the same fundamental pulse, a complex interplay between parts is created in which metric accents are constantly shifting. As well, the pure timbral quality of the ondes martenot being arpeggiated in such a manner is rather striking and clearly separates the instrument from its more fluid playing style.

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<sup>23</sup> In a classical context this chord progression is highly unorthodox. Given the piece’s tonal ambiguity, it is possible to interpret the piece in D-major as well as B-minor with mixed results. (D Major: ii<sub>7</sub>—iii<sub>7</sub>—V—IV<sub>7</sub>; B minor: iv<sub>7</sub>—v<sub>7</sub>—VII—VI<sub>7</sub>)



**Figure 3.4** Greenwood’s chord progression and voicing in “Weird Fishes/Arpeggi.”

In Radiohead’s re-arrangement of the piece, the core harmonic, melodic, and lyrical structure of the piece is maintained, but instrumental changes were introduced; most notably the ondes martenot was replaced by Greenwood’s primary means of expression, the guitar. The guitar itself has extremely diverse sonic capabilities—particularly the electric guitar—as affirmed by its use in a plethora of genres ranging from rock, folk, flamenco, raga, and more. Thus, in a way, the guitar itself transcends genre. However, despite its adaptability and diversity, certain musical nuances remain technically impossible on the instrument. Fundamentally, the guitar itself is plagued with inherently low sustain, with typical resonances lasting a matter of seconds; however, electric guitars are able to sustain much longer than acoustic guitars. This is particularly true when the instrument is amplified to stadium volumes and supplemented by gain-boosting effects such as distortion—or less frequently compressors or sustainers—as is common practice in rock bands including Radiohead. Furthermore, glissandi are never truly linear but rather terraced as frets ensure that the ascending or descending movement must move step-wise through the pitches of the chromatic scale as opposed to micro tonal movement. Finally, the instrument’s attack is sharp, rhythmically unforgiving, and is incapable of a seamless *al niente* or *de niente* dynamic swell.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps one of the

<sup>24</sup> It is worth mentioning that through the use of tools such as sustainers, slides, and volume pedals/knobs, these detriments can be bypassed. However, the use of such tools alters the fundamental mechanics of the instrument and often reduces playability, as is the case with slides and volume knobs which limit mobility of the hands and fingers.



attractions of the ondes martenot for Greenwood is that it is an instrument with which he can bypass the technical limitations of his guitar and explore new sonic terrain.

Having played viola, harmonica, banjo, piano, guitar, and more, Greenwood is no stranger to a range of instrumental expression. Thus, the ondes martenot is only one instrument which allows him to transcend the guitar's limitations and even generic barriers: the stringed instrument and string section instantly became a prominent feature in Greenwood's concert music. The stringed instrument, much like the ondes martenot, rectifies the deficiencies of the guitar. It has (essentially) infinite sustain combined with full dynamic control of both the attack and decay of sustained pitches. Additionally, it features the capacity to play linear glissandi and micro tones and, finally, it has the added benefit of having a diverse timbral palette through extended techniques.

Greenwood's obsession with stringed instruments manifests itself in his use of string instruments or sections in all of his concert works including—and following—*Smear* (2004) and *Arpeggi* (2005), and serves as the common denominator of all of his concert music.<sup>25</sup> In 2005, during his artist residency with the BBC orchestra—an achievement which, in and of itself, is a testament to his proficiency in the craft of composition—Greenwood composed what would become his most iconic and influential piece, *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, for string orchestra. The importance of this piece in the larger context of Greenwood's musical career cannot be emphasized enough. It was this very piece that launched Greenwood's career in yet another direction, and served as the primary impetus for his venture into film scoring, particularly regarding *There Will*

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<sup>25</sup> Greenwood's later concert works all feature stringed instruments in varying capacities, including *Doghouse* for string trio and orchestra (2010); *Suite from "There Will Be Blood"* for string orchestra (arr. 2012); *48 Responses to Polymorphia* for 48 individual string players; and *Water* for two flutes, upright piano, chamber organ, two tanpura & string orchestra (2014).

*Be Blood*.<sup>26</sup> During early workshops with the orchestra, a still inexperienced Greenwood received several significant opportunities for musical experimentation. First and foremost, writing for a string orchestra was an entirely new experience, and Greenwood whole-heartedly embraced the living, breathing quality of the music produced by such a large ensemble.

*Popcorn Superhet Receiver* represents a culmination of Greenwood's past experiences and influences and, as such, contains a plethora of diverse musical ideas, the most significant of which is Penderecki. Greenwood saw that the commission was finally "a chance to try out a long-held ambition to write something using large, Penderecki-style microtonal clusters."<sup>27</sup> These clusters can be found in abundance in Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (1994), among other works. Penderecki is not only a significant influence on Greenwood regarding his compositional language, but a sympathetic one to Greenwood's genre-bending tendencies. Penderecki, whose name is "synonymous with avant-garde Polish music," refused to conform even to the (lack of) restraints imposed by the avant-garde genre and "rocked the boat with the concluding major triads in the *Stabat mater*... and *Polymorphia*."<sup>28</sup> Thus, Penderecki's influence over Greenwood was not only technical, but inspirational as well.

Though Penderecki's "sound walls" were fully manifested in *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, the idea of using non-diatonic harmony and timbre to create a wall of noise existed in Greenwood's mind long before. Radiohead's "Blow Out" (*Pablo Honey*, 1993) features an outro of highly distorted guitars and electronics steadily rising in chromatic

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<sup>26</sup> Anderson, "Jonny Greenwood: Solo albums," 101.

<sup>27</sup> Jonny Greenwood, liner notes in score for *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (Essex: Faber Music Ltd, 2005).

<sup>28</sup> Adrian Thomas, "Penderecki, Krzysztof," *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), [www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed April 20, 2017).

fashion, creating a dissonant, chaotic, and unsettling atmosphere to conclude the track, and consequently, the album. This instance of noise as music served both as a violent outcry against the more tonal traditions of rock music, and as a precursor to the eventual manifestation of Penderecki tone clusters in *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*. Years later, Radiohead challenged rock's generic boundaries with "Climbing Up the Walls" (*OK Computer*, 1997). Situated once again in the song's outro, "Climbing Up the Walls" features a cacophonous mix of instruments, electronics, and, most importantly, *strings*, that create an ever-mutating wall of sound. Clearly, dense and unsettling sonorities were on Greenwood's mind rather early in his career. This moment is undoubtedly the single most representative of Greenwood's avant-garde influences creeping their way into Radiohead's corpus.

*Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, while focused on experimentation with a new harmonic language, is essentially a study of timbre. Indeed, timbre is one of the prime qualities by which *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*'s structure is aurally perceived. Diverging from Greenwood's penchant for composing by means of harmonic progression, *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* does retain, however, the Radiohead-esque quality of being comprised of several sections labelled as *Part 1*, *Part 2a*, *Part 2b*, and *Part 3*. Each section is promptly identifiable by its introduction of new timbral ideas, but many sections, particularly *Part 1*, contain a variety of sub-sections defined by texture as well.

*Part 1* of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* is by and large the longest and most diverse of the movements. Greenwood's wall of white noise makes an appearance at m.30 of the piece, where it signals the first textural shift of the piece from a largely diatonic exposition of sustained pitches with occasional "contiguous falling notes" to a full-

fledged microtonal noise wall.<sup>29</sup> As Greenwood says in the liner notes for the score, “I understood that two octaves of quarter-tones would produce white noise, and wanted to start from there, treating it like a big block to carve up and distort.”<sup>30</sup> While this bed of white noise is sustained, softly bubbling under the surface, the lower strings perform rhythmically and melodically contrasting diatonic melodies between m.47 and m.82. The most striking moment of this sound wall texture occurs in m.93 when the wall effectively collapses and each instrument converges onto a unison F# pitch.<sup>31</sup> Following this collapse, the piece explores yet another texture in which the entire orchestra ascends in a microtonal, homophonic fashion, in steps punctuated by stark dynamic swells from pianissimo to fortissimo. After a quick glissando in m.103, the orchestra resumes its microtonal wall until an abrupt textural change in m.118 signals an entirely new textural moment. During this event (m.118-142), shown in Figure 3.5, opposite pairs of strings engage in a harmonic, rhythmic, and dynamic “tug of war” whereby the strings fill in each other’s negative space with opposite dynamics, microtonal pitches, and rhythmic placement. This disorienting feature gives way to a reiteration of the piece’s exposition in m.143. Finally, in m.181, a textural idea is introduced in which the homorhythmic, microtonal ascending motive of the orchestra in tutti is staggered by individual players to create the musical equivalent of the “Shepard’s tone” aural phenomenon.<sup>32</sup> This brief overview and simplification of *Part 1*, while not doing the complexity of the piece

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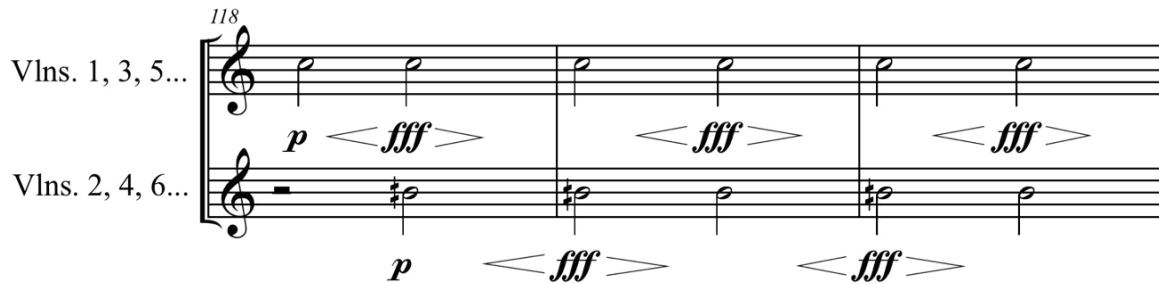
<sup>29</sup> Greenwood, liner notes in *Popcorn*.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> This particular motive pervades Greenwood’s career in many contexts. Referring once more to the textural outro in “Climbing Up the Walls” (*OK Computer*, 1997), we hear a similar motive, this time beginning on the pitch C before diverging into a tangle of fluctuating microtones. Given its presence in music written in part by Greenwood almost a decade prior, it is logical that this motive would also appear later in the composer’s career. Another instance of this exact motive occurs in Greenwood’s score for *There Will Be Blood* and is analyzed in detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>32</sup> The Shepard’s tone is an aural illusion in which, by means of subtly supplanting octaves below a rising pitch, the illusion of an infinitely rising pitch is achieved.

justice, serves as a sufficient model to grasp the episodic nature of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*. Table 3.2. outlines more broadly the various episodes of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* and the musical elements explored in each section.



**Figure 3.5** *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, mm.118-120, displaying the dynamic “tug of war” between opposite violins. This motive is present throughout each of the eighteen violin, and six viola parts.

**REHEARSAL MARK  
(MEASURES)**

**KEY FEATURES**

REHEARSAL MARK (MEASURES)	KEY FEATURES
<b>EXPOSITION (1–29)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups of instruments play sustained notes which slowly transform into “contiguous falling notes”<sup>33</sup></li> </ul>
<b>A (30–58)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of micro-tones as a “noise wall”</li> <li>Sustained sound clusters with fleeting glissandi</li> <li>Lower strings begin melody over noise wall</li> <li>Brief moment of convergence onto F-sharp</li> </ul>
<b>B (59–69)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Louder and denser melodic and rhythmic movement in lower strings heard over noise wall</li> </ul>
<b>C (60–93)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant moment of convergence onto F-sharp</li> </ul>
<b>D (94–105)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microtonal and homorhythmic tutti ascension figure</li> </ul>
<b>E (106–117)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise wall returns</li> </ul>
<b>F (118–142)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dynamic, harmonic, and rhythmic “tug of war”</li> </ul>
<b>G (143–180)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reiteration of exposition</li> </ul>
<b>H (181–206)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microtonal ascension as heard in C but rhythmically staggered to create “Shepard’s tone”</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2** Structural map of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver Part I* with key aural features of each section

*Part 2a* explores entirely new textural material; however, I focus on *Part 2b* because of its cross-genre timbre imitation. The percussive strumming of the strings in

<sup>33</sup> Greenwood, liner notes in *Popcorn*.

*Part 2b* is a result of Greenwood’s apparently failed experimentations in the recreation of timbres—particularly old drum machine samples built from white noise—as opposed to the creation of new ones. Greenwood states that “At the first workshop...we also tried rhythmic material [such as an attempt to] reproduce the sounds of an electronic drum machine...It didn’t work at all.”<sup>34</sup> Despite Greenwood’s perceived effectiveness of these experiments, they were not in vain. In *Part 2b*, the listener is bombarded by an aggressive strumming pattern played by the string orchestra (with a guitar plectrum) in a consistent underlying eighth-note pattern. Here, Greenwood explores the ensemble’s timbral possibilities by carrying over stylistic features from his guitar work in Radiohead, which relies heavily on the use of a plectrum for a percussive and sharp attack.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the specific pattern of continual eighth notes suggests the typical role of the hi-hat in rock music, which features the kick drum on beats one and three, the snare on beats two and four, and the hi-hats on each eighth note of the bar, as seen in Figure 3.6. Thus, he actively seeks to impose generic rock idioms on the classical medium and does so through the elements of timbre and rhythm.



**Figure 3.6** Rhythmic notation of a traditional rock groove with kick drum on beats one and three, snare on beats two and four, and hi-hats on each eighth note. Greenwood’s notation for the muted strums in *Part 2b* are identical to the hi-hat notation except transposed down a sixth to the central staff line.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> This technique once again crosses boundaries in Greenwood’s career with the first single from Radiohead’s 2016 album, *A Moon Shaped Pool*, titled “Burn the Witch.” The aggressive strumming of a string section makes an uncanny reappearance in “Burn the Witch” to the point where the tempo of the two is almost identical and the pattern of accents remains relatively unchanged. The harmony, however, is a point of contrast as *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* creates a harmonically ambiguous texture whereas “Burn the Witch” is clearly rooted in the motion between F# major and E major harmonies.

While the sample base of Greenwood's concert music is rather limited compared to the vast amount of material in Radiohead's catalogue, it should be reiterated that, in 2005, Greenwood's concert music career was not as prolific because it was still in its infancy. Furthermore, given that the primary aim of this project is to explain the role these careers play in Greenwood's genre-bending score for *There Will Be Blood* (2007), I have focused, for the most part, on his music pre-2007 concert work. Nonetheless, these examples serve as clear representations of both continuations and divergences between Greenwood's rock and classical streams. In the context of *There Will Be Blood*, Greenwood simultaneously drew heavily from these previous experiences, both in Radiohead and classical composition, to imprint upon the score a quality which similarly bends the film's genre.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Music and Genre in the Western

“[Greenwood’s] score for *There Will Be Blood*...represented something of an emerging new direction in contemporary film scoring that was both a reaction to the tight formatting of mainstream Hollywood films and an expression of the dirty media soundscapes of modern life.”<sup>1</sup>

Genre, at its most basic form, is summarized by film scholar Stephen Neale as “instances of repetition and difference.”<sup>2</sup> Through repetition of certain iconography and narrative elements over time, a collection of idioms begins to establish the distinct but mutable borders of a specific genre. Regarding the establishment of a particular genre across multiple mediums, film scholar Rick Altman suggests that “[e]ven when a genre already exists in other media, the film genre of the same name cannot simply be borrowed from non-film sources, it must be recreated.”<sup>3</sup> The western did indeed exist in other media, including popular dime novels and traditional Americana folksongs during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Contrary to Altman’s statement, these media shared the very same materials as the western in film (e.g., cowboys, gunfights, trains, horses, etc.). The fundamental reason for this cross-genre resemblance is that the elements are dictated, above all, by *history* rather than by a set of conventions. Thus, the (film) western’s role as a visual representation of a historical time (or concurrent, given that the genre’s inception coincides with the establishment of cinema in the early

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<sup>1</sup> Miguel Mera, “Materializing Film Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 159.

<sup>2</sup> Steve Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000), 80.

<sup>3</sup> Rick Altman, *Film/Genre* (London: British Film Institute, 2000), 35.



twentieth century) served to define its iconography by virtue of its existence in the real world. Thus, it is logical that the music of the western genre has, historically, drawn influence from *authentic* musical features of the American West throughout history. While the scoring practices of these films have coincided with the more general Hollywood scoring practices throughout the eras, such as the rise of fully orchestral scores in the 1930s, they have simultaneously diverged enough to create their own generic conventions.<sup>4</sup> Stilwell effectively encapsulates the generic scoring conventions of the western in four categories: (1) those relying heavily or exclusively on the use of traditional Americana folksong (i.e., Stephen Foster); (2) those that feature “Manifest Destiny cues” heavily inspired by the compositional language of American composer Aaron Copland; (3) the Italian-directed spaghetti western scores, predominantly featuring the work of Ennio Morricone; (4) postmodern and revisionist scoring conventions which attempt to bring musical balance to the depiction of the moral and just white man and the indigenous “savages” of pre revisionist westerns.<sup>5</sup>

As musicologist Kathryn Kalinak observes, “[b]ecause the [western] as a whole focuses so transparently on American values, its composers have tended to favour musical forms defined as American.”<sup>6</sup> Thus, songs of traditional Americana were a logical source and reference point for composers of a genre inexorably linked to American history. The songs of Stephen Foster and, later, Bob Nolan, who was essential in shaping the musical identity of the American west, served as the dominant musical

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<sup>4</sup> The western, in and of itself, is a broad generic umbrella given its plentiful sub-genres (e.g. spaghetti westerns, anti-westerns, acid westerns, etc.) each with its own narrative and musical idioms. There are certain qualities, however, that pervade the style regardless of sub-classification such as the inherent quality of being a generic period piece or drawing reference material from a specific period in (American) history.

<sup>5</sup> Robynn Stilwell, “The Western,” in *Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 50.

influence of the western as the cinematic genre moved into film in the late 1920s.<sup>7</sup> The music of the West was already firmly established at this point in American history as John Lomax's collection of *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*—published over a century ago—contains over 100 traditional cowboy songs.<sup>8</sup> Lyrically, the majority of these ballads highlight the same features that western films do with visuals and narrative: a sprawling, rugged landscape; a constant westward push towards new frontiers; stories of violent conflict with indigenous populations or famous criminals; physical labour in fields, ranches, or military service; as well as familial and communal bonds. These folk songs, by means of their lyrical content as well as their singable modal melodies, serve as a common parlance for composers, listeners, and film audiences alike, instilling a sense of familiarity and credibility in a film.

While this folkloric element permeates most film scores from the 1930s onwards in some way, it is most dominant in the popular “singing cowboy” films of the 1930s through the early 1950s.<sup>9</sup> These abundant B-westerns “were filled with the country-and-western music that was proving so popular on the radio and records.”<sup>10</sup> The music of these films, along with being inarguably “western” given its ties to folk music, was as

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<sup>7</sup> Kenneth J. Bindas, “Western Mystic: Bob Nolan and His Songs,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (1986), 439.

<sup>8</sup> John A. Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, with an introduction by Barrett Wendell (New York: Sturgis & Walton Company, 1911).

<sup>9</sup> The “singing cowboy” genre derived its name from incredibly marketable stars of these films such as John Wayne, Gene Autry, and Tex Ritter to name but a few, who embodied the strong and lonesome cowboy whose captivating voice was matched only by his handsomeness.

<sup>10</sup> Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung*, 49.

much a result of business goals as it was musical ones, since production and recording companies began to “exploit their film[s]’ music more systematically.”<sup>11</sup>

The singing cowboy was by no means the only representation of western music, however. In films such as John Ford’s seminal *Stagecoach* (1939), the singing cowboy actor-performers were substituted by classical orchestration of material derived from folklore and particularly concerned with the overarching idea of American identity. Historically, *Stagecoach* represented a time in film history (from the mid 1930s) where the typical Hollywood film began to “[adopt] the idea of [a score consisting of] plot-rooted music combined with underscore that was comfortable and familiar in its symphonic sound and idiom but which in content was entirely original.”<sup>12</sup> This radical shift in mentality surrounding film music would undoubtedly serve as a catalyst for change in film scoring practices, and allow for more connection between composer, film, and audience. As a result of this new musical liberty, “*Stagecoach*... [signaled] a broad cultural convergence of national identity and the American West that was to shape both American art Music and the genre of the western film.”<sup>13</sup> The reliance on folksong, combined with its execution in predominantly classical musical language, “can be, and usually is, traced back to the American art music of the 1930s, particularly that of composers Virgil Thomson and Aaron Copland.”<sup>14</sup> Given the western’s ties to American history and heritage, Copland’s “American” musical language is perhaps the most noteworthy. According to Stilwell, Copland’s musical Americanism included traits such

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<sup>11</sup> The distribution of sheet music popularized by film as well (as the later distribution of recorded media such as vinyl records, or, in the case of *There Will Be Blood*, digital albums) became common practice for Hollywood studios seeking to maximize on promotion and potential revenue particularly in the 1950s and 1960s. Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music* (New York: Columbia University Press), 61.

<sup>12</sup> James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 140.

<sup>13</sup> Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung*, 49.

<sup>14</sup> Stilwell, “The Western,” 224.

as “Anglo-Irish melodic patterns, quartal harmony, asymmetrical rhythms and metric modulations, [as well as] a spacious orchestration founded on a strong bass, a largely empty mid-range and a sharp, clear upper register.”<sup>15</sup> These qualities were not only present in Copland’s film music, but in his concert works as well and became associated with the western during a time where the genre was most heavily centred on the theme of “Manifest Destiny,” in which the white settlers’ conquest of indigenous lands was frequently depicted as being morally justified. These scores relied heavily on popular and folkloric material and, by combining the orchestral language of the cinema of the time with this popular material, became largely accessible to audiences. The title credits of *Stagecoach* lend an importance to the score’s folkloric origin, stating that the score is “based on American Folk Songs,” which further solidifies the role of music as a key component in the establishment of generic identity. While *Stagecoach* was not the first instance of such a scoring style, it was undoubtedly a catalyst for later scores in the same vein. Stilwell notes that “it was not until 1958 and Jerome Moross’s score for William Wyler’s *The Big Country* that the Copland-esque Americana style really became stamped on the Hollywood western.”<sup>16</sup> The use of “art music” in this case legitimizes the folk song by virtue of its high culture status and seriousness. Thus, the folk song, with its emphasis on nation-building and the American way of life, became embedded not only in the lower class culture of farmers, cowboys, railway builders, and more, but became just as important to the wealthier upper classes. Such a focus on American identity and American values in both low and high-brow music resonated directly with the idea of

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 225.

Manifest Destiny, or, American colonization and acculturation so heavily depicted in the western film.

Though the primary instrumentation of this style was that of the classical orchestra, the inclusion of more folkloric and pastoral instruments, such as the guitar, became nearly inseparable from the western genre. In the western soundtrack, there was a propensity to include “accompaniment instruments [such] as the guitar, harmonica and accordion/concertina – [which] were already part of western lore...[and] would reinforce the western’s generic blending of cowboy, parlour and minstrel songs.”<sup>17</sup> These instruments were defined by two staples of western identity: mobility and communality. Featured as much in the singing cowboy films as later revisionist and post-modern westerns, these outlying instruments began to distance themselves entirely from the highly orchestrated Hollywood western. This was particularly evident in the 1950s when Dmitri Tiomkin proudly stated that “his [score for *High Noon* (Fred Zinnemann, 1952)] was the first score ever recorded without the use of a single violin.”<sup>18</sup> While the validity of this statement is questionable, it signifies a deliberate attempt by composers, producers, and record labels to codify the musical tropes of the western, and to create an authentic musical style.

Italian composer Ennio Morricone was undoubtedly a key proponent in the shift from solely classical instrumentation toward a more geographically and culturally appropriate instrumentation. Morricone’s scores for Sergio Leone’s “spaghetti westerns” of the 1960s—humorously named after the Italian lineage of the genre’s directors—were simultaneously instances of convention and innovation. Given the irony that an Italian

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 218.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce*, 60.

director dominates a traditionally American genre, it makes sense, at least visually, that Leone was almost hyper-aware and “self-conscious of the [genre’s] iconic imagery.”<sup>19</sup> Morricone’s scores, however, were more explorative. They often feature prominent use of a melodically active guitar (as opposed to the more traditional accompanying role); inclusion of more Latin-inspired percussion elements, such as the maracas, castanets, and especially the vibraslap; and rhythmically active brass and vocal melodies heard more typically in a Mexican *banda* or *mariachi* context than a classically-influenced American film score. Many of these new instruments and styles are built upon the same principles of portability, rurality, and communality, but with a noticeably more Latin-American influence. This influence served to highlight the prominent roles of Mexican characters and culture in later western films, particularly in Leone’s *Dollars Trilogy* (*A Fistful of Dollars* [1964], *For a Few Dollars More* [1965], *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* [1966]). Indeed, Morricone’s theme for *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* with its short pentatonic melody sung in fiery Latin-American style, became synonymous with the western score by combining past practices with new forms of expression.<sup>20</sup> The iconic stature of this trilogy alone has shaped the practice of western scoring to rely heavily on prominent melody, inclusion of non-European classical instrumentation, and more improvisatory, less refined performances by the recording musicians.

Morricone’s prowess as a film composer, however, lies not only in his trailblazing style, but in his ability to adapt musically on a film-by-film basis. For example,

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<sup>19</sup> Stilwell, “The Western,” 226.

<sup>20</sup> Morricone’s influence on the sound of the western is so significant that it transcends the film score. The song “Knights of Cydonia” (*Black Holes and Revelations*, 2006) by English alternative rock band Muse features undeniably Morricone-esque tropes such as the galloping rhythm heard in *For A Few Dollars More*, as well as the brash Latin brass melodies heard prominently throughout the song’s introduction. The music video, directed by Joseph Kahn, is essentially a six-minute satirical space western which references, rather heavily, Leone’s classic spaghetti westerns.

“Carillon’s Theme” in *For A Few Dollars More* (Sergio Leone, 1965) was written only one year prior to *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and featured a stately, luscious, and pastoral string section juxtaposed with the harsh, over-played qualities of a Latin-inspired guitar part in the phrygian mode. Musicologist Jordan Carmalt Stokes discusses the importance of Morricone in establishing the generic conventions of the western genre, stating that “If Ennio Morricone’s name is attached to a Western...this becomes an aspect of the contract offered to the genre audience, a promise that this film will provide the kind of experience the viewers are seeking. And the music within the film can help to fulfill this contract.”<sup>21</sup> Leone, as Stilwell notes, “radically rewrote [the western’s] musical language.”<sup>22</sup>

While his influence over the genre is both paramount and still heavily influential, the history of the western score did not end with Morricone. This disposal of certain classical instruments in favour of more rustic, popular ones is seen clearly in later westerns, such as Robert Altman’s *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* (1971).<sup>23</sup> Though not the composer of *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*’s score, Canadian singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen’s music is the most prominent element of its score, specifically the non-diegetic songs.<sup>24</sup> Though by the 19670s the singing cowboy was but a relic of a former age, the folkloric and instrumental ties to generic tradition remain. Cohen’s “The Stranger Song”

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<sup>21</sup> Jordan Carmalt Stokes, “Music and Genre in Film: Aesthetics and Ideology” (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2013), 28.

<sup>22</sup> Stilwell, “The Western,” 226.

<sup>23</sup> A noteworthy feature of *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* is its narrative similarity with *There Will Be Blood*. Both films feature a male primary character who is crafty and charming and relies on questionable capitalistic ventures to establish wealth and power (Daniel Plainview is an oil tycoon while McCabe owns a brothel). The connection between these two films can be seen at the level of influence as well, as Anderson dedicates *There Will Be Blood* to the late Robert Altman, who passed away only a year prior to the film’s release in 2006.

<sup>24</sup> The specific songs used in *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* were “The Stranger Song,” “Winter Lady,” and “Sisters of Mercy” from Cohen’s debut album, *Songs of Leonard Cohen* (1967). Leonard Cohen, *Songs of Leonard Cohen* (Sony Music Entertainment Inc., 1967).

in particular is highly significant in its narrative role, outlining McCabe as a stranger and imbuing him with an air of mystery and intrigue in the film's opening sequence. The song itself is relatively static in its diatonic melody, and the isolated guitar accompaniment evokes the idea of the traveler or, more precisely, the storyteller. Despite their similarity of performance, Cohen's poetic lyrics—rife with intrigue and metaphor—serve as a point of divergence from the clear and relatable songs of the singing cowboy. This divergence serves as a parallel genre shift to the film's surprising establishing shot of a rich forest in western Canada posing as Washington State, which opposes the more desolate landscape of the western in the southern United States.

Though *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* features the guitar as a primary instrument, its importance is better highlighted in another film, Jim Jarmusch's revisionist western, *Dead Man* (1995). After a century of iteration, the western genre had seemed to be staggering towards the grave, but as Lee Clark Mitchell notes, *Dead Man*, among other films, "brought new life to materials that had come to seem hackneyed and inconsequential, revising them into something refreshingly new yet generically recognizable."<sup>25</sup> Musically, *Dead Man*'s familiarity stems from a score written by rock legend Neil Young, which is entirely devoid of any instrument besides the guitar. The strumming of the acoustic guitar is directly in line with western iconography, but the absence of voice, and thus lyrical content, is more in line with purely instrumental scoring styles. The presence of the *highly* distorted electric guitar performing a repetitive

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<sup>25</sup> Lee Clark Mitchell, "Dismantling the Western: Film Noir's Defiance of Genre in *No Country for Old Men*," *Genre* 47, no.3 (2014), 335.



and rather simple pentatonic riff in the idiomatic guitar key of E-minor is unique.<sup>26</sup> As Claudia Gorbman notes, “*Dead Man*’s overall strategy is to employ generic western sounds and push them to a limit, much as the film both participates in and denatures the western genre itself.”<sup>27</sup>

Following the rise of revisionist and space westerns, which challenged some of the genre’s fundamental narrative themes, as well as new technologies used in film scoring, such as the synthesizer, western film scores could now explore entirely new sonic terrain. This freedom, however, did not necessarily translate to the birth of a new western scoring language, but allowed for the exploration of new musical conventions. Films such as *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (Andrew Dominik, 2007)—released the same year as *There Will Be Blood*—almost entirely abandon the guitar and folk-centric traditions of past scores, in favour of more repetitive and pensive piano and synthesizer melodies laden with reverb. Many other scores, however, rely upon the same principles established throughout the history of the genre. Also released in 2007, *No Country for Old Men* (Joel and Ethan Coen) is almost entirely devoid of a score, instead favouring the natural ambiance of landscape to underscore narrative moments, save a few minor chords heard during the first appearance of the film’s antagonist, Chigurh.<sup>28</sup> The closing titles of *No Country For Old Men* do feature a song titled “Blood Trails,” written specifically for the film by composer Carter Burwell, which, given its prominent and melodically active guitar part, as well as its incorporation

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<sup>26</sup> Another key figure in the guitar-centric score is Young’s friend and contemporary Ry Cooder. Cooder has established himself as a film composer who uses the guitar as a primary instrument in his score. Subsequently, Cooder has scored a number of westerns including a number of Walter Hill films such as *Streets of Fire* (1984), *The Long Riders* (1980), and *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993).

<sup>27</sup> Claudia Gorbman, “Musical Worlds of the Millennial Western: *Dead Man* and *Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*,” in *Music in the Western: Notes from the Frontier*, edited by Kathryn Kalinak (New York: Routledge, 2012), 206.

<sup>28</sup> Mitchell, “Dismantling the Western,” 341.

of percussive elements such as shakers and a vibraslap, is instantly recognizable as music for a western film. Even the later *Cowboys and Aliens* (Jon Favreau, 2011) features a reliance on the fore-fronted guitar and percussive timbres, albeit supplemented by epic “movie strings” and additional percussion throughout.<sup>29</sup> Greenwood’s score for *There Will Be Blood*, however, is the prime example by which traditions of western scoring practices are noted, and discarded. The score is unique in its use of timbre and instrumentation and deliberately avoids reference to the western tropes established up until this point.

### Score Construction in *There Will Be Blood*

As Stokes notes, music is, at least in part, responsible for the generic identification of the western film, and thus, the choice of both music and composer are paramount to producers and directors. Given the specific nature of each individual composer’s compositional style, it follows that a particular composer is selected to write a particular style of music for a film. But Greenwood’s music up to this point, whether in the context of Radiohead or concert music, had virtually no ties with traditional western scores. Furthermore, when a popular artist scores a film, it is more often than not the musical qualities of their existing corpus of works that attract producers and directors, and it is these very qualities that are typically desired in the score. That is to say, you would not hire Picasso to paint a Pollock. Thus, when Anderson approached Greenwood to score *There Will Be Blood*, it is reasonable to assume that Greenwood’s “contractual

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<sup>29</sup> “Movie strings,” much like the term “pop strings,” implies the typically simple use of long, sustained strings playing predominantly chord tones as a supplement to more dominant timbres of melodies, rather than as intricate and nuanced parts in and of themselves.

obligation” was to *stray* intentionally from a typical western style. Thus, with the various generic scoring tropes of the western repeatedly established over the decades, the stage was set for Greenwood to defy convention with *There Will Be Blood*, but, as Stilwell notes, “[o]ne must know the conventions in order to play with them.”<sup>30</sup>

The score for *There Will Be Blood* includes pre-existing music (both by Greenwood and other composers), as well as original music written for the film. In addition to reusing and re-purposing about a large portion of the music present in Greenwood’s *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, *There Will Be Blood* also features music from Greenwood’s concert work, *Smear*; a track titled “Convergence” written for Greenwood’s score for *Body Song* (Simon Pummell, 2004); original music scored by Greenwood specifically for the film; Brahms’ *Violin Concerto in D Major* (1878); Arvo Pärt’s *Fratres* (1977); and two diegetic hymns titled “There is Power in the Blood” (Lewis E. Jones, 1899) and “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (Joseph M. Scriven, 1855). This heavy reliance on pre-existing sources is very much the reason that Greenwood’s score—much to the dismay of his loyal fan base—was deemed ineligible for “Best Original Score” at the 80<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards.<sup>31</sup> To demonstrate the various cues present in the film as well as their sources, I have recreated a useful table compiled by musicologist Gayle Magee as seen in Table 4.1. With the data already collected, I created a visual representation of the music’s origin to show the proportional distribution of the music by piece and composer (Figure 4.1). Figure 4.1 makes it clear that the most sizeable portions of the film’s score consist of Greenwood’s *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*

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<sup>30</sup> Stilwell, “The Western,” 226.

<sup>31</sup> Jim Emerson, “Why Jonny Greenwood’s Score Wasn’t Nominated,” *Roger Ebert* (January 21, 2008), [www.rogerebert.com/scanners/why-jonny-greenwoods-score-wasnt-nominated](http://www.rogerebert.com/scanners/why-jonny-greenwoods-score-wasnt-nominated) (accessed January 16, 2017).

and his original music for the film at thirty-five and forty percent respectively.

Interestingly, Brahms' *Violin Concerto in D Major* comprises the third largest portion of the film's score; however, the majority of the concerto plays over the film's ending credits, almost entirely separated from the narrative of the film. Thus, the majority of Brahms' concerto is largely incidental and does not actively contribute to the film's narrative, but rather to the closing credits. To account for this, I have adjusted proportional distribution of music only related to events which occur within the film's context (Figure 4.2).

## Annotated Cue Sheet for *There Will Be Blood*<sup>32</sup>

[ ] indicates cue title

+ indicates previously composed work by Greenwood

\*indicates previously composed work by other composers

Time	Title (Composer)
0:18-1:03 (0:45)	+ <i>Popcorn Superhet Receiver</i> (Greenwood): abbrev. <i>PSR</i> [“Henry Plainview”]
4:25-4:50 (0:25)	+ <i>PSR</i>
5:45-0:12:44 (7:01)	+ <i>PSR</i>
22:57-26:34 (3:37)	<i>Open Spaces</i> (Greenwood)
29:24-30:40 (1:16)	<i>Open Spaces</i> (Greenwood)
36:20-41:23 (5:03)	<i>Future Markets</i> (Greenwood)
41:27-46:48 (5:21)	<i>Prospectors Arrive</i> [sic] (Greenwood)
44:26-44:44 (0:18)	*“What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (Scriven and Converse)
49:35-50:58 (1:23)	*Violin Concerto in D, Op. 77, III (Brahms)
52:32-54:39 (2:07)	[ <i>Smear</i> (“+PSR” in original chart)]
0:58:44-59:45 (1:01)	+ <i>PSR</i>
1:01:56-07:45 (5:49)	+ <i>Convergence</i> (Greenwood) + <i>PSR</i>
1:09:00-10:55 (1:55)	* <i>Fratres for Violincello and Piano</i> (Pärt)
1:12:10-14:27 (2:27)	* <i>Fratres for Violincello and Piano</i> (Pärt)
1:20:59-25:02 (4:03)	<i>Oil</i> (Greenwood)
1:34:16-38:57 (4:41)	+ <i>PSR</i> [“Proven Lands”]
1:39:20-44:47 (5:27)	+ <i>PSR</i> + <i>Smear</i> (Greenwood)
1:45:44-48:42 (2:58)	+ <i>PSR</i> [“Henry Plainview”]
1:55:20-56:23 (1:03)	*“There is Power in the Blood” (Lewis)
2:04:20-07:12 (2:52)	<i>Prospector’s Quartet</i> (Greenwood)
2:07:34-08:46 (1:12)	<i>Eat Him by His Own Light</i> (Greenwood)
2:14:54-16:55 (2:01)	<i>Prospectors Arrive</i> [sic] (Greenwood)
2:30:46-37:53 (7:07)	*Violin Concerto in D, Op. 77, III (Brahms)

**Table 4.1** Adapted from the table compiled by Gayle Magee (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) outlining the various sources of music used in *There Will Be Blood* as well as their timecode and duration. The table was distributed as a supplement to Magee’s presentation at the *Confluences, Connections, and Correspondences* conference held at the University of Toronto on October 13, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Given that some cues in the film’s soundtrack repurpose and rename parts of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, I have included the cue titles where available in square brackets. Furthermore, the cue “Prospectors Arrive” on Magee’s chart is listed as “Prospector Arrives” on the film’s official soundtrack; thus, I will use the cue title that coincides with the official soundtrack from hereon in. Tabled reproduced from: Gayle Magee, “Convergence: Innovation, Tradition, and the Soundtrack for *There Will Be Blood*,” paper presented at *Confluences, Connections, and Correspondences*, Toronto, October 13, 2016.

### Music Distribution in *There Will Be Blood*

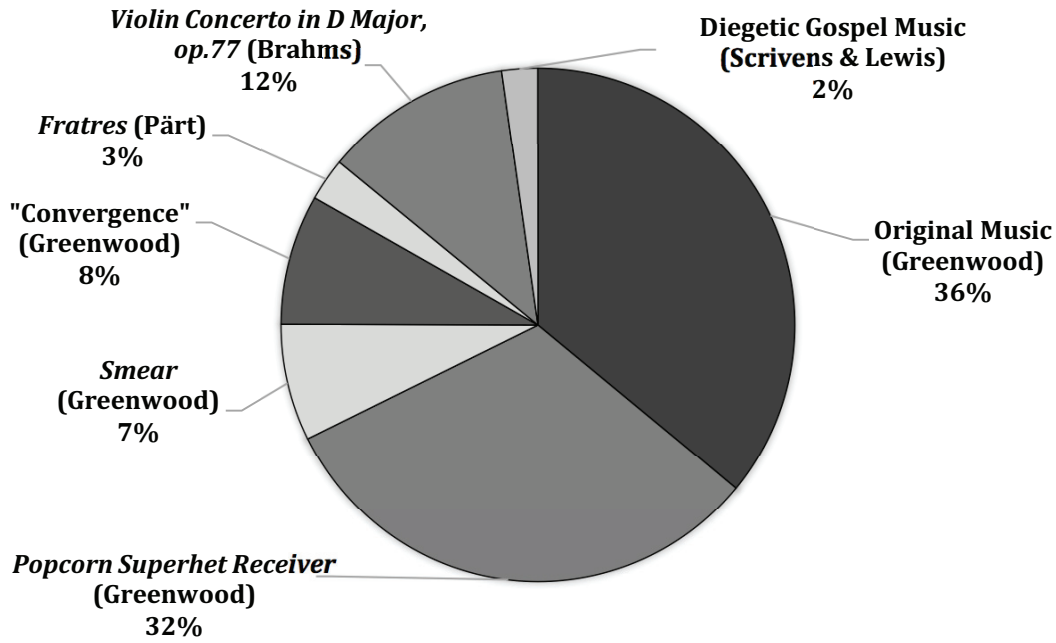


Figure 4.1 Proportional representation of musical sources in the score for *There Will Be Blood*

### Music Distribution in *There Will Be Blood* (Adjusted)

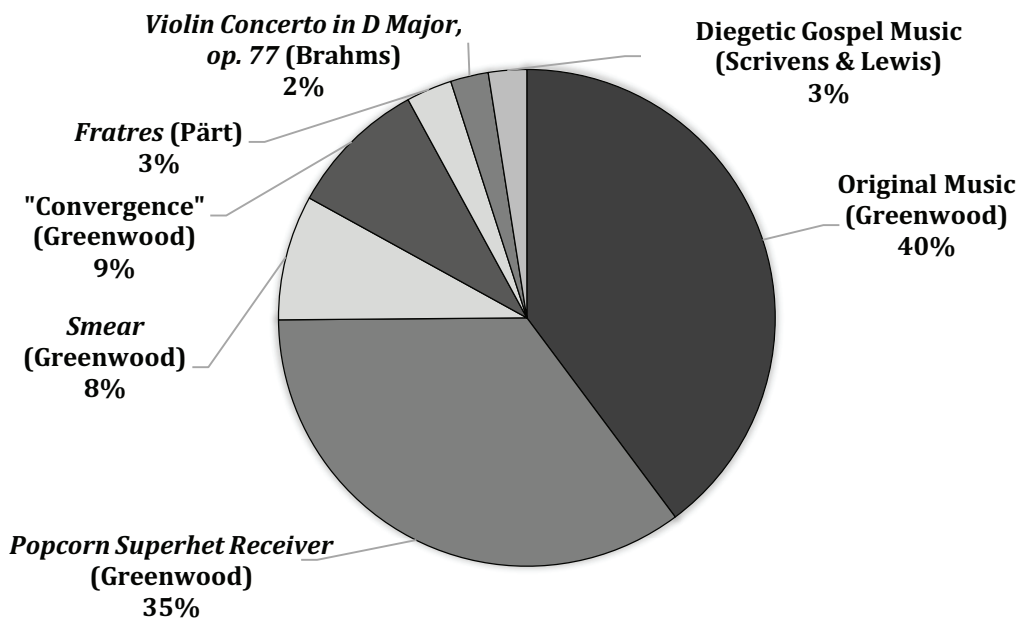


Figure 4.2 Proportional representation of musical sources in the score for *There Will Be Blood* adjusted to exclude music played over the film's credit sequence.

In addition to the annotated cue sheet compiled by Magee, two primary resources will be referenced when discussing Greenwood’s original music for the film. The first is the film’s official soundtrack album, *There Will Be Blood (Music from the Motion Picture)* (Nonesuch, 2007), which features full-length recorded cues as they appear in the film and is essential for referencing the film’s music. The second is the published score for Greenwood’s 2012 arrangement of the film’s music, *Suite from There Will Be Blood* for string orchestra with ondes martenot (or oboe).<sup>33</sup> While the two are not entirely identical in duration and instrumentation, the score itself serves as a near carbon copy of the music heard in the film, and, as such, can be readily referenced in analysis. Table 4.2 compares the relative durations and organization of the *Suite from There Will Be Blood* and *There Will Be Blood (Music from the Motion Picture)*.

Cue/Movement Title	Track/Movement		Duration	
			Film/Suite	
Open Spaces	1	I	3:55	4:09
Future Markets	2	II	2:40	3:00
Prospector Arrives	3		4:34	
Eat Him By His Own Light	4		2:40	
Henry Plainview	5	IV	4:13	4:52
There Will Be Blood	6		2:05	
Oil	7	VI	3:04	3:41
Proven Lands	8	V	1:50	2:01
HW/Hope of New Fields	9	III	2:29	3:12
Stranded the Line	10		2:20	
Prospector’s Quartet	11		2:57	

**Table 4.2** Table outlining organization and duration of cues/movements between *There Will Be Blood (Music from the Motion Picture)*, and the *Suite from There Will Be Blood* respectively. Durations for the suite were collected from the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra’s recording conducted by André de Ridder (Deutsche Grammophon, 2014).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Jonny Greenwood, *Suite from There Will Be Blood* (Essex: Faber Music Ltd., 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Jonny Greenwood, *There Will Be Blood (Music from the Motion Picture)*, (Nonesuch, 2007). Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, Bryce Dessner: *St. Carolyn By The Sea – Jonny Greenwood: Suite From “There Will Be Blood*, conducted by Andre de Ridder (Deutsche Grammophon, 2014).

With an understanding of the score's composition, a brief synopsis is necessary to understand the main characters and themes that arise in the film. Following the synopsis, I will divide the analysis of the film's score into three sections: Greenwood's pre-composed music used in the film; his original music written for the film; and the remainder of music found in the film, including Brahms, Pärt and the diegetic gospel music. As with any film analysis, understanding the complex nature and lack of individual authorship of a film is paramount. Thus, my writing and analysis operates under the presumption that Greenwood functions and/or operates as a music director in addition to being a composer. When attributing a decision of music in regards to its relation to a certain scene, I understand that Greenwood is not the sole decisive body, but rather the representative of the creative body of film makers.

### *There Will Be Blood as Anti-Western*

While Greenwood's music subverts the musical genre of the western, the plot of the film follows closely with anti-western themes of creating morally questionable primary figures and challenging the values of white settlers. The subject matter and thematic material of the film is equally familiar as the film relies on traditional elements in the western genre, such as the iconic landscape and familial ties. Jim Kitses' shifting antinomies from his seminal publication, *Horizons West* (1969)—shown in part in Table 3.3—contrast the qualities of the ever encroaching western frontier (left column) and the those of the eastern communities left in its wake (right column).<sup>35</sup> While this table is particularly concerned with the relationship between west and east, it outlines some of the

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<sup>35</sup> Jim Kitses, *Horizons West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 11.



key elements which appear in *There Will Be Blood* and subsequently help define it as a western. These key elements have been displayed in Table 4.3 in bold.

THE WILDERNESS [West]	CIVILISATION [East]
<i>The Individual</i>	<i>The Community</i>
freedom	restriction
<b>honour</b>	<b>institutions</b>
<b>self-knowledge</b>	<b>illusion</b>
<b>integrity</b>	<b>compromise</b>
<b>self-interest</b>	social responsibility
solipsism	democracy
<i>Nature</i>	<i>Culture</i>
<b>purity</b>	<b>corruption</b>
experience	<b>knowledge</b>
empiricism	legalism
pragmatism	idealism
<b>brutalisation</b>	<b>refinement</b>
<b>savagery</b>	humanity

**Table 4.3** Part of the “shifting antinomies” outlined in Jim Kitses’ book *Horizons West* with themes relevant to *There Will Be Blood* displayed in bold.

*There Will Be Blood* is a historical western frontier drama situated in the early twentieth century, in the pure and rugged landscape of south-western America. It is filled with a slew of morally bankrupt characters, relentless capitalism, religious exploitation, and a surprising lack of blood. It is centered on the life of silver prospector-turned-oil tycoon Daniel Plainview (Daniel Day Lewis), in his recklessly self-interested pursuit of oil, wealth, and power. Following a silver-mining accident in 1898 New Mexico, he strikes oil near Los Angeles, California in 1902. During this early oil expedition, a worker dies, leaving behind his baby son whom Daniel adopts and christens H.W. Plainview. Daniel’s familial bond with his adopted son is a hallmark of the western

genre, yet his relationship with H.W. is simultaneously wholesome and extremely volatile. In 1911, Daniel and a pre-adolescent H.W. (Dillon Freasier) are lead to Little Boston where they buy a plot of land belonging to the Sunday family. Eli Sunday—who, despite his religious upbringing, is equally as driven by greed as Daniel—is privy to Daniel’s swindling ways and negotiates a higher price for the land. This interaction serves as the first in a series of power struggles between Daniel and Eli throughout the film. When the first oil derrick in Little Boston is built, Daniel, who is skeptical of religion, and particularly of Eli’s desire for aggrandizement, denies him the opportunity to bless the well.

The derrick later explodes due to the sheer pressure and quantity of oil in the earth. As a result of the explosion, H.W. loses his hearing and Daniel, while initially concerned, is mesmerized by the vast amounts of oil he has discovered. As Daniel’s success becomes public knowledge, he is approached by his (supposed) estranged half-brother, Henry Brands (Kevin J. O’Conner) who creates yet another familial bond with Daniel. Wary of the timing of Henry’s arrival, Daniel is hesitant to trust him, but soon accepts him as family, and for the first time, begins to establish a meaningful bond with another character besides his son. H.W., however, is not convinced of Henry’s benevolence. After an attempt to frame Henry with an act of arson in their home, H.W. is sent to a deaf-school by the infuriated Daniel. One night, Daniel discovers Henry’s true motives of greed and deception and murders him in cold blood. The following morning Daniel is confronted by landowner Mr. Bandy (Hans Howes), who is privy to Daniel’s sin the night before and demands he repent at Eli’s “Church of the Third Revelation” before he will sell his land. Daniel repents at Eli’s Church and acknowledges that he has

“abandoned his child,” but harbours a clear resentment for Eli as he does.<sup>36</sup> The exchange highlights the importance of family to Daniel’s character, yet his later actions contradict this notion.

Daniel eventually reunites with H.W. after a relatively brief period, but his resentment of those around him has grown to the point of no return. For years, Daniel grows more distant, more resentful, until finally, in 1927, he admits to a now fully grown H.W. (Russell Harvard) that the sole purpose of his adoption was that, in his own self-interest, he “needed a sweet face to buy land.”<sup>37</sup> As H.W. leaves to operate his own oil fields in Mexico with his wife, Mary Sunday (Eli’s little sister), Daniel is left in his cavernous, empty mansion in a drunken stupor. In the film’s closing sequence, Daniel is visited in his private bowling alley by Eli, who has returned to California following a stint in radio or television preaching and attempts to sell Daniel more land to drill, specifically, the Bandy Tract. Daniel sees through Eli’s ruse that he is, in fact, bankrupt and only came to Daniel for his wealth. He reveals to Eli that through the phenomenon of “drainage”, the Bandy Tract is now devoid of oil by virtue of the surrounding wells draining oil out from underneath the tract. Eli is now helpless and becomes the sole outlet for Daniel’s hate, drunkenness, and insanity, as Daniel brutally murders his former companion with a bowling pin (note Kitses’ categories of “savagery” and “brutalisation”). Physically exhausted by the feat with Eli’s blood pooling beside him, Daniel is approached by his butler, and when questioned, simply responds: “I’m finished,” thus ending the film.

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<sup>36</sup> Paul Thomas Anderson, dir., *There Will Be Blood* (Paramount Vantage, 2007), DVD.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

With an understanding of *There Will Be Blood*'s score construction, as well as an understanding of historical scoring practices in the western genre, a detailed analysis of the film's score can now be conducted. The following chapter analyzes the role of Greenwood's music (both original and pre-composed) in creating generic subversion in the film. Additionally, the chapter explores the contextual relationship of Greenwood's music with the film's remaining non-diegetic, "non-Greenwood" music (Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* and Johannes Brahms' *Violin Concerto in D Major, op.77*), as well as the use of diegetic gospel songs in contradicting generic tropes. Rather than addressing each instance of music, I will address only specific cues in the film that are narratively, audio-visually, and generically significant.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Music as Generic Subversion in *There Will Be Blood*

“Some of the film cues are similar [to other works] in their harmonies. I still tend to write stuff that starts as chord-sequences and once you apply them to strings, you realise that these are often echoes of very old ideas.”<sup>1</sup>

*There Will Be Blood*'s score consists of three primary categories: (1) original music composed specifically for the film by Greenwood; (2) Greenwood's pre-existing music used in the film; (3) and music by composers other than Greenwood (i.e., Jones, Scriven, Pärt, and Brahms). Each of these categories will be discussed and analyzed in their relation to the film, and, in the case of the music not written by other composers, their relation to Greenwood's music as well. While the dominant focus of this project is Greenwood's music, both pre-existing and original, the other elements of the score interact with his music in meaningful ways and thus warrant their own measure of discussion. It must be noted that an exhaustive analysis of each piece of music featured in the score is not the aim of this project. While there is undoubtedly much to discuss regarding each cue, I have elected to include only those cues which exhibit connection to Greenwood's prior compositional styles and, more importantly, exert a measure of generic subversion on the traditional audio-visual tropes of the western film.

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<sup>1</sup> Lucy Jones, “Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood Q&A – Blending Classical Music with Rock,” *New Music Express* (February 18, 2014), [www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-jonny-greenwood-qa-blending-classical-music-with-rock-771598](http://www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/radioheads-jonny-greenwood-qa-blending-classical-music-with-rock-771598) (accessed November 15, 2016).

Before proceeding, however, a moment must be taken to address the complex issue of authorship in film. Much like Greenwood's relationship with Radiohead, the nature of film making is collaborative. As such, the audio-video relations in *There Will Be Blood* are attributed to Greenwood with the understanding that key figures in the film making process had considerable influence in the resulting relationships as well. These key figures are most notably the director, Paul Thomas Anderson, editor Dylan Tichenor, and sound editors Matthew Wood and Christopher Scarabosio. These individuals were involved in decisions pertaining to where exactly music should be placed, which music to use (whether in part or in entirety), how long it should be used, at what volume, and more. As such, it is their collective treatment of the film's music in relation to the picture that gives the score its subversive quality. Mera describes this situation, stating that "[t]he materiality in *There Will Be Blood* reflects the fluidity of the collaborative method, the clear directorial selection of musical materials and the relative inexperience of the composer, a potent mixture resulting in the disregard for certain scoring conventions and 'rules'."<sup>2</sup> As an experienced director, Anderson in particular has a strong understanding of music's role in film, and a clear vision of how he can use music to achieve his directorial goals.<sup>3</sup> According to Michael Slowik, "Anderson regularly harnesses...sounds to his explorations of humans' relationship to their outside world."<sup>4</sup> This is particularly important in *There Will Be Blood*, given not only Daniel Plainview's relation to the *earth* which he exploits for wealth, but also the western genre's heavy reliance on the qualities of the earth and *landscape* for generic fluency.

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<sup>2</sup> Miguel Mera, "Materializing Film Music," in *The Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 167.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Slowik, "Isolation and connection: unbounded sound in the films of Paul Thomas Anderson," *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 13, no. 2 (2015): 150.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 152.

## Greenwood's Original Music

Greenwood's original music for *There Will Be Blood*, which accounts for approximately thirty-four percent of the film's score, serves a two-fold purpose: it must complement his pre-existing music used in the film, as well as adapt to the filmic material it accompanies. Extremely significant is the way in which Greenwood wrote this music. Mera notes that Greenwood "did not write music directly to picture and instead provided a range of pieces that were spotted, edited and re-configured... [Thus, he was not] expected to hit specific cue points or to write around dialogue."<sup>5</sup> This musical liberty allowed Greenwood to effectively merge the streams of film and concert composition as he explored his relatively new compositional language in the context of a new medium. Furthermore, he was able to draw on his previous experience of writing music in a concert context to create music which was simultaneously subservient to the film, and musically independent. In this way the film's music can be connected to Greenwood's previous compositional styles. In general, Greenwood's original music draws similarity to his previous styles with its episodic nature, its reliance on harmonic progression as a structural tool, and the inclusion of the ondes martenot. It differs in its heavy development of motivic material, as well as its inclusion of the piano as a prominent instrument.

Regarding the overall role of Greenwood's original music in the film, it is (almost) entirely non-diegetic, and is most often associated with the film's primary character, Daniel Plainview, and occasionally his son, H.W. Miguel Mera argues that the Greenwood's music (through its inherent hapticity) invites the audio-viewer to not only

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<sup>5</sup> Mera, "Materializing Film Music," 167.

physically experience Plainview's emotions throughout the film, stating that "when we observe Plainview [aurally and visually] we also experience a tiny part of ourselves."<sup>6</sup> The hapticity of the music is not only limited to Daniel's character, as Mera notes, but also to the earth and landscape itself. This connection between the music and landscape is crucial not only in observing haptic cause and effect, but in cementing the film's genre itself. Greenwood's music is oftentimes driven by *texture* and, through the use of "microtones, clusters and aleatoric and extended instrumental techniques," reflects and embodies the rugged earth so crucial to the film.<sup>7</sup> Simultaneously, the textural qualities of his music (which range from harsh and noisy to smooth and pure) enact upon the viewer feelings of uneasiness, fear, melancholy, and comfort at various stages of the film.

Contextually, Greenwood's original music accompanies several significant plot points in the film as well as montage sequences that show the passage of time. But to refer to the role of Greenwood's complex and nuanced score as mere *underscoring* is an injustice. Such an interpretation diminishes its capacity to comment on and *disrupt* generic expectations of the film. Thus, the term *overscoring* is perhaps more apt. Chicago Symphony Orchestra guest conductor Donato Cabrera notes in a 2015 interview that "Jonny Greenwood's soundtracks...have a wonderful way of exploring the interior characters that are a hallmark of particularly P.T. Anderson's films...With Jonny's music, what he explores and shows...is a sense of [Daniel's] inner turmoil and incredible angst and this drive to succeed at all cost; this sort of Machiavellian attempt to conquer

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 158.



his world.”<sup>8</sup> Given this understanding of the music as a commentary on, and a reflection of Daniel’s character, the role of instrumentation in the score becomes particularly significant. Most notably, the presence of the ondes martenot becomes representative of Daniel’s interactions with others (whether sincere or insincere), while the strings reflect his darker, more relentless side. The presence of the piano serves as an embodiment of his declining mental stability throughout the film.

Generically, Greenwood’s use of the ondes martenot in scoring a western film is, in and of itself, a generic “faux pas.” Furthermore, his exclusion of the generically “acceptable” guitar signifies a deliberate abandonment of western scoring tropes in favour of more personal expression and ideas. Even the violin, which, in films like *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, typically carries a diegetic, parlour-friendly connotation, is used atypically in the creation of large scale textures as opposed to folk-based melodies. Well aware of the generic conventions surrounding the use of the ondes martenot, Greenwood notes that “[i]t’s often treated as a special effects device, because of the unearthly noises it can make such as ghostly, swooping tones in science fiction films.”<sup>9</sup> Even Greenwood’s description of the instrument violates the fundamental principle of earthliness so crucial to *There Will Be Blood* and the western genre as a whole. Overall, Greenwood does not concern himself with an overabundance of leitmotifs, grand orchestration, simple underscoring, and iconic melodies as historical western scores have, but with intricate and detailed character representation. Thus, Greenwood’s primary

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<sup>8</sup> Mia Clarke, “About Jonny Greenwood’s Suite from ‘There Will Be Blood,’” Chicago Symphony Orchestra Sounds & Stories (January 22, 2015), [www.csosoundsandstories.org/about-jonny-greenwoods-suite-from-there-will-be-blood/](http://www.csosoundsandstories.org/about-jonny-greenwoods-suite-from-there-will-be-blood/) (accessed April 3, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Jonny Greenwood, programme notes from *Smear* (Essex: Faber Music Ltd, 2004), [www.fabermusic.com/repertoire/smear-47](http://www.fabermusic.com/repertoire/smear-47) (accessed April 17, 2017).

attachment lies with the internal (the character) rather than the external (the surroundings).

According to Greenwood, the ondes martenot is the most human, “voice-like” and “expressive” of digital instruments with an ability to create natural glissandi, volume swells, and vibrato, which are largely the reason for his attraction to the instrument.<sup>10</sup> By analyzing this “human” element of the ondes martenot as a representation of Daniel’s humanity, certain musical features begin to develop important relations to visual moments in the film. Essentially, the listener can use the presence (or absence) of the ondes martenot, among other features, to gauge Daniel’s emotional state, motives, and sincerity. Thus, the most generically inappropriate instrument in the film’s score becomes arguable the most important.

### **“Open Spaces”**

The ondes martenot is first heard during an early sequence in the film wherein Daniel is approached in his office by Eli’s twin brother, Paul Sunday. Paul offers to disclose the location of his oil-rich family ranch to Daniel in exchange for \$500. Daniel, ever the strategist, attempts to trick Paul into disclosing the information with seemingly harmless questions, but Paul counters stating “I’d like it better if you didn’t think I was stupid.” The cue (titled “Open Spaces”) begins softly as Daniel, uncharacteristically outmatched in a battle of wits, pays Paul for the information. The film shifts to a scene depicting Paul, H.W., Daniel, and Daniel’s business partner, Fletcher Henderson, overlooking a map as Paul points out the ranch’s location (0:22:57). After having

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<sup>10</sup> Caroline Martel, dir., *Wavemakers*, National Film Board of Canada, 2012. [www.nfb.ca/film/wavemakers/](http://www.nfb.ca/film/wavemakers/) (accessed May 1, 2017).

disclosed the location of his family ranch and effectively dooming them to Daniel's merciless capitalism, Paul leaves the office, never to be seen again.

Serving as the second instance of music in the film (following the initial dissonant and unsettling exposition of the film's first frames), "Open Spaces" is, in a way, the musical antithesis of what I later describe as the "locust motif" in that it is tonal, minimalistic, and eerily comforting.<sup>11</sup> Beginning as a mere whisper of sustained strings and ondes martenot underscoring Paul and Daniel's dialogue, the title, "Open Spaces," becomes relevant as the music bridges over a cut to a low-level shot of a railroad track in a wide, open landscape. Furthermore, the title also alludes to the cue's primary motive: the perfect—or "open"—fifth heard in the celli and double basses. This open fifth serves as a recurring punctuation throughout the cue that effectively "resets" the piece. With each subsequent iteration of the cue, however, the musical material between these fifths (performed by the violins, viola, and ondes martenot), become progressively more altered.



**Figure 5.1** A shot of a railroad track near Little Boston accompanied by the cue "Open Spaces."

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<sup>11</sup> For an analysis of the film's exposition and the locust motif in particular see pages 75-81.

The nearly static wide shot of the landscape is, traditionally, a prime opportunity for lush orchestration and soaring melodies drawing influence from traditional Americana, as heard in westerns such as *Stagecoach* (1939). Alternatively, a simple ambiance or silence, as heard briefly in *No Country For Old Men* (2007), for example, is equally as evocative of the vast, open landscape. Instead, Greenwood minimizes the scene to the most basic of intervals (besides the unison or octave), a homophonic movement between the strings and ondes martenot, and two relationally ambiguous triads (Figure 5.2). The music reflects not so much on the grandeur of the landscape, but more so the relative purity of the wilderness (recall Kiteses shifting antinomies which include “wilderness” and “purity”). The simplicity of the alternation between C#-major and G#-minor triads (albeit juxtaposed over a sustained C#-major making the technical harmony that of a C# dominant ninth chord) results in a rich harmonic colour. The sustained open fifth in the lower strings imbues the shot with stability and breadth. In the distance, Daniel and H.W. approach by car as the static, wide shot dollies backwards, simultaneously panning to the right and following their vehicle. The new framing reveals noticeable features of civilization (i.e., small structures, fences, telephone poles) and, as if reacting to the foreign bodies in an untouched landscape, the music begins to change. A brief but exotic melody shown in Figure 5.3 is introduced in the violin and cello parts. This brief instance of “melodic divergence,” whereby the melody begins to stray from its previously sustained pitch, counters the diatonic implications of the key signature with nearly every other note in what becomes an aural representation of a visual perversion of environment. The first inklings of this melodic divergence (Figure 5.5) are heard, albeit more subtly, during Daniel and Paul’s earlier interaction when Paul first begins

describing the landscape to Daniel in his office. Due to the music’s role as an underscore in this previous scene, however, it is not nearly as flaunted as with the following shot of the open landscape.

The musical score for measures 29-33 of "Open Spaces" is presented in a four-staff system. The top staff is for Ondes Martenot, the second for Violins & Violas, the third for Violin, and the bottom for Cello & Double Bass. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) at the start of the system. The Ondes Martenot part starts with a *p* (piano) dynamic and a *ff* (fortissimo) crescendo. The Violins & Violas and Violin parts also start with a *p* dynamic and a *ff* crescendo. The Cello & Double Bass part starts with a *f* dynamic and a *ff* crescendo. The music features sustained chords and melodic lines with long note values.

**Figure 5.2** “Open Spaces,” mm.29-33, reduced and reproduced from *Suite from There Will Be Blood* perusal score (Faber Music Ltd., 2012).

The musical score for measures 36-42 of "Open Spaces" is presented in a three-staff system. The top staff is for Ondes Martenot (O.M.), the middle for Violin (Vln.), and the bottom for Cello (Vc.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) at the start of the system. The Ondes Martenot part starts with a *p* (piano) dynamic and a *f* (forte) crescendo. The Violin part starts with a *p* dynamic and a *f* crescendo. The Cello part starts with a *f* dynamic and a *p* (piano) dynamic. The music features sustained chords and melodic lines with long note values.

**Figure 5.3** “Open Spaces,” mm.36-42, displaying melodic divergence in cello and violin parts.

The ondes martenot in this cue is particularly significant. Recalling that the instrument is related to Daniel’s ever-diminishing humanity and compassion, it is noteworthy that, in terms of melodic divergence, the “most human” of the instruments remains relatively unsullied. In keeping with the film’s strong religious themes, it seems that the instruments’ relative pitch and position in the staff system can be directly linked

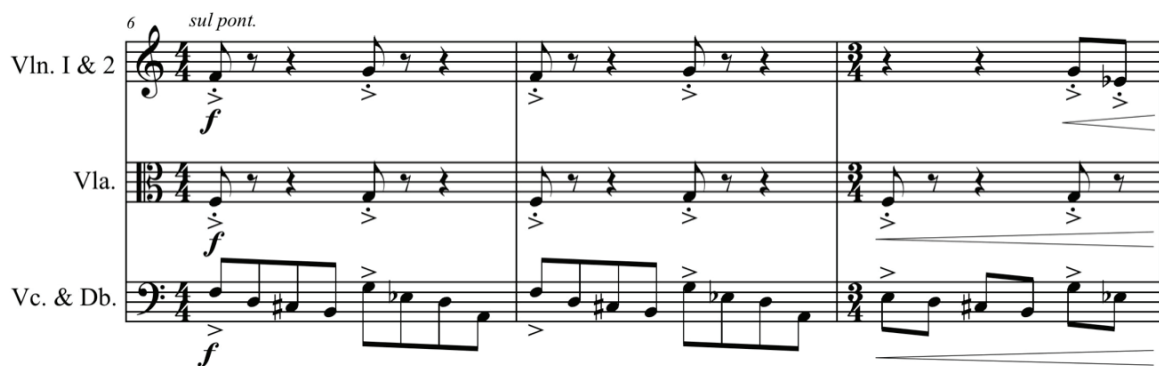
to their figurative proximity to the *earth*. The skies, or more appropriately, the “heavens,” perhaps are represented by the *ondes martenot* and remain largely untouched, while the bowels of the earth (celli and basses) experience the most divergence and corruption (Figure 5.3). The violins exist somewhere between the two extremes. Thus, Greenwood’s music embodies not only the horizontal vastness of the landscape that we expect, but highlights the *verticality* of the scenery as well.

### **“Future Markets”**

Much like “Open Spaces,” the film’s next cue, “Future Markets,” serves as an unconventional commentary on typical (revisionist) western subject matter: industry, capitalism and settlement. Situated in the film’s first act, Daniel and H.W. meet with Eli Sunday (Paul’s twin brother) and his father, Abel Sunday, to strike a deal regarding the purchase of Abel’s land. Daniel initially offers a meager payment of \$3700 for the Sunday’s land under the premise that he is purchasing merely for the luxury of hunting quail. Eli, knowing about their untouched oil, demands \$10,000 instead. After a strained debate, a clearly frustrated Daniel finally offers Eli a \$5000 signing bonus to build his “Church of the Third Revelation” in addition to his original offer (0:36:20). During this back and forth between Daniel and Eli, Abel and H.W. become largely inconsequential and are predominantly off-screen. The two primary figures, Daniel and Eli, are, in typical frontier fashion, largely concerned with their own self-interests as opposed to the interests of those around them.

The cue begins, once again, by underscoring a discussion, this time between Daniel and the second Sunday twin, Eli. The overall mood of the underscore during

Daniel’s earlier conversation with Paul contrasts sharply with his conversation with Eli during this engagement. Daniel and Paul’s conversation is accompanied with a bed of soft strings, both harmonically and melodically simple, while Daniel and Eli’s engagement is underscored with a hard, driving eighth note ostinato in the lower strings, relentless in its motion as if steamrolling its way through rough terrain (Figure 5.4). The music remains unobtrusive during Daniel and Eli’s negotiation as it shies from the dialogue and reaches a moment of rest as the scene cuts to a crane shot of Daniel and H.W. driving toward the train station. The music engages in full force following this brief pause wherein the camera tilts upwards to reveal the horizon, train tracks, and a train station.



**Figure 5.4** “Future Markets,” m.6 coinciding with a hard cut to the train station following Daniel and Eli’s discussion at the Sunday Ranch.

The dominating presence of the lower strings commands the listener’s attention and lends a sense of urgency to the mise-en-scène and narrative. The clear connection to industry is made as the eighth notes quickly become synchronized with the rhythmic chugging of a train approaching from screen right. The imagery of the train itself is a commentary on the negative effects of settlement, industrialization, and the relentless pursuit of capital gain as it spews thick black smoke into the sky, similar to the earthly

ichor that spews from Daniel's oil derricks. Once again, the horizontality so crucial to the western is invaded by a vertical element, this time the visual black smoke. The steady introduction of the train's sound also invokes a certain diegetic ambiguity and the connection between sound effect and music links the two sources in context and commentary. This musical association with the train—a staple of the western, grounding it both historically and contextually—is also rather peculiar. The train could be interpreted as a positive element of the western linked with industrial triumph and promotion of travel and community, but Greenwood's score imbues it with a menacing quality. Much like in *Blazing Saddles* (Mel Brooks, 1974), the railroad, or more specifically the *construction* of a railroad, spells the *destruction* of a frontier town as opposed to its increased interconnection with other cities and states. Regardless of symbolism, however, the music, originally self-perpetuating and entirely non-diegetic, becomes almost tangibly intertwined with the menacing train.

The music also embodies the dystrophy of the film's subject matter in a subtler way through recurring pitch content. The melodic and harmonic material features a set of recurring pitches (C#–D–Eb–F) comprising a [0124] pitch set, also found in the first instance of melodic expansion in “Open Spaces” (Figure 5.5). This cluster of pitches was but a brief instance of melodic divergence in an earlier scene, but is now the dominant feature of the film. The music, relentless and unescapable, grabs the attention of the viewer even more so than the film's visual elements. Furthermore, the “human” element of the ondes martenot is entirely absent from this cue, detaching the music from any sense of humanity. With this cue, Greenwood uses harmonic language and



instrumentation to effectively undermine, and shift attention from, the landscape. Instead, he highlights industrialization the perverse effects of industry and capitalism.



Figure 5.5 “Open Spaces,” m.10-14 where a single violin displays the first instance of melodic divergence

### “Prospector Arrives”

The ondes martenot returns during the cue “Prospector Arrives,” which, by instrumentation and title, is firmly associated with Daniel. Appended to the end of “Future Markets,” this cue accompanies a parallel montage of Daniel speaking at a town hall meeting in Little Boston (assuring the townsfolk of his good intentions), as well as oil workers arriving by train, settling in, and constructing the first oil derrick (0:41:27). As Daniel interacts with the townspeople in his usual suave and commanding manner of speech, the ondes martenot is heard at its most emotive and vulnerable. Overall, the combination of the *mise en scène*, as well as Daniel’s monologue, promotes the sense of *community* so crucial to the western.

The music, however, is devoid of nearly all sense of community. The ondes martenot, supported only by the piano in a strictly harmonic role, is isolated, and, by extension, so is Daniel. All connections to communal American folksong or even communal music-making instruments (i.e., guitar, fiddle, or parlour style piano) are absent. Instead, the viewer is left to absorb the rumbling, somber piano chords and the forlorn ondes martenot, an other-worldly instrument few listeners can even recognize (Figure 5.6). Even the melodic content of the cue consists of only three notes. Together, these pitches (E—F#—E#) create another [012] cluster pitch set, a sub set of the [0124]

pitch set used in “Open Spaces” and “Future Markets.” This clustered pitch set distances the cue even further from the pentatonicism or diatonicism of Americana folk song.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 5.6** “Prospector Arrives,” m.6 where the ondes martenot and piano enter with a doubled melody an octave apart.

The cue does feature a second section, however, that is musically rather different but still underlines the same theme of isolation, this time to the point of insanity. During this second iteration of “Prospector Arrives” during the film’s final act, a grown-up H.W. learns of his adoption and, after being ridiculed by Daniel, leaves his father’s mansion, stating, “I thank God that I have none of you in me.” During this exchange, a drunken Daniel sits in a darkened room on his luxurious “throne” and spits insults at H.W., calling him a “bastard in a basket.” As H.W. leaves and Daniel is left alone (save his off screen business associate), the ondes martenot’s melody returns, this time performed by the “less human” violin. Furthermore, the piano accompaniment is no longer somber and lurching, but has become more haphazard, less tonal, and more chaotic. As the film cuts to a flashback of Daniel’s bittersweet interactions with a young H.W., the original, more sincere arrangement of the cue returns and the piano recedes to another somber

<sup>12</sup> This melodic motive will pervade several of Greenwood’s cues for the film including “Prospector’s Quartet” and “Oil” in various melodic and harmonic contexts.

accompaniment. The ondes martenot returns once again as Daniel reflects on the past, but the addition of the strings into the instrumentation simultaneously tethers him to the present. Both instrumentally and melodically, the cue highlights Daniel's *isolation*, the antithesis of his relation to community.

Thus, "Prospector Arrives" serves simultaneously as a representation of isolation from community, as well as a reflection of Daniel's mental state throughout the film. In his earlier years, prior to Henry's murder, the ondes martenot—Daniel's "human" representation—is prominent yet bittersweet. During his later years, however, this purity of the ondes martenot makes way for the less pure instrumentation of the violin and piano, and becomes scattered, jarring, and more akin to other cues such as "Eat Him by His Own Light" or, more befittingly, "Prospector's Quartet."

### **"Prospector's Quartet"**

Furthering the music's commentary on familial and communal bonds, the cue "Prospector's Quartet"—directly linked to "Prospector Arrives" by title and thematic material—is perhaps the most classical of Greenwood's cues. While the name implies connection to Daniel, it is more appropriately attributed to H.W.<sup>13</sup> At this point in the narrative, H.W. begins his own journey towards becoming an "oil man" (as Daniel presents himself at the beginning of the film), but one with honour, integrity, and less self-interest, less corrupted, and more concerned with communal and familial ties.

Functionally, the cue serves as the underlying music for another montage in the final act.

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<sup>13</sup> Greenwood states in an interview that certain cues were written specifically with H.W. in mind. As H.W.'s character is more in line with traditional western tropes, I have elected to discuss Daniel's musical associations (for the most part) instead. Niall Byrne, "An interview with Jonny Greenwood," *Nialler9* (2011), [www.nialler9.com/jonny-greenwood-interview](http://www.nialler9.com/jonny-greenwood-interview) (accessed May 3, 2017).

With very little dialogue, this montage shows several important developments leading up to the film's final scenes: Eli boards a train to Bakersfield, California to spread the word of his church; a young H.W. learns sign language pertaining to the oil business with Mary Sunday by his side; a grown-up H.W. and Mary Sunday get married 1927, with Daniel nowhere in frame. The cue ends with a shot of Daniel's luxurious bowling alley inside his mansion, seen in Figure 5.7. The symmetry and depth of the shot directly references the railroad featured in "Open Spaces" yet is vastly different given that the end of "Prospector's Quartet" coincides with this shot. The once "open spaces" of the rugged California landscape have been all but exterminated, closed in on all sides by Daniel's extravagant yet prison-like home. Furthermore, the once serene music that accompanied the former landscape has been euthanized.



**Figure 5.7** A shot of Daniel's private bowling alley (reminiscent of the railroad tracks shown in Figure 5.1) coinciding with the end of "Prospector's Quartet."

The cue is primarily constructed of melodic material heard in "Prospector Arrives," although, as the name suggests, arranged for a string quartet. Once again, the absence of the ondes martenot represents Daniel's utter lack of compassion and integrity

at this point in the narrative. Simultaneously, however, the piece serves as a variation on a theme to distance the cue from Daniel and associates it more firmly with H.W. As H.W.'s biological relation with Daniel is revealed to be non-existent, the absence of the eerie, other-worldly ondes martenot so closely knit with Daniel's character is understandable. Instead, H.W.'s arrangement features the more traditional, approachable, communal, and more wedding-appropriate instrumentation of the string quartet. The interaction of the string quartet as a medium as well as the increased activity in each part promotes community and interaction between performers. This interaction evokes a sense of communal music making that is largely unexplored in the film. This highlighting of community, while incongruous with Daniel, is very much in line with H.W.'s character traits and values.

This depiction of one character drawn to the warmth of communal and familial ties, as well as another character who purposely isolates themselves from it, is reminiscent of John Ford's iconic western, *The Searchers* (1965). In the final scene of *The Searchers*, John Wayne's character, a violent ex-soldier, wanders alone into the rugged terrain while his brother chooses to live with his wife, her parents, and their children. The choice of community over individual pursuits is depicted as more commendable as the music, featuring four men singing a traditional cowboy ballad in harmony, comments on the extreme lonesomeness that results from isolation from one's family and community. *There Will Be Blood* ends similarly with Daniel choosing a life of isolation as H.W. and Mary begin their journey to Mexico to start their own oil company.

## Greenwood's Pre-Existing Music

Present in *There Will Be Blood* are fragments of two of Greenwood's previous classical compositions—*Smear* (2004) and *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (2005)—as well as the cue “Convergence” from his first film, *Body Song* (Simon Pummell 2003). Greenwood's pre-existing music featured in *There Will Be Blood*, which constitutes approximately forty percent of the entire score, simultaneously exerts influence on his original music for the film, while retaining its own particular qualities. These qualities are generally those of instrumentation, such as the string orchestra (*Popcorn Superhet Receiver*), two ondes martenot and minimal brass (*Smear*), and percussion (“Convergence”). Additionally, they feature more explorative harmonic language, particularly through the use of microtones. *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, in particular, is featured heavily in the score. This is largely due to its episodic and multi-textural style, lending its applicability to a variety of filmic contexts. I will discuss several key scenes in the film that feature Greenwood's pre-composed music in which the tropes of the western genre are challenged.

### ***Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (“Henry Plainview”)**

*There Will Be Blood*'s opening sequence serves as one of the film's most defining moments. During this crucial establishment of genre, Greenwood's music occupies an extremely significant role, which, from the very first frames of the film, counteracts the scoring conventions of the western genre. The historical convention of introductory credits accompanied by iconic theme songs (as heard in singing cowboy features or

Leone's spaghetti westerns) is utterly rejected. Furthermore, ascribing a "theme song" to *There Will Be Blood* is nearly impossible given the lack of substantial melody in the score. Instead, the film begins with an antiquated title screen showing the film's biblically stylized title in white text on a black background, quavering to evoke early film projection technology. These stylistic decisions place the film in a historical context even before its first diegetic frames. The title screen fades away and a fade from black establishes a large, tri-peaked hill (Figure 5.8), easily identifiable as the south-western region of the United States (specifically New Mexico). Once again, the "spectacular landscape" so entrenched in the western genre is not only present, but flaunted. It is this firm generic trope that allows the viewer to identify the film as a western almost immediately.<sup>14</sup> Thus, by the first shot, the film has already been established geographically, historically, and therefore, generically. Musically, however, another story unfolds. From the blackness of the introduction emerge *two* significant events, one that establishes the genre (the landscape), and one that contradicts it (the music).



**Figure 5.8** An opening frame from *There Will Be Blood* following the title screen and the visual accompaniment to the first instance of the locust motif.

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<sup>14</sup> Robynn Stilwell, "The Western," in *Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 217.

Bubbling below the surface during the title screen is the soft yet unsettling sonority of a micro-tonal sound wall performed by a string orchestra. Coinciding with the fade in to the desolate landscape, the strings dramatically converge onto a unison F# reaching fortissimo, before veering off and diminishing once more to a wall of percolating chaos. As scholar George Toles notes, it is “[t]he music [that] infects, by association, our initial view of the rolling hills of the New Mexico desert.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, the quality of the underscoring contradicts the established generic and historical setting of the film. This motif was previously explored in m.86 of Greenwood’s *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (2005), as well as “Climbing up the Walls” (*OK Computer*, 1997), and it does not hide its contemporary origins.<sup>16</sup> In the context of the film, I refer to this chaotic theme as the “locust” motif due not only to its resemblance to the chaotic sound of swarming locusts, but to stress its alignment with the film’s overarching religious themes. Functionally, it serves two purposes: it is simultaneously a mode of underscoring—albeit more *overscoring* as it is the music which *establishes* the emotion of the scene, rather than merely emphasizing it—and it also serves as a leitmotif associated with Daniel’s narrative trajectory. With its atypical harmonic language and timbre verging on sound effect, the music evokes more of a post-apocalyptic setting, or, perhaps, even an alien planet. Indeed, the locust motif would be well situated in a space western such as *Cowboys & Aliens* (Jon Favreau, 2011) as opposed to *There Will Be Blood*. Regarding the decision to overscore the film intro with such counterintuitive music, Toles posits that

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<sup>15</sup> George Toles, *Paul Thomas Anderson* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 58.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that the actual music used for this sequence comes from the cue “Henry Plainview” recorded specifically for the film. Despite this technical classification as an original piece written by Greenwood specifically for the film, the cue is undoubtedly an adaptation of material heard in *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, thus qualifying it as a pre-existing piece.



“Anderson and Greenwood’s strategy is to build (at the very outset of the narrative) a sense of internal discord already stretched to the breaking point, before we are given a terrain or a specific character to contend with.”<sup>17</sup> Needless to say, they are successful.

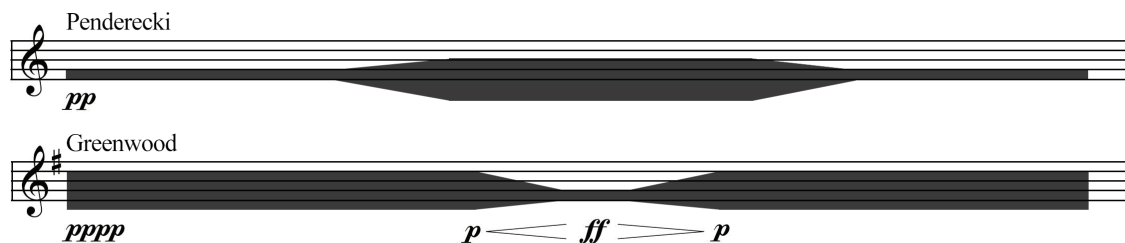
In the film’s first scene we meet Daniel, dirty and alone, picking for silver in a small mine shaft somewhere in New Mexico. This dimly lit, claustrophobic, and largely *vertical* environment serves as a stark contrast with the horizontality and openness of the establishing shot, and situates Daniel as a man driven by a desire for wealth. He is less concerned with what is *on* the earth than what is *inside* of it. Daniel emerges from the shaft to blast the shale loose from the walls, but is unable to hoist his tools out of the shaft before the explosion. As he descends to retrieve his tools, his ladder gives way and he is sent plummeting into the shaft. Framed from below with a hard light emphasizing his silhouette as he speeds downwards towards the camera, Daniel’s fall is, in a way, akin to that of Lucifer, a figure with whom Daniel shares startling similarity. Daniel’s “demonic” qualities recur throughout the film, further enforcing the religious undertones of his locust-like leitmotif. Upon awakening after the fall, one of Daniel’s first acts (prior to assessing his shattered leg) is to check the rubble for silver and, upon finding some, he utters the first significant dialogue of the film: “there she is...there she is...” referring, of course, to the veins of silver in the blasted rock. Daniel painstakingly climbs his way out of the mine and into the desolate landscape, at which point the camera tilts up to reveal once more the tri-peaked hill that appeared in the opening shot now with narrative context. Even with this context, however, the music is still largely incongruous with the *mise en scène*. Daniel, alone, feeble, and crawling towards the hilltop, would normally merit sympathy from the viewer; however, the accompanying locust motif signals that the

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<sup>17</sup> Toles, *Paul Thomas Anderson*, 58.

view should, in fact, question their initial emotional response. In this instance, the music serves simultaneously to “foreshadow narrative developments and contribute to the way we respond to them.”<sup>18</sup>

Generically, the locust motif lacks all identifiable features, not only of western scores, but of most musical genres as well (e.g., rhythm, pulse, harmony, and melody). Such a bold statement and utter abandonment of traditional musical elements at the outset of the film immediately calls into question the viewer’s conception of the film’s genre. Greenwood, as he did with the inclusion of the ondes martenot in the score, is drawing influence from different generic worlds in order to achieve this effect, most notably, the psychological thriller. The motif’s relationship to Penderecki’s *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* is particularly clear here. Used in film’s such as Stanley Kubrick’s psychological horror film *The Shining* (1980), as well as Alfonso Cuarón’s dystopian science-fiction thriller *Children of Men* (2006), the physically unsettling qualities of *Threnody*’s microtonal language have been used specifically to incite uneasiness and even fear. Due to its imitative style, the overall effect and goal of the locust motif is similar. Using a graphic notation based on those seen in *Threnody*, the striking similarities between Greenwood’s motive and Penderecki’s are displayed in Figure 5.9.



**Figure 5.9** Image outlining Penderecki’s original motif as seen in *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (above) and Greenwood’s locust motif as heard in *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* (below). Pitch range is accurate but durations are not to scale.

<sup>18</sup> Kathryn Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1.

Though crucial to the film's exposition, the locust motif is not restricted to this one scene in the film. It functions as a rare yet instantly recognizable leitmotif that occurs for the second time when Daniel murders and buries his (false) brother, Henry.<sup>19</sup> Daniel's suspicions arise earlier in the film when he joyfully reminisces with Henry about the annual "Peachtree Dance" in their hometown of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. During Daniel's uncharacteristically joyful recollection, Henry seems only minimally invested. Later, they attend a brothel as per Henry's suggestion, but Daniel only observes Henry with a look of suspicion and disdain as he mingles drunkenly with the escorts. Notably, the brothel is absent of the generically typical boisterous diegetic music and is, instead, underscored by the unsettling, sustained beat frequencies heard in Greenwood's *Smear*. A quick cut reveals Daniel's face, harshly lit by the flickering campfire, almost demonic with its red glow, as he stoops over a sleeping Henry and draws his pistol. An exchange of dialogue (more in line with an interrogation) confirms that Henry is merely assuming the position of Daniel's real brother who died coming to see him. As Henry pleads to be released, Daniel promptly executes him and buries the corpse.

As the life fades from Henry's eyes and body, the viewer once again hears the percolating, incessant buzz of the locust motif. It builds steadily and reaches its hallmark point of unison as Daniel relentlessly hacks away at the earth with his pickaxe, as in the film's opening scene. Unique to this iteration of the motif, however, is a resonance between picture and music. In the new scene, the motif is now fully contextualized and serves to highlight another key aspect of the western: violence. Violence, or

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<sup>19</sup> Technically, this is the third iteration of the motif but, given that the first and second instances are the same scene spliced into different moments of the film, this iteration should, for all intents and purposes, be considered the second instance.

“brutalisation” in Kitses’ words, forms a core tenet of the western genre which is largely built on blood, both indigenous and foreign. However, musical representations of these moments of violence are, traditionally, a far cry from the hair-raising timbre of Greenwood’s locust motif.<sup>20</sup> One need only look back at *Stagecoach* (1939) with its active, galloping rhythm and blaring brass section accompanying the fight scene between the indigenous population and the stagecoach riders. More recently, Morricone’s iconic “Ecstasy of Gold” cue from the final three-way Mexican standoff at the end of *The Good, The Bad and the Ugly* (1969) shows the sharp contrast between traditional depictions of violence and Greenwood’s contemporary, horror-inspired sound wall.

### ***Popcorn Superhet Receiver (“Proven Lands”)***

Another significant reappearance of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* in *There Will Be Blood* is the previously discussed *Part 2b*, or, according to the film’s official soundtrack title, “Proven Lands.” This movement is set to yet another montage in which Daniel and Henry visit Little Boston landowner Mr. Bandy in hopes of purchasing his land to lay an oil pipeline. Mr. Bandy, however, is absent when they arrive and is not set to return for a few days. Undeterred, Daniel and Henry begin to survey the land over an unspecified timeframe while they await Mr. Bandy. The montage, driven forward by the percussive and rhythmic string section, reaches an abrupt end with the two “brothers” on horseback overlooking another type of sprawling “landscape:” the ocean.

As discussed in the analysis of Greenwood’s classical compositional style, the key feature of *Part 2b* lies in its strumming of stringed instruments with guitar plectrums, the

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<sup>20</sup> Jim Kitses, *Horizons West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 11.

resulting effect of which is largely similar to the recurring eighth note pattern of the hi-hat in a standard rock groove. Generically speaking, the string orchestra corresponds (almost) directly with the standard practice of scoring orchestral film scores, but its application is, again, unconventional. The very drum kit which Greenwood evokes in this moment is generically outlandish in the western. Even Neil Young's score for *Dead Man* (1995), which features the heavy use of the electric guitar—an instrument recognizable as quintessential in both rock music, as well as western scores such as those of Morricone—does not go so far as to include a hint of percussion. More importantly, however, is the music's interaction with the film's stimulating sequence in terms of colour and grandeur.

Geographically, Bandy's Tract contrasts with almost all other scenery in the film. As seen in Figure 5.10, it is vast, untamed wilderness that is, for once, full of greenery. This sequence highlights the grandiose landscape with crane shots of rolling hills, large rocky crevasses, and, most importantly, the ocean. Once again, the prominence of the landscape would traditionally incite grandiose melodies and thick orchestration, yet, counterintuitively, the viewer is barraged by the percussive plucking of the string orchestra in a chugging rhythm evocative of the train heard during "Future Markets." Rather than underscoring the beauty of the landscape, Greenwood emphasizes the relentless movement forward regardless of obstacles.



**Figure 5.10** A still of the Bandy Tract as Daniel and Henry plot their oil pipeline.

The melodic material in the cue is also of interest in that it is, more so than any other of Greenwood's cues, mischievously jovial. Small sections of the string ensemble dance above the bed of plucked eighth notes in pizzicato and arco haphazardly, but largely syncopated rhythms that contribute to the overall levity of the cue. Despite the fact that no tonal key is easily identifiable—indeed the various melodies throughout the brief moment use all twelve pitch classes—the disjunct melodic fragments are aurally pleasing and almost playful in nature. Contrastingly, the music prior to this scene in the film stems from another section of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* that is brooding, dissonant, and unsettling, further adding to the bizarre gaiety of the audio-visual relationship.

In essence, the musical commentary of the montage ignores its most striking feature, the landscape, to emphasize the underlying intentions of its characters. As if representing Daniel's tunnel vision as he pushes relentlessly forward, the perpetual striking of the strings mimics the rhythmic striking of survey stakes with a hammer to embed them solidly into the earth. In a jarring instant, the music is quickly silenced when

Daniel and Henry have run out of land and reach the largest and only natural body of water in the film, the Pacific Ocean.

### **“Convergence”**

Drawing on the theme of rhythmic propulsion of a scene, no other original piece of Greenwood’s pre-composed music is as musically isolated as “Convergence.” Written for Greenwood’s first film score—*Bodysong* (Simon Pummell, 2004)—“Convergence” is consists of an entirely atypical instrument for Greenwood and, to an extent, the western genre: percussion. Adding to its emphasis, “Convergence” coincides with a pivotal moment of the film’s narrative. As the crew of roughnecks in Little Boston drill for oil with H.W. watching on, a *massive* gush of oil blasts violently out of the well, sending H.W. flying backwards and destroying a large portion of the derrick’s infrastructure in the process. Unbeknownst to Daniel, who quickly acts alongside Henry to retrieve his son, the concussive blast ruptured H.W.’s eardrums, leaving him entirely deaf for the remainder of the film. As Daniel frantically carries H.W. back to the mess hall, he learns of the severity of the situation as H.W. says, “I can’t hear my voice.” While initially concerned, Daniel’s focus quickly shifts to the massive geyser of oil (now alight with flame) that has quite literally blown the top off of his derrick (Figure 5.11). The accompanying music for this scene can only be described as *cacophonous*.

“Convergence’s” origin attests to its capacity for genre bending. It was written to accompany an entirely different genre of film with drastically different subject matter, and in the context of that experimental genre, the piece fits logically. As *Bodysong* is driven in a series of episodes, each accompanying different stages in the human life cycle

depicted through found footage with no voice over narration, the film is a sort of experimental art documentary, and as such, features experimental art *music*. In the context of the scene, the drums embody Daniel's primal greed as well as his lust for power and wealth. The rhythm, as it has in several other cues, drives him forward. Furthermore, "Convergence" serves, in effect, as the rhythmic equivalent to the locust motif wherein the former derives its unsettling timbre through manipulation of *pitch*, and the latter uses the parameter of *rhythm*.



**Figure 5.11** A still showing the sheer verticality of Daniel's oil derrick fully alight.

Perhaps drawing inspiration from György Ligeti's *Poème Symphonique* for 100 Metronomes (1962) or Steve Reich's *Piano Phase* (1989), "Convergence" is a rhythmic piece in its construction. It is built from the interaction of a series of independent rhythmic elements of varying tempi steadily layered overtop one another, quickly resulting in a cacophonous barrage of sound as it becomes difficult to distinguish the various attacks of each element in the fray. Over time, the independent elements slowly "converge" to a uniform, homorhythmic, quarter-note pulse. While Reich's *Piano Phase* contains several moments of rhythmic convergence in which *tempi* are audibly



synchronized, Ligeti's *Poème Symphonique*, while full of mathematical moments of convergence, lacks the aural clarity of these moments due to its sheer density, until many of the metronomes have exhausted their kinetic potential. "Convergence" bears resemblance to these pieces in its converging tempo, but additionally explores timbre. The resulting clamor of different instruments (e.g., a low resounding bass drum, shakers, a snare drum, wood blocks, and several more individual elements) becomes increasingly chaotic as the cue progresses.

The primary visual logic of this scene is verticality. Serving as the narrative midpoint of the film, the story has reached a high point that is reflected in the height of the flaming derrick. The film's 2.35:1 aspect ratio struggles to capture in its entirety the blazing idol to greed. Additionally, the drastic change in instrumentation from predominantly strings and ondes martenot to percussion signifies the importance of this scene. It should be noted, however, that superimposed on "Convergence," particularly the last minute of the scene, is a section of *Popcorn Superhet Receiver*, which further contributes to the timbral chaos of the cue. Thus, "Convergence" is, in a way, the ultimate divergence from traditional western scoring tropes. Its lack of traditional western instrumentation, pentatonic or diatonic melody, triadic harmony, and even its disposal of traditional rhythmic practice all serve to distance the piece both generically from the film, and from Greenwood's own original and pre-existing music.

## Music by Other Composers

Although Greenwood's music in *There Will Be Blood* serves as the primary focus of this project, it is also important to address the impact of his music on the additional elements of the score. There are four pieces in the film's score which are not composed by Greenwood: *Fratres* (Arvo Pärt), "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (J. M. Scriven), "There is Power in the Blood" (L. E. Jones), and *Violin Concerto in D Major*, op. 77 (J. Brahms). While the two gospel songs are distanced from Greenwood's (and all other) music by virtue of their presence in the diegesis, his music's relationship with Pärt's and Brahms' is complementary and contrary respectively.

### **Arvo Pärt - *Fratres***

Of the music used in *There Will Be Blood* not composed by Greenwood, the most complementary piece to Greenwood's score is Arvo Pärt's *Fratres*, for violoncello and piano. In many ways, it seems a deliberate decision to maintain some measure of consistency between the film's various musical elements (i.e., pre-existing music and original music). The reason for the inclusion of *Fratres*, however, is entirely irrelevant as it is the resulting synergy with the other components of the score that is noteworthy.

Originally composed in 1977 without specified instrumentation, *Fratres* was later arranged for several instrumentations, including the one used in the film.<sup>21</sup> *Fratres*, the Latin word for "brothers," is an extremely relevant title in regards to the film's narrative, given the fraternal relationships of Daniel and Henry, as well as Paul and Eli. The piece

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<sup>21</sup> Arvo Pärt: *Fratres*, "work introduction," [www.universaledition.com/Arvo-Paert/composers-and-works/composer/534/work/7094](http://www.universaledition.com/Arvo-Paert/composers-and-works/composer/534/work/7094) (accessed May 1, 2017).

incorporates Pärt's own compositional style called "tintinnabuli," which is "a two-part homophonic texture... [in which] a melodic voice moves mostly by step around a central pitch (often but not always the tonic), and the tintinnabuli voice sounds the notes of the tonic triad."<sup>22</sup> The "melodic voice" in Pärt's language bears striking resemblance to the melodic expansion exhibited in Greenwood's cue, "Open Spaces." The seamlessness of *Fratres*' integration into Greenwood's score for *There Will Be Blood* lies not only with the compositional style of the piece, but with its structure and instrumentation.

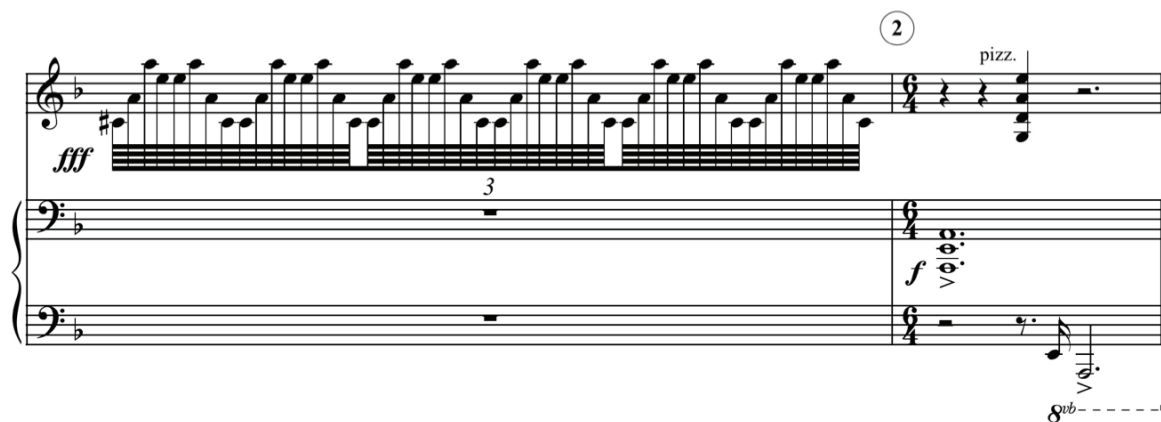
Given *Fratres*' arrangement in a variety of different instrumental combinations, the particular instrumentation of cello and piano is both interesting and expected. While the cello, an instrument for which Greenwood has composed extensively, is a logical inclusion, the piano remains less explored in his repertoire.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, since *Popcorn Superhet Receiver* forms the core of the film's score—both literally and inspirationally—inclusion of more original music heavily featuring stringed instruments is logical in regards to uniformity. Nevertheless, the piano appears in several of Greenwood's original cues, such as "Prospector Arrives" and "Eat Him By His Own Light," inexorably linking its instrumentation with *Fratres*. The consistent use of stringed instruments and piano with the occasional inclusion of the ondes martenot (or percussion in the case of "Convergence") signifies a clear and deliberate attempt to consolidate and unify instrumentation in the majority of the film's score.

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<sup>22</sup> Paul D. Hillier, "Pärt, Arvo," *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), [www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed March 3, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> Greenwood is by no means a stranger to the piano, however. Given his diverse instrumental background, experience with keyboard instruments such as synthesizers and the ondes martenot combine in his earliest concert classical piece titled *Piano for Children*, Greenwood is not inexperienced with the instrument but merely leans more heavily on stringed instruments in his writing.

In addition to its sympathetic instrumentation, the episodic structure of *Fratres* exhibits Greenwood-like compositional qualities. The piece is organized in several “episodes”—identifiable by their exploration of texture and harmony, rather than melody—each of which is punctuated by a recurring, bold cadential figure from the piano, an example of which is shown in Figure 5.12. Thus, by virtue of its compositional style, instrumentation, and episodic nature, *Fratres*, although not written by Greenwood, has certain similarities to both his pre-existing music and original music for the film.



**Figure 5.12** An example of Pärt’s textural “episodes” heard in *Fratres* concluded with cadential piano punctuation. The following episode begins shortly after the piano’s cadential figure.

In the context of *There Will Be Blood*, *Fratres* can be heard for approximately five minutes over two separate scenes in close proximity. The first scene is a montage where Daniel is fully coming to terms with H.W.’s hearing loss, which serves primarily as a means of promoting temporal progression (1:09:00). The second scene, however, is of much more significance. In this scene, Eli approaches Daniel—who is agitated by the recent loss of his son’s hearing—with the intention of obtaining the remaining \$5000 owed to the Church of the Third Revelation (1:12:10). In a moment of striking cinematography, Eli can be seen approaching a patch of cloudy blue sky in the

surrounding desolate landscape. The irony of this scene lies in the fact that the sky—or the *heavens*—to which Eli walks so decidedly, is merely a reflection in a pool of oil (Figure 5.13). Thus, while it appears that Eli is figuratively ascending to the heavens, he is, in fact, descending to the same pits of crude filth that Daniel so concerns himself with. The underlying intensity of the cello’s sixty-fourth note arpeggios is balanced with the simplicity of Pärt’s accessibly tonal harmonic language and subtle dynamic swells. When Eli finally reaches Daniel, the abrupt and violent interjection of the piano shatters his composure and confidence. Eli steps confidently before Daniel and asks, “when do we get our money, Daniel?” at which point Daniel promptly slaps him and with such force that Eli falls to the ground. The music—now subdued so as to not interfere with the dialogue—continues as Daniel, in his first act of violence, proceeds to beat Eli, dragging him through the dirt and oil by the hair and questioning his status as a “healer” and “vessel of the holy spirit.” To conclude the scene, Daniel foreshadows his murder of Eli with the chilling statement, “I’m going to bury you underground, Eli...I’m going to bury you underground.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Paul Thomas Anderson, *There Will Be Blood*, screenplay, PDF, 2006, p. 65. [www.hollywoodchicago.com/uploaded\\_images/therewillbeblood\\_script.pdf](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/uploaded_images/therewillbeblood_script.pdf) (accessed January 25, 2017).



**Figure 5.13** A shot of the sky reflecting in a pool of oil as Eli walks towards it.

Daniel's obsession with the earth manifests itself in different ways throughout the film. Indeed, Daniel began the film in the very womb of the earth, searching out his riches. When he attempted to climb out, the earth pulled him back in. He buries his half-brother after murdering him, replacing the blood of the earth that he has taken with the blood of his "kin." Musically, Daniel is grounded by the low, ominous, and rumbling interjection of the abrupt piano motif that disrupts Eli's supercilious approach. The motive—comprised of a tonic A, as well as a fifth and above drawing connection to "Open Spaces" with its D-A motive—is devoid of colour and character, and is largely defined by its brute force and presence.

Pärt's *Fratres* provides the perfect juxtaposition to the worlds of the holy and the unclean. Given Pärt's own prominent religious influences, it is logical that his music could effectively serve as a representation of religious struggle in a film. It is once again, however, the western genre which serves as the stray piece of the puzzle. Minimalistic music, much less Pärt's *holy* minimalism, is a far cry from the traditional ballads of mid-century westerns, or even the traditional orchestral styles of Hollywood westerns. Thus,

Anderson used music not written by Greenwood (but whose choice was perhaps inspired by him) to create generic subversion in the film.

### **“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”**

The use of gospel music in *There Will Be Blood*, due to its diegetic status, subject matter, and hymnal origin, is undeniably the most traditionally western musical feature of the film’s score. The two hymns used in *There Will Be Blood*—“What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (Joseph M. Scriven, 1855) and “There is Power in the Blood” (Lewis E. Jones, 1899)—are not only the sole instances of diegetic music in the film, but are the most historically and contextually fitting musical instances. The hymn as a musical genre promotes communal participation in both music and faith, as well as a sort of familial bond between participants. According to Stilwell, the “celebration and formation of family and community ties” is a key feature of the western, and in the film’s gospel music, we finally see cohesion between the musical and visual western tropes.<sup>25</sup> Despite this cohesion, however, the treatment of these musical instances in the greater context of the score strips at least one of them of traditional meaning.

The first gospel song encountered in the film, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” occurs during the construction montage of the first oil derrick in Little Boston. A group of parishioners from the Church of the Third Revelation—led by Eli Sunday—sing together as they approach the newly constructed oil derrick to offer their blessings to the workers (Figure 5.14). The song is a significant moment in the film as it is the only diegetic musical moment that elicits a response from Daniel, who is distracted from his work in his office tower by the singing. Perhaps more significant, however, is that the

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<sup>25</sup> Stilwell, “The Western,” 216.

hymn is not delivered in a pure, uninterrupted fashion, but rather is overshadowed or perverted by the presence of Greenwood's music. The cue "Prospector Arrives" subtly begins prior to the hymn and accompanies the entire montage, from the preliminary town hall meeting Daniel holds with the residents of Little Boston to the moment the parishioners finish their duty. Additionally, "Prospector Arrives," by virtue of being non-diegetic, is significantly louder and more present across cuts, while the hymn, forced to abide by the principle of sound perspective due to its diegetic nature, comes across as disjunct, unsure, and feeble. The hymn weaves in and out of audition and is often times an indiscernible mumbling as opposed to a powerful hymn. Once again, the music plays a reflective role in the power struggle between Daniel and Eli. In this scene, Daniel's non-diegetic accompaniment overpowers that of Eli's generically typical hymn in volume, audio quality, and performance, and thus establishes Daniel in a position of power over the church and, therefore, over Eli. The other-worldly accompaniment effectively silences the (false) voice of the holy in the film.



**Figure 5.14** A shot of the Church of the Third Revelation's congregation approaching Daniel's new oil derrick as they sing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."



While the aural relationship between “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” and “Prospector Arrives” is full of connotation and speculation, the lyrical subject matter of the hymn offers another level of complexity. During their walk toward the new oil derrick to bless the workers, the church party can be heard reciting the lyrics from the hymn’s first three stanzas. Below are the hymn’s lyrics with bolded text representing the words that are at least partially discernible in the film.

1. ***What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer!***  
*Oh, what peace we often forfeit,  
Oh, what needless douleur we bear,  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer!*
2. ***Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?***  
*We should never be discouraged—  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful,  
Who will all our douleurs share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness;  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.*
3. ***Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
Cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge—  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.***  
*Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
In His arms He’ll take and shield thee,  
Thou wilt find a solace there.<sup>26</sup>*

Of particular interest is the audible lyric “Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?” This moment not only emphasizes Daniel’s greed, but also

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph M. Scriven, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” 1855, [www.hymnary.org/text/what a friend we have in jesus all our s](http://www.hymnary.org/text/what_a_friend_we_have_in_jesus_all_our_s) (accessed April 6, 2017).

foreshadows the looming danger and toxicity of both Daniel and Eli. The parishioners, however, are entirely oblivious to this danger throughout the film and remain largely disconnected from the Daniel-Eli power struggle.

Despite their aural absence from the film, the unsung, or more precisely, the *unheard* lyrics are rife with foreshadowing and narrative commentary. The absences of the lyrics “Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?” and “Do your friends despise you, forsake you?” effectively summarize Daniel’s relationship with his closest “friends” in the film, Henry and Eli. The absence of the first lyric can be interpreted as a commentary on Daniel’s isolation in the film, and his underlying desire for a companion figure despite his self-professed dislike of people.<sup>27</sup> During Daniel’s interactions with his (false) half-brother Henry, we see Daniel—for the first time in the film—interact personally and meaningfully with a character besides his son. Their interactions show a genuinely softer side of Daniel, one that is less calculating, greedy, and conniving, one that is honest and can speak his mind without adhering to social necessities and niceties. While initially skeptical of their relation, Daniel is quick to accept Henry as his brother, bringing him along on work meetings, camping, and enjoying recreational time on the beach to the point of neglecting his own son. Daniel’s bond with Henry is one of *blood*, unlike with his adopted son, H.W. who was “merely” adopted. As a result, he holds his relationship with Henry in the highest regard. Daniel confides in his estranged brother, “there are times when I look at people and I see nothing worth liking. I want to earn enough money so I can get away from everyone...I see the worst in people, Henry. I don’t need to look past seeing them to get all I need. I’ve built up my hatreds over the years, little by little. Having you hear gives me a second breath of

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<sup>27</sup> Anderson, *There Will Be Blood*, screenplay, 74.

life. I can't keep doing this on my own...with these, umm...people." With Henry, Daniel is presented as more accessible, more *human*. In Henry, Daniel has found "a friend so faithful who will all [his] sorrows share." When the truth of Henry's identity is brought to light, their relationship changes. As the lyric suggests, he "forsakes" Daniel and, as a result, pays the ultimate price.

The hymn lyric also refers to a friend who "despises you," which can be interpreted from both Eli and Daniel's perspectives. Despite the disparities between their characters—Eli being a righteous man of God, and Daniel being a power-hungry, morally bankrupt businessman—they bear striking resemblances. Both are, in essence, swindlers, purveyors of wealth—be it spiritual or tangible—who are consumed by the underlying vice of greed. Additionally, both use false but convincing humble charm to exert influence over those around them. While their similarities are striking, the term "friendship" may not be the most suitable to their relationship—"rivals" perhaps being more fitting. They do, however, have one of the strongest, and most volatile, bonds in the film. Eli and Daniel's relationship is one of mutual benefit, strain, and hatred. Daniel unabashedly despises Eli as he humiliates him, beats him, and eventually murders him, while Eli's contempt is more internal and in line with his relatively reserved nature. He resents and abuses his father, Abel, for allowing Daniel to swindle them out of their land and rightful profits and relishes the opportunity to deliver Daniel by, quite literally, slapping the sin out of him.

## **“There is Power in the Blood”**

Following the thread of lyrically suggestive diegetic gospel songs, the second of the two—“There is Power in the Blood”—is even more significant. The very name itself references the recurring theme of blood throughout the film, as well as its religious connotations. While a viewer may comment on the apparent lack of literal blood in the film—save Daniel’s two murders—“blood” in the film refers to much more than simply blood that runs through the veins. In *There Will Be Blood*, oil and blood are akin. For Eli, there is power in the blood of Christ, but for Daniel, there is power in oil.

The scene in which we hear “There is Power in the Blood” follows Daniel’s murder of Henry. Daniel is coerced to repent for his sins in the Church of the Third Revelation by Mr. Bandy, whose land he wants to purchase. Eli sees Daniel’s repentance as an opportunity to exert control and revenge over his nemesis. Following a violent expulsion of the demons residing in Daniel by violently slapping the evil spirits out of him, Daniel is baptized, as presumably the off-screen organist begins the hymn:

1. *Would you be free from the burden of sin?  
There’s power in the blood, power in the blood;  
Would you o’er evil a victory win?  
There’s wonderful power in the blood.*  
Refrain:  
*There is power, power, wonder-working power  
In the blood of the Lamb;  
There is power, power, wonder-working power  
In the precious blood of the Lamb.*
2. *Would you be free from your passion and pride?  
There’s power in the blood, power in the blood;  
Come for a cleansing to Calvary’s tide;  
There’s wonderful power in the blood.  
There is power, power, wonder-working power  
In the blood of the Lamb...*<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Lewis E. Jones, “Power in the Blood,” 1899,  
[www.hymnary.org/text/would\\_you\\_be\\_free\\_from\\_the\\_burden\\_jones](http://www.hymnary.org/text/would_you_be_free_from_the_burden_jones) (accessed April 6, 2017).

The third line of the first stanza, “would you o’er evil a victory win,” is a clear reference to the victory of the holy spirit over Daniel’s backsliding nature, but more so a victory for Eli over Daniel himself. In their exchange, Eli exerts his revenge on Daniel for humiliating and beating him earlier in the oil field. Eli is in control of Daniel’s body as he pushes, slaps, and manipulates his head into various positions, but also of his speech as Daniel is forced to repeat after Eli “I am a sinner...I am sorry Lord...I want the blood...I have abandoned my child...I will never backslide...I was lost but now I’m found...I abandoned my child...”

Daniel exerts some measure of control during the interaction, however, as he glares at Eli with unbridled fury. Immediately following his baptism, as the music begins, Daniel confronts Eli in a corner and shakes his hand. While what Daniel says to Eli is indiscernible, the look of shock on Eli’s face says perhaps more than any words could. As Daniel returns to his seat, he is met with unmitigated love by the congregation, who embrace him and welcome him as their brother. Eli sees this and quickly interjects, saying, “that’s enough now...that’s enough...he must take the Holy Spirit in on his own now...” This gesture puts an abrupt halt not only to the rejoicing surrounding Daniel, but to the music as well.

Once again the diegetic gospel music, which serves as the film’s most concrete link to the aural world of the traditional western genre, is treated apathetically. Even the very delivery of the song is half-hearted as the organist sings the lyrics in isolation with his minimal organ accompaniment. The music fails to establish the community it did with “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” and instead is merely incidental to the focal point of the scene, Daniel, as worshippers fawn over him like a saviour and idol. The singer is

reduced to the role of an amateur cocktail musician whose aged voice fails to convey the power necessary to command the room. The song's role in the film is defined by its subversion, its lack of substance, its *disposability*. It is constantly disrupted and overshadowed whether by Greenwood's sonically atypical scoring, or by the very character who is supposed to be its ambassador, Eli Sunday.

Unbeknownst to or perhaps unacknowledged by Eli, however, is that Daniel's most grave sin is not abandoning his child or backsliding, but is no less than *murder*. While Eli is indeed in a position of power over Daniel, he is, in the grand scheme of the struggle, powerless and defeated once more. Daniel's jests throughout their interaction in the scene are evidence of the fact that Eli's actions are a charade. Tauntingly, he can be heard exclaiming, while being slapped and shoved no less, "can't feel that, Eli" and "where is your Lord, Eli? Let me feel him? Where is he? Oh, there he is! There he is!" (1:55:00). During this exchange, Daniel, despite being subjected to the will of Eli while on his knees, is the more powerful of the two. As the song states, "There is Power in the Blood" which, quite literally, means that Eli holds the power with the blood of Christ, but Daniel holds the power of oil, and in the end, oil trumps blood in more ways than one.

### **Johannes Brahms – Violin Concerto in D Major, Op.77, Mvt. III**

As Buhler et al. suggest (rather simply), "Music can provide narrative cues, but these tend to be fairly general and are usually used in an overdetermined way, confirming with the music what we already know from the visuals or dialogue[.]"<sup>29</sup> The use of music in *There Will Be Blood*, however, displays much more complexity, particularly with the

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<sup>29</sup> James Buhler, David Neumeyer and Rob Deemer, *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 16.

use of Brahms' Allegro movement from his *Violin Concerto in D Major*, op. 77 (Figure 5.15). When analyzing the rest of the music in the film, it can be rather difficult to distinguish certain works such as *Fratres* from Greenwood's catalogue, or even sometimes Greenwood's own previously composed works (i.e., "Convergence") from the rest of the original score. The same cannot be said, however, of Brahms' *Violin Concerto in D Major*. Composed in 1878, Brahms' concerto is, historically speaking, the closest instance of source music present in the film besides its diegetic gospel music. Yet, the piece bears such little resemblance to the rest of the film's score that, even to the most amateur of listeners, it is clear that something entirely different, something more *grandiose*, is at play. The use of Brahms in the film is so striking, in fact, that both scenes to which the music is set are easily visualized.

The image shows a piano reduction of the first eight measures of Brahms' Violin Concerto in D Major. The score is written for violin and piano. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 2/4. The violin part begins with a forte (f) dynamic, playing a series of chords and eighth-note patterns. The piano accompaniment starts with a *poco f* dynamic, featuring a triplet in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The music is characterized by its grandiose and powerful sound.

Figure 5.15 Piano reduction of Brahms, *Violin Concerto in D Major*, mm. 1-8.

The first instance of the concerto accompanies a scene in which Daniel is inaugurating the first oil derrick built on the Sunday Ranch. The entire Little Boston

community is present and in high spirits on a glorious, sunny day. Eli looks on longingly for Daniel to call on him to bless the well during his speech; however, solely to spite him, Daniel calls up Eli's younger sister, Mary, and dismissively blesses the well himself. As H.W. turns on the well's drilling motor, Daniel states, "that's it, ladies and gentlemen!" (Figure 5.16) at which point the triumphant melody of the concerto's Allegro movement begins (00:49:39).



**Figure 5.16** Inauguration scene of Daniel's first oil derrick in Little Boston accompanied by the first instance of Brahms, *Violin Concerto*

To say that the sheer volume and suddenness of Brahms' concerto in this moment are surprising would be an understatement. It starkly contrasts with every other piece in the score such that no piece of music up until this point has expressed an emotion akin to excitement or joy. Once again, the emotional quality of the music can be associated firmly with Daniel. For Daniel, and subsequently for the people of Little Boston, this moment is a victory. For Eli, however, this moment is a slight. The brightness of the scenery and joyousness of the event serve as a stark juxtaposition to his emotional state. The relentlessness of the concerto bludgeons Eli with an overbearing, unavoidable sense



of majesty and joy, thus asserting Daniel's dominance and victory over Eli. Regardless of their personal disposition, however, the sense of community at this moment in the film is at its peak, and, for once, the music—in some measure at least—reflects this.

Though the sheer volume and overall joviality of this underscore is jarring and memorable, it is the presence of a discernible *melody* that is the cue's most prominent feature.<sup>30</sup> Of the non-diegetic music included in the film's score up until this point, the role of melody in the overall delivery of the piece has been rather minimal. But now, we are presented with an entirely diatonic and easily sung melody, linking the people of Little Boston (despite their inability to actually *hear* the music) to Daniel, H.W., and the newly arrived oil workers.

Similar to the locust motif, Brahms' concerto also serves as a kind of leitmotif for Daniel, this time for his relationship with Eli. The first iteration occurs when Daniel slights Eli at the inauguration of the oil derrick, but the second iteration is at a much more iconic moment, the final scene of the film. During this scene, Daniel, passed out in the gutter of his ludicrous private bowling alley, is awakened from his drunken slumber by Eli, who has returned from his mission and attempts to sell Daniel the lease for Bandy's land, which he believes to be full of untouched oil. Daniel, knowing that there is no oil there due to drainage, sees this as an opportunity to humiliate Eli. He forces Eli to proclaim (several times) that he "is a false prophet and God is a superstition." Some of the last words Daniel speaks to Eli before murdering him are "I drink your milkshake!" and "*I am the Church of the Third Revelation... I told you I would eat you up, Eli!*" At

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<sup>30</sup> Indeed, discernible melody is by no means a feature of *Popcorn Superthet Receiver*, or "Convergence" (or *Smear*, for that matter) and, despite the recurring melodic motive featured in several of Greenwood's cues, none feature an iconic, instantly recognizable melody.

this point, Daniel, hunched over and evoking the apes in Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, bashes Eli's skull in with a bowling pin. To conclude the scene, Daniel's butler enters the room, and upon seeing the bizarre scene of Daniel sitting beside a bleeding Eli, simply exclaims, "Mr. Daniel?" Looking over, Daniel responds with one of the film's most memorable lines: "I'm finished!"

It is at this moment that the Brahms returns, in full force, juxtaposing the severity of the situation with the piece's lively nature, and underlines the absurdity of Daniel and Eli's interaction in that it is entirely incongruous with the resulting murder. Daniel, once again alone (save his personal assistant), is not accompanied by the ghostly reminder of his humanity (the *ondes martenot*) but is rather entirely content with his insanity.



**Figure 5.17** Daniel sits beside Eli's corpse and says "I'm finished" followed promptly by the second instance of Brahms, *Violin Concerto*

Thus, the incorporation of Brahms is a deliberate attempt to create a contrast with the rest of the film's music. Whether the creative team decided Greenwood was not capable of such composition, or whether it was logistically more feasible to source pre-existing music, or some combination of the two is irrelevant. By virtue of contrast,

Brahms' *Concerto in D Major* is a commentary on the nature of Daniel Plainview, his underlying remorselessness, and his capacity for evil. It is Greenwood's music, however, which *creates* this contrast. Indeed, the effectiveness of Brahms' thick orchestration, fevered tempo, and diatonic melodicism is instantly recognizable because Greenwood's music, from the very outset of the film, countered these elements at every turn.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusion

“It’s easier having to write music [for film since there is] something to hide behind. That music [for *There Will Be Blood*] was written about those big landscapes... In the end, I wrote too much music, all about the story and the landscapes, and [Paul Thomas Anderson] even fitted some of the film to the music.”<sup>1</sup>

Music’s role in cinema has, more often than not, been one of subservience and dependence on visual and narrative elements. That is to say, the cases where music is the primary driving force behind the picture, or where the music interacts meaningfully and substantially, are few and far between. In many ways, the western genre has historically perpetuated this practice with its abundance of generic scoring tropes derived from Americana-inspired themes to instrumental accompaniment centred on portability and communality. However, the genre has simultaneously supported music as a dominant factor in film such as with its extremely popular (and plentiful) singing cowboy features. Regardless of their musical content, these films have always interacted with the same fundamental concepts of geography, history, and culture which serve to further codify and affirm our understanding of the western as a genre.

Paul Thomas Anderson’s *There Will Be Blood* represents yet another iconic work in a genre rife with iteration upon iteration of the same themes and material. Though the genre has evolved far beyond its original material such as cowboys on horseback, revolver pistols, and bank robberies (by now largely clichéd), it still relies heavily on

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<sup>1</sup> Niall Byrne, “An interview with Jonny Greenwood,” *Nialler9* (2011), [www.nialler9.com/jonny-greenwood-interview](http://www.nialler9.com/jonny-greenwood-interview) (accessed May 3, 2017).

historical material for narrative themes, identification, and generic classification. *There Will Be Blood*, through its historically derived narrative and exploration of themes more critical than those of traditional westerns, is easily classified as an anti-western. The iconic landscape, scenery, and period-specific clothing, technology, and modes of transportation (among other features) all lend credence to the film's "western" classification, while the critical focus on religion and relentless capitalism give the film its "anti" qualification.

This is not to say, however, that the film does not incorporate influences from other genres and film styles. Indeed, it is rare for a film to embody only one primary generic styling and scholars such as Lee Clark Mitchell have explored alternate readings of the film (film noir, in Mitchell's case). Regardless of the auxiliary generic qualifications of the film, it remains true that, in the case of *There Will Be Blood*, all other generic semblances are built upon the foundation of the western genre. As (one of) cinema's oldest and most iterated genres, the western is evoked inescapably with even the slightest hint of visual, narrative, and even musical material that immediately draws on the viewer's recollection and understanding of the western genre.

Jonny Greenwood's score for *There Will Be Blood*, despite its aural generic discrepancy, tackles the same themes colonialization, capitalism, and brutality but in a vastly different way from other films of the western genre. Furthermore, Greenwood's score transcends the role of mere underscoring and not only imparts to the film significant narrative context, but drives the film into a nebulous region of the western genre. Through his use of pre-existing and original music, Greenwood challenges the traditional scoring tropes associated with the western genre and creates a new aesthetic

that is entirely his own. Compare, for example, the overall quality of Greenwood's texturally charged score with the "driving [and] soaring scores" of Copland and Copland-esque "manifest destiny" cues as outlined by Robynn Stilwell.<sup>2</sup> These scores, overtly influenced by a firm attempt to solidify American identity particular around the time of the second World War, preceded Greenwood's, but ultimately bore little influence. Although certain cues such as the rather transparent "Open Spaces" and the humble "Prospector's Quartet" are similar in their accessibility by virtue of their simplicity and transparency, the predominant role of dissonance and a lack of emphasis on melody (among other features) serve to distance the score almost entirely from its predecessors.

Furthermore, Greenwood's music exerts significant power and influence over the other elements of the score. It undermines the diegetic elements of the score (which serve as the film's most generically traditional element) and grants context to the music by other composers, pulling them into his realm of unconventional scoring practices. Greenwood's score for *There Will Be Blood* is heralded as a great achievement in the history of film scoring and, through an analysis of its role in creating narrative context and generic subversion in the film, it is understandable why.

Greenwood continues to exhibit cross-genre interaction in all aspects of his career. His influences bleed across generic borders and are unconstrained by medium or musical language. The influence of Greenwood's classical compositions and film scores have manifested noticeably in Radiohead's most recent album, *A Moon Shaped Pool* (2016). The presence of quick, fleeting strings and drum-like percussive strumming of stringed instruments are heard clearly in "Daydreaming" and "Burn the Witch"

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<sup>2</sup> Robynn Stilwell, "The Western," in *Cambridge Companion to Film Music*, edited by Mervyn Cooke and Fiona Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 225.

respectively. As a concert composer, he has moved beyond imitation of his idols (Penderecki, Messiaen, Ligeti, etc.), and has developed a compositional voice that is entirely his own with newer works such as *Water* (2014) and *Fight With Cudgels* (2014). However, as we have come to expect from Greenwood, his works remain genre-defying at its core. As his latest score for Paul Thomas Anderson's *Phantom Thread* looms almost teasingly, it is undoubtable that scholars, composers, musicians, and Radiohead fans alike are bursting with anticipation of what Greenwood has in store.

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