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HORROR SOUNDSCAPE

IN GIALLO FILM

Function of the musical score

Without psychology, the horror film doesn't exist.

Dario Argento¹

In cinema, sound plays a significant role, since it can emphasize, give depth or even change the meaning of a scene, thus the very sense of the film. Early in horror cinema, a very popular film genre, soundscape became a pivotal element working hand by hand towards visual narration, this has changed the way in which cinema was seen before and added more atmospheric values to it. Sound design became another powerful feature of the cinematographic language, creating terrifying environments according to the patterns that perception obeys to, and playing with these, to juxtapose the seventh art in its greatest expression. This document will focus on the importance of the musical score and how soundscape recreates another nuance of narration in addition to the visual in horror films, particularly in the supernatural Giallo horror trilogy by Italian filmmaker Dario Argento. These films are *Suspiria* (1977), music by Goblin band, *Inferno* (1980) Music by Keith Emerson from Emerson, Lake & Palmer, and *The Mother of Tears* (2007), music by Claudio Simonetti's Goblin band, and Daemonia band.

The commercial success of Dario Argento's trilogy is not only due to his expressions devoid of taboos in grotesque images and terribly shocking scenes, but also

¹ Dario Argento (b.1940) Italian film director, producer, film critic and screenwriter. He is best known for his horror films made during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the subgenre known as giallo, and for his influence on modern horror films. Quote from interview in *Broken mirrors/Broken Minds* by Maitland McDonald. Pg. 231-245.

due to an atmospheric score that makes participant the progressive rock with tints of classical music and new unprecedented elements. As a novelty to our attention, the sound design of the trilogy recreates a fearsome delivery of innovative sounds ranging from soft and easy listening passages to onomatopoeic sounds, high notes, strident frequencies and the use of unusual instruments.

The environmental sound assumes a relevant function in the development of types of attention, which will be mentioned ahead, whether it is in real life or in film soundscape. Psychologically speaking attention types are sustained, selective, alternating and divided attention. Understanding how attention works in cinema is an important correlation, inasmuch as the visuals elements with no sound design attached would not have as much success and figuratively meaning as it does. All of this applied after the incursion of the sound technology, to record, mix and insert it, to the cinematic apparatus. In addition to the contributory observations on the analysis of sound as a component of the acoustic environment and as an element of narration in cinema, it is necessary to mention the relationship between acoustic contamination and auditory perception, in order to understand how the musical composition and cinematic soundscape behaves in audience and creates strong bonds in the memory.

Later in the text, it seeks to address the components of the Argento trilogy, where the editing methods, color palettes, montage, mise-en-scene, photography and plot are analyzed closely. This is directed around the sound environment, its motives and its content in more detail. Responding to the premises that wraps the popularity of the films, their perpetuation of sound and their contributions and influences with the genre of horror. In this way, understanding the crucial importance of the Italian progressive rock

of the Goblin band with the collaboration of Argento in *Suspiria* and *Mother of tears*, at the same time as the contrasting composition style of Keith Emerson in *Inferno*.

Having said that, in order to comprehend the purpose of many representational emotions through these three films this document looks up to engage the reader with relevant details of the sound environment, dialogues and primarily the atmospheres that are recreated around the visual narrative. It is important to realize that using psychological perspectives about attention in general, and active listening to music, we seek to extract the functionality of musical composition in Argento's horror film trilogy. Another key thing to remember will be the cinematographic details such as the photography and lighting that make these works unique masterpieces in their genre.

Transition from Comics and to Giallo Film

Giallo means yellow in Italian. It is a genre of literature and Italian thriller cinema developed in the mid and late 1960s and reaches its peak of popularity in the 1970s, after that, the genre started declining in the coming decades, however it is still around. Mainly outside Italy, Giallo is a term referring to the genre of horror suspense cinema that has characteristics of mystery as detectives, crime, psychological thriller, psychological horror, sexual exploitation, and often supernatural elements too. In Italy, the term Giallo generally denotes the suspense novels of comics, typically subgenres of fiction, mystery and horror that began in the mid-1920s in Germany and Italy, which used to have a yellow cover, hence the name was adapted latter to the cinema genre. In English-

speaking countries, the term Giallo often refers to the Italian film version of the horror genre, a style of the murder mystery thriller that generally combines the atmosphere and the suspense of fiction with elements of terror and eroticism, and many times is involved a mysterious murderer whose identity is only revealed until the final act of the film, in which the Interlocutor or public would come to be configured as a participant, as a detective who helps to develop the plot and who discovers, step by step by means of clues, the identity of the murderer. Giallo has been also considered as an ancestor relative and a significant influence on the American cinema of the latest generation, Slasher, this reaching its popularity in the 1980s in the Hollywood of United States.

About Soundscape, Noise Pollution and Audio Perception.

The current "noise pollution" is part of our daily life, even in many cases goes unnoticed. The world after the industrial revolution is constantly looking for "noise abatement", in other words, it is trying to find tranquility by stifling noise by reduction, but this is not how a better "soundscape" is achieved. At least in the cinematic world audio behaves independently and quite different to real world. Finding through the "acoustic design" the environment in which one can be comfortable, auditive comfortable, is a challenge at present and more if it is close to the industrialized landscape which contains sounds of all kinds.

Nowadays, many companies are aware of the pollution and the environment disharmony in which we are immersed, then, labor market is not exempt and try to diminish and balance the impact of it with new technologies.

For instance, workers in industry and construction use hearing protectors, as well as musicians, technicians and engineers. Traffic also has a lot in this field. Years before the traffic was unbearable, today it is better in terms of decibels. In New York City the politics of control noise pollution started back in 1900s by "Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noise" lead by Julia Rice, to MD degree from the Women's Medical College of the New York, which after almost 2 years from the initial request was published an study on where it suggested "ways to quiet subways and elevated railroads, to use pneumatic riveting and fusion welding in building construction, and suggests amendments to the sanitary code" 5 (1930).

Years later in 1936 the first noise code is passed as law for New York residents, it becomes the new regulations for noise abatement, scheduling certain activities. The aforementioned is in order to settle the attention as completely on what surrounds us, and also in our own sound environment. And through this we can also analogically understand the scope of a cinematographic soundscape creation.

This is an addition to understanding the impact that noise and its components generates, this way decoding, as Chion does in his essay about the three modes of listening, how it affects us directly in the understanding and pursuit of the environment, whether it be real, or in an artificial atmosphere like a theater.

Horror Film Genre

The horror film genre looks up to terrorize the public in a safe way. This wants to provoke emotions that are not as common in a daily basis. Retaking literature books such as the stories of Edgar Allan Poe (The Raven), Bram Stoker (Dracula), Agatha Christie (And Then There Were None), H.P. Lovecraft (Necronomicon), Mary Shelly (Frankenstein), Charles Baudelaire (The Flowers of Evil), and many other writers who incurred the fantastic horror genre, Giallo cinema was also mainly influenced by thriller comics popular through 1920s and 1950s, and will kept Giallo name as a reference as mentioned before.

The horror cinema evokes varied topics that always lean to the dark side of the being, towards the unknown where fears prevail, the terrors of existence, also deeply attached to the world of the nightmares and psychological issues. The plots include, but not limited to, cold-blooded murders, plans to destroy humanity, vampires, conspiracy theories, cannibalism, ghosts, satanic rituals, zombies and other beings from beyond the grave. The horror film also has subgenres such as slasher, horror drama, psychological horror, horror comedy, footage found, science fiction horror, gothic horror, natural horror and supernatural horror. There are other classifications that can deepen the perspectives of analysis in the horror film genre as the Italian Giallo film which this paper is looking focus on and its music score aspects.

Early in Cinema, supernatural aspects such as those expressed by Georges Melies in his 1896 film, *Le Manoir du Diable* (in French for *The House of The Devil*) or how it was released in the United States, *The Haunted Castle*, would already be demonstrated. A

brief pantomime of quite fantastic theatrical humor. Unfortunately, at this early stage of the technological development of cinema they did not have the technology to add a soundscape. However, *Le Manoir du Diable* would go down in history as an essential part of the silent film, and main influence for many directors in the future that recreates supernatural stories and engages with a work of soundscape to create truthfulness and authenticity.

The music score to these early films were usually played by musician present in the theater and happened until the arrival of the "talkies" at the end of the 1920s decade. "The jazz singer"(1926 by Warner Bros) is recognize as the first piece were the incursion of dialogues and sound was made, as well as this film was important to the transition from silent cinema to "talkies," in 1931 the first horror movie with these new characteristics was *Dracula*, directed by Tod Browning were Bela Lugosi (count Dracula) with his Hungarian accent and Helen Chandler (Mina Seward) with her charming charisma, both will marked down the gothic aesthetics of horror supernatural film and gave birth through the audio, to the characters of the immortal book of the English writer Bram Stoker, which name is pseudonym of the film. Then will come *Frankenstein* (1931, Dir. Josh Balderston) and the *Daughter of Dracula* (1936, Dir. Lambert Hillyer).

Horror Scores

“Music and cinema fit together naturally. Because there’s a kind of intrinsic musicality to the way moving images work when they’re put together. It’s been said that cinema and music are very close as art forms, and I think that’s true.”

Martin Scorsese²

Artificial environments that are specially created to decorate film and bring a sense of reality, are called "Soundscape." In this concept are included completely music score, dialogues, diegetic and non-diegetic sounds. The soundscapes and the aural atmospheres developed with sound effects and dialogues are incredibly ambitious, and it is a pivotal element as important as the visuals. Even in the Italian genre Giallo, which can be established in two decades, the number of musicians, bands and the incursion of innovative sounds is quite broad and creative at the same time. Here we will name some characters that have significantly marked this evolution. This is the case of Walter Murch, who has made Francis Ford Coppola's films as a sound designer. His work is excellently represented in *Apocalypse Now*, *The Godfather I, II and III*, *American Graffiti*, and the most relevant for the topic *The Conversation* (1974). It is a film in which the characteristics of the sound are deeply explored and, at the same time, the technological development for its capture is exposed. Walter Murch is the winner of the Oscar for the sound mix of *Apocalypse now* (1979), this is the first tape to credit someone with the title of Sound designer.

In traditional musical methods for instance, Bernard Herrmann (*Citizen Kane* score) creates an astonishing musical piece for a scene in Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). A

² Martin Scorsese is a 75 years old Italian American filmmaker born in Queens, Ny. Recognized for movies like *Taxi Driver*, *The Departed*, *Goodfellas* and many more.

woman is about to be stabbed while is taking a shower, then, it comes, the high-pitched sound that tell the public something is going to happen, something terrible. Audience can feel aroused by it, kind of stabbed too in a figurative way, through their ears. Every beat hits assimilating the visual violence with the accuracy of the rhythmic montage. The same way the Claudio Simonetti's' band Goblin creates environments on which only the music score is prolifically scary and left a very vivid recollection. On Contrast to another famous and contemporary example is John Carpenter soundtracks in *Halloween* (1978) and *Vampires* (1998), where he made the soundtracks specifically to the film. In this case Carpenter only composes soundtracks to his own movies, but he has never written or recorded an entire album outside films, opposite as Goblin and its members that have several records out and are not only film soundtrack-relate.

New instruments and New sounds

The creative capacity of a soundscape is almost infinite, in a figurative language. The assignment of sound to objects is a well-defined role in the cinema, since its voice is conveyed and through the frequency, the auditory object describes its characteristics. Likewise, it happens in the musical composition, considering that it is also part of the soundscape, the melodies and harmonies seeks to play with the emotions of the spectators in a background almost involuntary, could even seem like unconscious, or as a conscious process too.

An important score on which composer used creative instruments and sounds was George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (1978). After *Suspiria*, Dario Argento and Claudio

Simonetti were called to do this score, then Goblin influences in *Dawn of the Dead* are also very noticeable. Another relevant music score for instance is, the Bachianas by Villa Brazilian musician Heitor Lobos (Music score in “*deus e o diabo na terra do sol,*” “*black god, white devil*” Dir. G. Rocha. 1964), soundtracks which although are culturally loaded also are quite dark, profound and decorate spectacularly the raw scenes of Brazilian Counter cinema director Glauber Rocha.

Speaking of musical influences to decorate horror environments, Simonetti repeatedly mentions the creations of John Carpenter's soundscape. However, initially *Suspiria* score was not centered on the cinematographic apparatus, but Dario Argento found it significantly important, because of its innovative sound and its supernatural atmosphere. Simonetti also makes reference to the aesthetics of terror and its integration with the score; "Music must also be terrific, or even better, horrific." This compare to the grisly murders in the films, the soundscape, of course, must be loaded of strident noises and hectic repetitive sequences.

Function of the musical score in Giallo Film

In the current environment there are many more sounds than previously did not exist, thanks to the industrialization and evolution of cities, also to create artificial landscapes that require an extra investment besides the commonly recognized sounds. This is the premise that Schafer, R Murray suggests in his book "The Soundscape" in which he makes pertinent observations on the construction of acoustic environments.

This concept will help to understand the edification or de-construction of environments in the horror trilogy.

The relevance of the music score in the trilogy by the Italian filmmaker Dario Argento³ makes a strong cultural impact, since by appropriately using the aural objects and characteristics of sound, acoustic environment, that are being of great influence in the society of that time, as was the case of progressive rock in the Italy of 1970s and 1980s, and putting it next to the visual development of the horror genre, it offered an additional component. Which expanded the possibilities of development, for the film genre and as well as for the music. *Suspiria (1977)* music was composed by Claudio Simonetti's Goblin band, *Inferno (1980)* by Keith Noel Emerson, and for *The Mother of Tears (2007)* music was composed by, again, Claudio Simonetti's Goblin band, and Daemonia band, this last one on which should be noted the role of Dani Filth, English singer of a renowned black metal band.

Dario Argento and Giallo Genre

Dario Argento (born in Italy in 1940) is a film director, producer, actor, film critic and screenwriter. He is best known for his work in the horror film genre during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the subgenre known as giallo, and for his influence on modern slasher films. Primarily, Dario was strongly influenced by his father, Salvatore Argento, who was a cinematographer but also for early Giallo filmmakers as Mario Bava, Lucio

³ Dario Argento (b.1940) Italian film director, producer, film critic and screenwriter. He is best known for his horror films made during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the subgenre known as Giallo, and for his influence on modern horror films.

Fulci⁴ and Demofilo Fidani. In the second part of his trilogy of the mothers, (*Inferno*) Argento chooses Lamberto Bava, Mario Bava⁵ film director's son, as the assistant director, this was sealing a more assiduous relationship within Giallo genre and his new film, as a continuation of *Suspiria*. The direct inspiration of Argento to build this altar of madness, the trilogy of mothers, arose from the reading of the book "*Suspiria de Profundis*" by English writer Thomas De Quincey⁶. Argento used De Quincey ideas, particularly *Levana* and *Our Ladies of Sorrow*, to frame his triptych theory.

Argento first film that consecrated him as director of Giallo genre was *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* in 1970 (also known as *The Gallery Murders*). Previous to it Argento's role was specifically in the creative area, writing the scripts. His filmography begins as a screenwriter back in 1966 with *Pardon, Are You For or Against?* later *Someone's a Traitor* in 1967 and a very prolific year in his career as a scriptwriter, 1968 with several films as; *Today We Kill...Tomorrow We Die!*, *Commandos*, *Comandamenti per un gangster*, *La rivoluzione sessuale*, and his most important incursion in Spaghetti Western (Italian Western) film genre *Once Upon a Time in the West*. Latter directed by Sergio Leone and co-written with the famous Bernardo Bertolucci, was a success at the box office and significant in Argento's career. After his first directed movie *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, he decides in the 1970s to put all the efforts in directing. The characteristics that make him a rather unique Giallo Auteur, would be the ones given in his 1970 films: *The Cat or 'Nine Tails*, and *Four Flies on Gray Velvet*, in which he

⁴ Lucio Fulci (1927-1996) was an Italian film director, screenwriter, producer and actor. Fulci is well known for his Spaghetti Western, science fiction, erotica, Giallo and horror films.

⁵ Mario Bava (1914-1980) was a special effects artist, Italian director, screenwriter, and cinematographer from the "golden age" of Italian horror films. He did the inferno special effects.

⁶ Thomas Penson De Quincey (1785-1859) was an English essayist, best known for his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* and *Suspiria de Profundis*.

demonstrates his obsession for animals and turns them into protagonists who are giants of the screen. *Deep Red* (1975), *Suspiria* (1977), *Tenebrae* (1982), *Phenomena* (1985), *Demoni* I and II (1985-6), *Opera* (1987) and *The devil's Daughter* (1991), all these movies direct contributors to the horror genre and loaded with many elements of the Giallo film.

A negative connotation that the critics have always made, to which Argento responds without any problem saying he does not care. This could be an internalized misogyny, represented by murderers in movies that mostly kill young women, as a method of evading sexual content. This is clearly reflected through the trilogy of mothers, which is also gradually decoded in his other Giallo films such as *Deep Red* (1975), *Phenomena* (1985), and *Opera* (1987). Slavoj Zizek, in *pervert's guide to ideology*, clarifies these cultural misrepresentations, where "*female mutilation*" demonstrates the male incapacity of social dominance without violence, and transposes genital masculinity as a vital lack of power in the female gender. However, the psychographic environment of the artistic representation of the director must be analyzed from the perspective of horror cinema, in which people always die and do not necessarily have a symbolic representation. In addition to this, it is even sometimes difficult to follow the frames or sequences in Argento films, meaning that their biggest point is not to simulate a tendency to follow or an implicit ideology, but the contrary, clichés and popular tropes to win audiences, including criticism negative for his position, using the worst elements of human behavior.

The Three Listening Modes in the Argento's Trilogy

French film sound theorist, Michael Chion (1947-) say: “*Any silence makes us feel exposed, as if we were laying bare our own listening, but also as if we were in the presence of a giant ear, tuned to our own slightest noises,*” and is from there where is understood the importance of silence as well as the sound that breaks it. In film, the creation of a soundscape has had many variables and creative components, which is more than in a merely technical work, is an art piece itself. Chion makes an asserted emphasis on the ways in which our way of listening is addressed. This text is “*The three listening modes,*” and it is applied to films’ soundscape, as well as specifically to the music score and soundtracks. Soundscape usually uses pre-existing music, dialogue and sound effects to enhance the dramatic narration and emotional impact.

The listening modes are: **Causal listening:** Michael Chion tell us that “*when the cause is visible, sound can provide supplementary information about it,*” in this case, he refers to diegetic sound. He also says, “*when we cannot see the sound's cause, sound can constitute our principal source of information about it,*” the no-diegetic sound. **Semantic Listening:** Chion describes semantic listening as “*a code of language, a way to interpret a message.*” **Reduced Listening:** Chion quotes, Pierre Shaeffer gave the name *reduced listening to the listening mode that focuses on the traits of the sound itself, independent of its cause and meaning. Also, Television use sounds solely for their figurative, semantic, or evocatory value, in reference to real or suggested cause.*

A sharp tone, a sudden sound, shouting, a change in the structure of the music, and creepy sounds can be described as an abrupt increase or change in volume, tone or frequency range. These assumptions are made for the characteristics of sounds, in this way the auditor can identify their sources and build their form and interpret even their nature. For example: a glass with half or full water, a small or large metal tube, a knife or a gun, an old door or a car, etc.

To illustrate properly and insert the components of the listening modes that Chion talks about, soundscape and music score by Goblin in *Suspiria* are perfect to it. “Semantic listening” is the most notorious mode of listening denote in *Suspiria*, because the sound itself is special, its high pitches are strong enough to the scenes, the rapid tempo and wild progressive rhythm is in accordance with the overtone montage, this could be observed in the murdering of the evil witch scene, close to the end of the movie, where Suzy is stabbing her kind of representational phantom and then everything collapses.

In the scene of *Suspiria*, close to the last climax which is also an important turning point, where Suzy is opening the door that is in the center of the academy, and she turned a flower to open the entrance (very similar to the mise-en-scene of Alice in Wonderland). From the perspective of the causal listening a few non-diegetic sounds, creepy sounds, that can be assimilate like to opening a portal to hell are sudden making present. This because the sounds are heard, but they are not visually shown on the screen, and the assignment that can be given to this complementary sound narration is like giving space to the unknown. Certainly, the atmosphere of the film becomes dense before they show to

dark images or grotesque, simply by the predisposition of music and auditory ambience, the association is made.

In “reduced listening,” we can take the scene where Suzy is walking down the corridor and the cook is seated, a boy is standing next to her and a strange silver ornament is on a side. There's a special saturation on the tone of the leitmotiv which creates a juxtaposition with the visual narration which show us the angular prismatic mirror that the cook is holding, the deep red vivid color of the corridor walls, and the shining phantasmagoric lights. There is also the iconic photographic contrast of the boy grey dress and the set piece, plus the disturbing attitude of the cook. The homologous soundtrack of the movie "suspiria" plays in crescendo in the background and the synthesizers' sound start getting new forms, is the presence of the witch, a spiritual field are raised by this song. So since now on, this song will represent unconsciously the proximity of the danger in the film, the passage to the underworld, and as soon as this song is latent we already know that Suzy will be at risk. This is different than the use of the same soundtrack in the beginning because we also gathered information relevant that contributes to the significance of the motif itself.

Suspiria (1977)
Mater Suspiriorum.

Bad luck isn't brought by broken mirror, but by broken minds.
Dr. Frank Mandel⁷

Suspiria is a 1977 film Directed by Dario Argento, produced by his brother Claudio Argento, with the collaboration of their father, Salvatore Argento, as executive producer.

⁷ Dr. Frank Mandel is a character from *Suspiria*, interpreted by Udo Kier.

The screenplay is written by Dario Argento and Daria Nicolodi, this last had a hard time putting her name on the movie credits because conjugal problems with Argento.

Suspiria described, in the same director words: "It is a fairy tale for adults," and truly it is. It contains many similarities and symbolisms that resemble many child fables, which contrast with stories of phenomenal spirits and classic themes of Giallo genre. Dario tells in an interview to Maitland McDonagh, which she uses as a part of her book "broken mirror, broken minds," that he was mainly inspired by Disney and Edgar Allan Poe tales, and one in special "Alice in the wonderland." The inspiration for this gruesome and barbaric adult fairy tale is pretty varied, but three thematic constants are prominent, one is the mythological influence of English writer Tomas de Quincey with his book "*Suspiria de Profundis*" (Latin for "sighs from the depths"). Where the three mothers Argento mentioned as the seeds of evil in the plot, are the same roman goddess, Levana and our ladies of sorrow, that De Quincey writes about. These are; Mater Lachrymarum (our lady of tears), Mater Suspiriorum (our lady of sighs) and Mater Tenebrarum (our lady of darkness). In *Suspiria* appears the first of the three mothers, Mater Suspiriorum. The second thematic constant is the inspiration in the western fairy tales such as for instance "Snow white and the seven dwarfs" for the film wardrobe, especially Suzan in a supposed role of virgin and innocent princess, as well as the features of the physical of the witch. "Alice in wonderland" for the mise-en-scene, and the palettes of extreme vivid colors that in the film work in the opposite way as a technicolor terror almost emetic. And the academy location as symbol of the unknown, in the middle of the forest, like it is in "Hansel and Gretel," or in "Little Red Riding Hood." And the third thematic that is not too constant, but that was basically the backbone of *Suspiria*. It is the story that Yvonne

Müller Loeb, grandmother of the screenwriting co-writer Daria Nicolodi, told her about when she was sent as a child to a prestigious boarding school, and discovered there they practiced black magic. This was a story that Nicolodi told Argento on one of their trips through Europe and that inspired the director to take this memory and make it an integral part of the film.

The plot is based on an American ballerina called Suzy Banyon (Jessica Harper), that goes to study abroad to a very prestigious German ballet academy, where she discovers, as in Nicolodi's grandmother story, black magic is being practice by all those in charge of the academy. Paying tribute to an evil witch who hides in secret walls through the academy in which Erasmus of Rotterdam lived, the latter adding points to an apparent ecclesiastical narrative or discordance. The main witch's worshiper, Madame Blanc (Joan Bennett) wants to get rid of Suzy and at the climax of the movie Suzy just discovers everything and killed the ancient witch, mater suspiriorum, and all their entourages die with her, at the same time a rampant fire that consumes the entire academy is unleashed, ending the film with the strident music of Goblin sounding loudly, and Suzan escaping.

In this horror film and phantasmagoric thriller, it is perpetuated gruesome and horrific murders, but that has gone down in history as a cult movie for its features. Murder sequences are shoot from impossible angles making audience feel hopeless, and without escape.

The score by Goblin plays both atmospheric and symbolic roles. Since the first scene audio describes how Suzy is entering in a nightmarish world with a dark content on it, and it just suggesting us to be aware because something is surrounding. The musical

score uses a wide variety of instruments and contraptions to achieve the resulting environments. We find Agostino Marangolo on drums, percussion and vocals. Massimo Morante played electric guitars, acoustic guitars, bouzouki (Greek guitar) and vocals. Fabio Pignatelli on fender precision bass (fretless), rickenbacker bass, acoustic guitar and vocals. Claudio Simonetti plays the mellotron (3-violins, church organ and 8-choir), elka organ, logan violin, celesta, fender rhodes electric piano, grand piano and moog synthesizers. And additionally, Antonio Marangolo played saxophone on "black forest." And Maurizio Guarini on additional keyboards, including the moog synthesizers and other keyboards listed on "roller."

A curious fact is that the band Goblin had already composed early versions of many of the tracks for the *Suspiria* when Argento started the recording. The soundtracks for *Suspiria* are: *Suspiria* (Main theme and most remembered score in the trilogy), its duration is six minutes. 6:01 Mins. *Witch*– 3:12 Mins. *Opening to the sighs*– 0:32 Secs. *Sighs*– 5:16 Mins. *Markos*– 4:05 Mins. *Black forest*– 6:08 Mins. *Blind concert*– 6:16 Mins. *Death valze*– 1:51 Mins. These are the total tracks that the entire film uses, and all are interrelated as a conjunction as music album as well. The chronology of these soundtracks conjoined fundamentals of visual narration in metric montage. A decision that apparently had results in the public, but that initially was impressive for the cast, was that the score was going to be reproduced through loudspeakers in the set to the performance to create an environment. The dialogues would be doubled after, as was tradition in Italy at the time, and this fact created the necessary tension in the cast for a spectacular performance. The result could be noted in the film.

Inferno (1980)

Mater Tenebrarum.

I don't know what price I shall have to pay for breaking what we alchemists call *Silentium*.

E. Varelli⁸

In this film, as in *Suspiria*, Argento plays with our capacity for symbolic interactionism and, combine elements from alchemy, mysticism, occultism and symbolism, it is very easy to get confused and find complete scenes without meaning.

In this second part of the triad of evil, the patriarchal hierarchy continues to have a prominent role. The brutal murders, female mutilation, the voyeuristic objectification of women, and ritualistic representation of sexuality are key pieces to decipher the riddles of this crossroads of destiny, in which apparently almost nobody survives.

To *Inferno*, Argento decided to bring Keith Emerson⁹ to composed and performed, except for track thirteen orchestrated and conducted by Salmon. Considering that Argento himself says of *Suspiria*, the first part of the trilogy of mothers, which is a kind of fairy tale for adults. We could expect that for *Inferno*, since some elements of the film lack sense and continuity, especially if compared to reality. It should be understood then that in fairy tales not everything is strictly something that is extracted from reality, or that it has an explanation congruent with some psychological mechanism. It means that the lack of sense can be common in this world full of evil beings with secrets, bad intentions, and plots of conspiracies to destroy the world and human existence. Mentioned this point, world of alchemy can be represented with history books or Argento movies, since the overload of symbolism and references to occultists and alchemists is

⁸ E. Varelli is a fictional character in *Inferno* film. He is the English architect, for the three houses for the three mothers in Freiburg, Rome and NY. Also, he is an alchemist and the writer for book in the movie: "The three Mothers"

⁹ Keith Noel Emerson (1944 –2016) was an English musician and film composer.

simply overwhelming. Starting with the two houses that are locations for *Suspiria* and *Inferno*, where events take place, are points of reference for research for alchemy, the first, the house of Desiderius Erasmus¹⁰ and second, the building in New York where G.I. Gurdjieff¹¹ live through 1925 to 1926. First location for *Suspiria* in Freiburg, Germany, and the second for *Inferno* in New York. These locations are in accordance with the text of E. Varelli, who is the architect who built the buildings for the three evil mothers.

Emerson Keith from Emerson, Lake & Palmer (ELP), made this music score, new phantasmagoric environment, for Argento's *Inferno*. At the time, when he was called to build the music of this film, his musical career with ELP was in hiatus. Soundtracks he made for *Inferno* are: *Inferno* (Main Titles Theme) lasts 2:56 Mins. *Rose's Descent into the Cellar* lasts 4:58 Mins. *Taxi Ride (Rome)* lasts 2:15 Mins. *The Library* lasts only 0:57 Secs. *Sarah in the Library Vaults* lasts 1:17 Mins. *Bookbinder's Delight* lasts 1:11 Mins. *Rose Leaves the Apartment* lasts 3:30 Mins. *Rose Gets It* lasts 2:04 Mins. *Elisa's Story* lasts 1:10 Mins. *A Cat Attic Attack* lasts 3:13 Mins. *Kazanian's Tarantella* lasts 3:34 Mins. *Mark's Discovery* lasts 1:23 Mins. *Mater Tenebrarum* lasts 2:38 Mins. *Inferno Finale* lasts 2:26 Mins. *Cigarettes, Ices, Etc.* lasts 2:50 Mins. An important work from the Italian opera is used frequently in this film, this is “*Va, pensiero* chorus (also known as “*The Hebrew Slaves Chorus*”)” Giuseppe Verdi's opera, *Nabucco* (short for *Nabucodonosor*, 1841). In the soundscape of this movie, metric montage is mixed with overtone montage about the auditory environment.

¹⁰ Desiderius Roterodamus (1466-1536), known as Erasmus or Erasmus of Rotterdam, was a Dutch Christian humanist scholar of the northern Renaissance. Originally trained as a Catholic priest, Erasmus was an important figure in classical scholarship who wrote in a pure Latin style. Desiderius refers to alchemy in several of his work, as in the most well-known: "Colloquies" and "In Praise of Folly."

¹¹ George Ivanovich Gurdjieff ((1866-1877) -1949), commonly known as G. I. Gurdjieff, was a mystic, philosopher, spiritual teacher, and composer of Armenian and Greek descent, born in Armenia.

In *inferno* it is necessary to emphasize the participation that has the animals, since Argento has always included them always in his work. Considering the use of cats is quite frequent in this film, these creatures that have had many myths in history, around their stealthy behavior, and their nocturnal life, Argento decides to put it as an object, as a contraption that symbolizes that this animal is part of the evil and they perceive the presence of the witch or her worshipers. In the several scenes like the one in which Rosa decides to enter the cellar at the beginning, or when Mark her brother received the letter that sends from NY to him in Rome, or later the neighbor of Rose in the NY hotel when she meets with mark and end up been killed by the mysteriously cruel murder, in all these scenes the cats are central theme. Starting the last scene mentioned audience is earwitness of how the plot turns turbulent, since the sound effects seek that, and the music of Emerson provides a paranoiac effect where the presence of the murderer, which has already been established previously with the motif, besieges.

The brilliant set design is mainly due to the color palette, where are predominant red and blue, with a fairly high tonality. In the cats' scene and where Elise De Longvalle Adler (Daria Nicolodi) dies, the camera begins giving space with long shots that help determining they are entering to prohibited places of the hotel. These places are hidden because it is where the murderer interacts, also where the witch moves, that although she is not present at this point of the film, it shows in the phantasmagorical atmospheres and terribly charged with thriller sounds. Elise tells Mark about the voices and the strange smell coming out of the ventilation windows. Mark decides to investigate, and he leaves, leaving her alone. Elise scared decides to go looking for him after a while. In the search for Mark, Elise discovers that he is being dragged on the floor by a shadow that is

impossible to determine. Scared, she runs and descends through corridors inside the hotel to a small room where the camera takes approaching making shots and close-ups.

The music is in crescendo, and the unexpected happens, or moderately predictable by the music: a shower of cats on the actress. These mythological creatures attack unmercifully Elise until a knife in a very first camera shot, descends from nowhere to end her suffering. The music is desperate, bells, disharmonic piano, strident violins, trumpets with high tones and rapids chords are the characteristics of "A Cat Attic Attack" (Emerson 3:13 mins), how is called the song that is played while that scene. This is artfully mixed with the sounds of cats, wind, and other elements of the scene by the sound engineer Francesco Groppioni. Twelve years later Mick Garris made very similar scenes in the end of "sleepwalkers (1992)"

The Mother of Tears (2007)
Mater Lachrymarum.

As it happens previously in the first two movies of the trilogy, the evil of the witches is unleashed mercilessly against everything that finds in its way, and in "Mother of tears (Matter Lachrymarum)" will not be the exception. The tropes of Giallo are slightly demonstrated in this production, maybe it is because Asia Argento¹² is the protagonist and Dario does not want to expose Asia in the same way he did with the other actresses. Also, there is a gap between the second part of the trilogy with this last part of 27 years. Which is a long waiting period to watch the third part of a trilogy.

¹² Asia Argento (Aria Maria Vittoria Rossa Argento, 1975) is an Italian actress and director. The daughter of filmmaker Dario Argento, she had roles in the films XXX (2002), Land of the Dead (2005) and Marie Antoinette (2006) and his father last part of the mother's trilogy, Mother of Tears

In this last part of the trilogy, Claudio Simonetti's *Goblin* comes back and composed the soundtrack for *The Third Mother*, which was complete in early April 2007 after four months of work. He chose a classical style mixed with gothic influences present in many of the choruses. This music score was influenced by Dario Argento's *Master of Horror* TV series episodes (2005-2007), and by composers as Carl Orff (*Carmina Burana*) and Bernard Herrman (*Citizen Kane* music score).

The piece at the end of Simonetti's "*Mater Lachrimarum*" is called "*Dulcis in Fondo*" and was performed by the band *Daemonia* (basically a formation of the all *Goblin* members with new drummer Titta Tani, and Dani Filth on vocals) on which Dani Filth (English musician from *Cradle of Filth*) recorded a song. *Daemonia* is Claudio, Bruno Previtali on guitars, Federico Amorosi on Bass-guitar and Titta Tani on drums) Curiously the soundtrack was released October 31, the celebration day of the *Ossa dei morti* (Dead Bones cake) in Italy, it is like the day of the dead in Mexico, Halloween.

The classic elements of the *Giallo* are not completely applied to this production of Argento, but in a certain way the completely graphic assassinations, some photography and the blood all over on the screen seem to be taken from those times where the *Giallo* had its greatest splendor. Also, the *scopophilia* is fed to a lesser degree, focuses on the plot that is more notorious and although it is loaded with symbolism is much easier to follow than in the first two parts of the trilogy. During 27 of waiting the world was dominated by *Mater Lachrymarum*. the youngest one of the three witches and the most beautiful, which will be destroyed at the end of the film, in an almost comical way.

After the discovery of a coffin and a trunk protected with the symbols of *Mater Lachrymarum*, in an excavation carried out the Viterbo cemetery in Rome, Italy.

Monsignor Brusca (Franco Leo) sends the trunk to the antiquities museum in Rome with the director, Michael (Adam James), and he delegates Sarah Mandy (Asia Argento) and Giselle Mares (Coralina Cataldi-Tassoni) to investigate and give clarity on its content. This trunk contains three statues, a dagger (it seems to be the Spear of destiny used also in *Inferno*), and a red costume with dead language, that are made, more likely, in the XIII century in a medieval technique. At this point the film has already established the tones of the photograph that tend to be more realistic than its predecessors in the triad. This point was made because it seems that it was already long enough for Argento to have the movie without grisly murders. And it's there, in the first ten minutes of the movie that the first death happens in the film. Sarah and Giselle are already analyzing the content. A soft phantasmagoric melody supports this chiaroscuro photograph, with more muted tones and with a more baroque appearance than fantastic, unlike *Suspiria* and *Inferno*.

After Giselle cut herself unintentionally and the blood falls over the trunk. Giselle sends Sarah to pick a dead language dictionary. While it happens, a medium full shot of Giselle in the lab of the museum, cut down to a medium shot and finally to medium close-up, this way audience is already embodied almost with the character of Giselle, and what she is doing. The dialogue is between the environment and herself, where you hear a constant vacuum sound that only increases in volume and intensity. There is no progressive rock as in *Suspiria*, nor classical music orchestrated as in *Inferno*, on the contrary it seems that image fixation is sought in visual effects, that are moderately well achieved, but still no less grotesque and gore. The camera approaches close-ups and moves away to medium shot constantly, the tonal montage advances with the events, where Giselle is being subdued by three demons that came out of nowhere when listening

to her read the words of the inscription of the vestry that was inside the trunk. It could also be related to intellectual montage if the three figurines and the dead language is taken into account.

The symbolism is ritualistic, since the blood and the words read by Giselle are what evokes the evil spirits that end up murdering her and hanging her with their own intestines. Something comical of the special effects is that, Argento cares less if it seems completely real, or false, this is a fact that he confirmed saying that is more symbolic than the real purpose. Then they start a hunt for Sarah who is the character that will end giving back to these spirits that take possession of human minds. This first scene takes the reins of what will be the rest of the photography and the visual narration of the film. The voyeurism is less in this film than in the previous ones, but there are still nudes even from Asia Argento, the director's daughter. The musical score is less noticeable compared to what were in the previous two, and in this movie it is challenged the sound effects more than to soundtracks. Finally, it is relevant to say that the song named at the beginning, *Mater Lachrymarum*, made by Daemonia band sounds only until the end about the credits.

Emotion and Memory

In the safest places to be scared is in the theaters with horror movies. Once directors understood that, film experience can be taken to the extreme, as it is done in Argento's trilogy. Goblin band and Emerson group resorted to progressive techniques, they use various devices to conceive modern noises, and folk instruments from other regions (as the bouzouki), to create that special sound environment that moves under visual narration

in the trilogy. It is there where the aural objects are perceived, where the nerves are shaken, and where the psychology of attention plays an extremely significant role to capture and interpret the film as a threatening reality that manages to frighten the spectators.

Attention is a brain cognitive process and it is focus on information or stimuli that could be of different types. The processing of information present in the environment through the five senses is also a definition that can be incurred. The types of attention are; sustained, selective, alternating and divided attention. Sustained and selective attention are used when someone needs to concentrate on only one thing at a time. Then, the sustained attention is commonly used when someone needs to concentrate on a specific task or activity over a long period of time (such as video games). And, selective attention is commonly used to focus on one activity in the middle of others (listening to a friend at a concert). Alternate and divided attention are common when someone must focus on several trades at the same time. So, alternate attention is used to alternate between activities or tasks simultaneously (such as driving a bus and receiving the fare money). And, divided attention commonly used to complete more than two tasks at the same time (talking on the phone and watching a movie eating a sandwich).

A distinctive feature of soundscape is also the conjunction of dialogue and additional aural objects, whether it be diegetic or non-diegetic, which creates a sonorous environment besides the visual perception. In the field of cinema, the types of attention are usually the two most important senses, hearing and sight but not limited. In fact, there is people who also experience other levels of emotional stimuli that implicates another sense, like the feeling of vomit or goosebumps that could be applied to taste and

touch. Also, memory activation delivers endorphins that could even make the audience experience the sense of smell, similar to what 4D films do with the smell-o-vision system. In this grandiloquent case it could be say that film can engage all human senses. Ultimately in this triad of evil, the grotesque scenes of *Suspiria* and high tone, or in *inferno* the liveliness of blood and guts can get to the point of occasioning vomit to those who have no enough guts.

Music to Fill the Silence

A relevant discourse by Aaron Copland¹³, an American music composer, discusses three levels of listening to music: sensuous, expressive, and sheerly (or purely) musical. The sensuous level, or plane, is the most basic, but pleasurable level of enjoyment. This level of listening requires the least amount of brain power; therefore, we usually engage this level when we use music as background music-to fill the silence in the room, as it could happen sometimes in film soundscape. For instance, the Daniel (blind piano player) and his dog scene of *Suspiria* where the dog strangely attacks his owner. For instance, the *Suspiria* Scene of Daniel (blind piano player) and his dog, where the dog strangely attacks his owner after being fired from the school. The long shot gives the spatial magnitude of this monuments. While the characters, Daniel and his dog, look quite small compare to the square of Konigsplatz, the center of Munich's cultural district, where this scene was shot. Few elements in the screen and the music score reach its higher intensity. Divided attention become one with sustained attention, it means the sonics and

¹³ Aaron Copland (1900-1990) was an American composer, composition teacher, writer, and later a conductor of his own music. Copland was referred to by his peers and critics as "the Dean of American Composers"

visuals are capturing our senses, but volume overpass the diegetic sound and becomes the soundtrack (Goblin, Suspiria main titles theme) is only part we heard of the soundscape, attention is sustained, almost like holding the breath waiting for the intense scene to finish.

The expressive level requires some concentration, for we can feel some sort of emotion from the music, in film it is a correlation with the image and the plot itself. In this level Copland stresses that “we may not be able to specify what we feel, but we know it is there.”

Then there is the third level, the sheerly or purely musical level. Most people do not reach this level, which consists of "the notes themselves and their manipulation." For instance, the music room scene in "Inferno." It is a music appreciation class where Mark Elliot (Leigh McCloskey) and classmates are analyzing “Va, pensiero” chorus (also known as “The Hebrew Slaves Chorus”) from Giuseppe Verdi's opera, Nabucco (Nabucodonosor). The scene begins with a strong note, F-sharp major, orchestrating the transition from New York to the music room in Rome, where, in a medium shot, Mark is trying to read the staffs from the opera, and the letter that his sister Rose Elliot (Irene Miracle) sent him from New York. The slow camera movements and soft montage changing between panoramic shots and medium shots let the collective attention be more focus on the music piece.

Even that non-diegetic sound is almost unimportant also become noticeable with accordance of some actions lead by photography, like the windows opening abruptly just before the class ends and the sound of people leaving the classroom. In this scene, the sheerly level of listening is granted space to interact with the beautiful score, and the slow

tracking of camera and panning just let the audience enjoy the music in its best. Giving prominence to the final chorus of Verdi's opera, it possible to hear the Hebrew slaves singing (in Italian) about their exile into a foreign land. The Hebrews wishes the beauty of their forefathers' land. They sing: "*ove olezzano tepide e molli l'aure dolci*", which in English translation is: "*where warm and fragrant and soft are the gentle breezes.*" This while the director is showing us the architectural space of the classroom through the lens and cutting down to a medium shot of Mark getting anxious because the extremely beautiful girl who staring at him dominantly and whispering unherdable words, what seems to be a mute curse.

Cinematic Time **(Personal Experience)**

In a perfect dungeon to get scare by the screening of "*Suspiria*," I decided to personally investigate the music score and went to the concert of Claudio Simonetti's Goblin in *Le Poisson Rouge*, a place in downtown Manhattan dedicated to underground music and artistic events. November 26 of 2018 and the soundtracks from this film are still around and survive the past of the years. This talks good about the impression and importance of appropriate music elements in the horror soundscape, as it is in any other genre of film. This cinematic experience takes me to another level of understanding, on how important the role of music tracks is for film, especially in Giallo. The fact this movie was release in 1977, and I saw it screened in 2018 with live score, it makes a gap in time that transport all the senses to the day of the premiere, the legitimacy is yet intact.

Suspiria background music survives until today. As some paints are immortal, music equally endures and transcends in the common media culture.

The Claudio Simonetti's Goblin presentations in tour band member, I was in, were: Bruno Previtali at guitars and bouzouki, Cecilia Nappo at Electric bass-guitar, Titta Tani at drums and percussion, and Claudio Simonetti in Synthesizers, piano and voices.



In order of appearance: Claudio Simonetti, Cecilia Nappo, Titta Tani and Bruno Previtali. Photos taken November 26 of 2018, in *Le Poisson Rouge*, Manhattan NY. at the Screening of *Suspiria* Credits: Pablo Cortes

This was not just a concert more than what I usually attend, it was a cinematic experience where the elements of cinema were more real than ever, and where also the intention, creation and meaning of the score transcended from emotional level to a level of profound interpretation. Where the basic concepts of music such as pizzicato (pinched), fortissimo (very loud) and crescendo (increasing), were explained by itself in front of the unbridled delivery of ultra-violence and grotesque images. Perhaps some of the phrases in the dialogue do not work as well in English as they did in Italian, and the literal translation transfigured the context, converting it in some way into two-way phrases dominated by linguistic stereotypes and the marked accents of dubbing and literal translation makes it comic. The attendees, including me, to this film projection with live music had a spooky evening, or rather, an incredible stand-up comedy musical horror.

The mentioned previously does not take anything off from the value or seriousness of the Argento's work. On the contrary, it brought a handful of nuances that I may never could have realized in a traditional cinema theater. In a metaphorical way, I understood that *Suspiria* is a “cult” film that turned the social ritual into a metaphysical experience where the gods are humans’ creators of their own worlds, and with their instruments decorated the spiritual realm. Now I understand better this phrase of Einstein: "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

Conclusions

In conclusion, the music score, besides just giving potential form to the visual environment, can also create, change, amplified or transform deeply the meaning and scope of scenes. The soundscape created in Argento's trilogy of the mothers, that become cult not only because the horror plots and the maniac development of the script, but for its magnificent musical scores which give them a wide range of nuances enriching visual forms with creative and versatile atmospheres. The insertion of contemporary popular music, as it is the case of progressive rock contrasted with classical music like the "old school" way, also creates a socio-cultural correlation bond, on which the public is participant further than merely the theater where the movie take place. This means, the interpolation effect that was brought to life in films is now another valuable trope added to horror films.

Therefore, the relevance of Horror's musical score in Giallo's Italian supernatural trilogy penetrates several levels in the sensory planes and creates an effect of juxtaposition, where the unpleasant and bloody images seem to be as aesthetic as attractive and more than acceptable, beautiful. In the same way that, Goblin and Emerson in the Argento trilogy, create an auditory contact between all the elements of the staging, they are also a music score that evokes nightmares and brings back the spooky scenes of the terrible murders and demonic atmospheres.

As a result of this research, is affirmative that the musical score is a pivotal piece in the construction of the soundscape and film language, since it encodes and helps to transmit the message proposed by the director, also creating a singular and particular relationship between the film and the audience.

Filmography

1. *Suspiria (1977)* Mater Suspiriorum. Dir. Dario Argento. Music: Goblin (Claudio Simonetti)
2. *Inferno (1980)* Mater Tenebrarum. Dir. Dario Argento. Music: Goblin (Claudio Simonetti)
3. *The Mother of Tears (2007)*. Mater Lachrymarum. Dir. Dario Argento. Music: Daemonia (Claudio Simonetti)

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that even everyday people become educated about the sheerly musical level. Copland asks all to become more active listeners to music. *Extracted from:*
<http://www.westminster.edu/staff/brennie/WDGroup4/what2listen4.htm>

Notes and Extra Links

- Claudio Simonetti's Goblin (*Suspiria* live score) Footage from sat Nov 26 at Le Poisson Rouge
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- <http://www.factmag.com/2014/10/31/suspiria-is-the-masterpiece-of-goblin-claudio-simonetti-reflects-on-the-best-horror-soundtrack-of-all-time/>
- <http://www.soundtrackcollector.com/forum/displayquestion.php?topicid=10064>
- <https://vimeo.com/70082881>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horror_film#cite_note-1
- <https://study.com/academy/lesson/attention-as-part-of-cognitive-development-definition-process.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJoo79OwZEI>
- https://lpr.com/lpr_events/claudio-simonetti-goblin-suspiria-november-26th-2018/
- <http://m4ufree.tv/watch-w8wb-mother-of-tears-2007-movie-online-free-m4ufree.html>

- **NOTES on Goblin.** the use of new sound techniques (recording and implementation of instruments as the Bouzouki, a Greek stringed instrument, contrasted with electronic pianos generate other aural perceptions and creates other style of environment) Members of band **Il Ritratto DI Dorian Gray** that after becomes **Goblin** from 1970 were: Massimo Giorgi (Bass), Massimo Morante (Guitars), and Claudio Simonetti (Keyboards). The permanent composer to Dario Argentos' films is Claudio Simonetti. Goblin (Original) actual members Massimo Morante, Fabio Pignatelli, Maurizio Guarini, and Agostino Marangolo. Actual Claudio Simonetti's Goblin are: Cecilia Nappo (Bass), Bruno Previtali (Guitars and Bouzouki), Titta Tani (drums and percussion) and Simonetti (Synthesizers, piano and voices)