Cuadernos de Investigación Musical, 2022 (15, extraordinario), pp. 91-104
DOI: https://doi.org/10.18239/invesmusic.2022.15.09
ISSN: 2530-6847

Swashbucklers and Femme Fatales: Gender Coding in John Williams's Score to *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008)

Espadachines y Femme fatale: Codificación de género en *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008) de John Williams

Conor Power
Maynooth University
conor.power.2016@mumail.ie
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0378-925X

ABSTRACT

Despite having literally and figuratively ridden into the sunset in 1989, Hollywood's favourite adventuring archaeologist returned in 2008's *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.* John Williams's score continued to revel in the established styles and codes befitting of the series' nostalgic references: 40s and 50s B-movies. In addition to resurrecting beloved themes, the composer penned new themes for characters who, in part, progressed the franchise's traditional gender roles. This article investigates how Williams's neoclassical score lingers in the rigid gender codes of Hollywood's past, at the expense of forming innovative thematic identities less reflective of traditional archetypes.

Key Words: John Williams, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull,* gender coding, neoclassicism, genre.

RESUMEN

A pesar de haber cabalgado hacia el crepúsculo, tanto literalmente en la pantalla como en el sentido figurado, en 1989, el aventurero arqueólogo favorito de Hollywood, regresó en 2008 en *Indiana Jones y el reino de la calavera de cristal*. La partitura de John Williams siguió recreándose en los estilos y códigos de referencia nostálgica que se encuentran en las películas de clase de B las décadas de 1940 y 1950. Además de volver sobre venerados motivos, el compositor escribió nuevos temas para personajes que, en parte, hicieron progresar los roles de género tradicionales de la franquicia. Este artículo examina cómo la partitura neoclásica de Williams persiste en los códigos rígidos de género del antiguo Hollywood, a expensas de formar identidades temáticas menos relacionadas con arquetipos tradicionales.

Palabras clave: John Williams, *Indiana Jones y el reino de la calavera de cristal*, codificación de género, neoclasicismo, género.

Power, C. (2022). Swashbucklers and Femme Fatales: Gender Coding in John Williams's Score to *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008). *Cuadernos de Investigación Musical*, (15, extraordinario), pp. 91-104.

1. INTRODUCTION

"The Adventure Continues" was the tagline to *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. The fourth film of the Spielberg-Lucas series returned after a nineteen-year absence from the big screen in 2008; with it, Harrison Ford and Karen Allen reprised their roles, and John Williams returned to write the music: his one hundredth film score. Continuing with homage to the sound and stylings of an "old fashioned B-movie" (Lucas, as cited in Audissino, 2021, p. 159), *Crystal Skull* inherits the traits of what Fredric Jameson dubbed "nostalgia films" (1991, p. 19). Like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), it visually and musically references the cinematic past. While the original *Indiana Jones* trilogy had evoked the 1930s and 40s, the retrospective aesthetic of *Crystal Skull* turns to the following decade, cinematically amplifying its 1950s milieu with Indy's "greaser" sidekick à la Brando in *The Wild One* (Benedek, 1953), Soviet villains for the Cold War setting, and a plot influenced by 1950s science-fiction films. But the past in *Crystal Skull* is also the past of the *Indiana Jones* series. In this sense it can be understood as an embodiment of many of the traits of the "legacy film" (Golding, 2019, pp. 69–83), a reboot-sequel hybrid which: brings back familiar

characters, introduces their successors, revises familiar thematic or narrative concerns, and passes the torch from the old to the new.

Musically, this legacy element is evoked through Williams's return to the established soundworld of the series, with the addition of fresh themes for new characters and artefacts. The score has received little scholarly attention in comparison to its revered predecessors and Williams's other scores to the decade's franchise blockbusters: the early *Harry Potter* films (2001–03) and *Star Wars* prequels (1999–2005)[1]. With a particular emphasis on the new characters' thematic treatment, I examine the extent to which Williams's score built upon the franchise's established musical models and discuss how appropriate its gender coding is to a film which, seemingly, aimed to advance the genre's gender binaries into the twenty-first century.

Scholarship on Williams's gendered themes has frequently cited the composer's indebtedness to classical Hollywood and the romantic art music from which composers of the 1930s–50s took their cue (Audissino, 2021; Schneller, 2015; Halfyard and Hancock, 2012; Kassabian, 2000). Broadly speaking, female characters and romance are musically conflated in themes which often use a lyrical melody opening with a rising sixth and borrowed Phrygian harmony, in lush strings or woodwind. Fülöp's term for this phenomenon, "Feminine Romantic Cliché (FRC)" (2012, pp. 35-47), will be adopted for this case study. On the other hand, masculinity, often a subset of more general heroic tropes, is established via brass timbres, straight accented rhythms, upward bounding melodies with perfect intervals, in march or fanfare styles, the heroic themes of *Star Wars* (Lucas, 1977), *Superman* (Donner, 1978), and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* being the most popular examples. This article examines the encounter between musical features *Crystal Skull* inherits from the series and the new Hollywood of franchises, cinematic universes, and CGI[2]. First, a brief plot summary.

Having escaped Dr. Irina Spalko (Cate Blanchett) and the Soviets, who have stolen mysterious mummified remains, Indy returns home to find his job in jeopardy. He is urged by Mutt (Shia LaBeouf) to follow the clues left by an old colleague, Prof. Oxley (John Hurt), to find the legendary Crystal Skull of Akator which may lead Mutt to his kidnapped mother, Marion (Karen Allen). They discover the skull in Peru, but were tracked by the Soviets who bring them to Spalko's camp. Reunited, Marion reveals Mutt is Indy's son—Henry Jones III—and Oxley provides a final riddle to discover the whereabouts of Akator. Spalko journeys through the Amazon to return the skull in exchange for telepathic powers enabling world domination. Along the way, the heroes escape and bring the skull to Akator, but they

[1] This lacuna may be due (in part) to the perception of the film as somewhat souring the reputation of the originals. At the time of its release, the film's reception was polarized, it was the second highest grossing film of the year at the international box office, received middling to favourable reviews, yet won the 2009 Razzie Award for "Worst, Prequel, Remake, Rip-Off, or Sequel." Fans of the series dismayed the presence of aliens in the film, and many bemoaned the scene where Indy survived an atomic bomb blast by hiding in a lead-lined fringe.

[2] This new era of Hollywood is best emblematized by the other top-grossing films of 2008: *The Dark Knight* (Nolan) and *Iron Man* (Favreau). The success of both films presaged the superhero genre's ensuing box office dominance. While Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard's *The Dark Knight* score would shape the aesthetic of maximum impact via minimalist musical ideas, rather than romantic-influenced thematicism, which would influence the sound of blockbusters to follow.

are betrayed by Indy's old friend Mac (Ray Winstone) who has led Spalko to them. She returns the skull demanding to "know everything". The overwhelming knowledge kills her as the ancient city begins to crumble and a flying saucer emerges from the earth. The heroes escape; Indy and Marion marry.

2. FEMININE ROMANTIC CLICHÉ

Marion's thematic treatment both in *Crystal Skull* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is in the vein of an FRC [Feminine Romantic Cliché], conflating "femaleness, femininity, and romance" (Fülöp, 2012, p. 91). Like many, though not all, female characters within swashbuckler or adventure genres (Edgar, 2021, pp. 38–42), Marion is a damsel in distress; an object of the male gaze. Other female characters of the original trilogy are similarly objectified, resulting in an "assimilated identification" which tracks the audience "toward a rigid, tightly controlled position that tends to line up comfortably with aspects of dominant ideology" (Kassabian, 2000, p. 141)[3]. By reusing a theme that was at once associated with Marion and romance, *Crystal Skull* perpetuates its conventionalised treatment. Williams reintroduces this Marion/love theme at a specific, and thoroughly unsurprising, moment. Delayed until ten minutes after Marion's return, her theme is cued when Indy begins his escape and is cutting her loose. Marion reveals to the audience that Indy abandoned her one week before their wedding. Enraged, she says "I'm sure I wasn't the only one to go on with my life. Their must have been plenty of women for you over the years". Indy flirtatiously responds that "There were a few, but they all had the same problem. They weren't you, honey." The love theme returns after this line in longing solo horn (somewhat hurried given the ensuing action) as Marion stares lovingly at Indy, who swiftly leaves. Shortly after, in a moment of calm, it repeats in traditional wind and strings as the pair share a brief smile together before chaos ensues. These initial examples reaffirm the FRC's "focalization" function, when, as Buhler (2019, p. 181) writes, music can compensate for the "film's inability otherwise to penetrate the surface of its images and represent the interiority of its characters". This process perpetuates the treatment of Marion as a romantic object, while simultaneously preserving Indy's traditional masculine heroism by allowing music to express his emotions: he can avoid overt romantic or emotional declarations if the music speaks for him.

The only instance where the theme seems purely associated with Marion, rather than love, is as she drives off a cliff into the safe waters below (to the protest of all her male counterparts). This daring feat recalls the character's "feisty and independent" (Halfyard & Hancock, 2012, p. 178) attitude from her original introduction in *Raiders*. However, in this moment the theme is barely audible in the mix. For the most part, she remains a passive damsel in distress, or "virtuous wife" (Kalynak, 1982, p. 81) (albeit a rather nuanced, likeable, strong-willed one due to Karen Allen's performance). Given the character's narrative

[3] A greater victim of this narrative and musical treatment in the series is Willie Scott (Kate Capshaw) in *Temple of Doom* (1984). Halfyard and Hancock discuss the (perpetually screaming) character in detail, summarising her as "important not in herself but what she causes others to do" (2021, p. 177).

purpose as a romantic partner for Indy, her theme rarely manifests elsewhere due to the lack of time given to their relationship. The most prolonged manifestation is in lush wind and strings during the pair's wedding in the epilogue. Ultimately, thematic treatment of the character in 2008 differs little to what was offered in 1981.

Musically represented in a similarly reductive manner is the film's antagonist. Despite being the first leading female villain, and the first villain to have an individual theme, Dr. Irina Spalko's theme is not a conventionally evil or sinister one. Williams rarely details his composition process, but what little information he did give on her theme is telling:

> Cate Blanchett, as Irina Spalko, she presented, to me, an opportunity to create a sexy film noir theme to accompany a femme fatale from, maybe, the movies of the 1940s where you would hear a slithering saxophone and certain harmonic progressions that would depict this dark side of sensuality, and power, and its uses and so on. She's very sensual. She's very powerful. And she's depicted musically with this theme that is an homage to the great film villainesses of the 1940s. (Bouzereau, 2008).

At the start of the film, Irina's theme accompanies her introduction in its most extended narrative appearance. Offscreen, Dr. Spalko orders her right-hand man, Dovchenko (Igor Jijikine), to halt as he is about to punch Indy. The camera cuts to her behind a dirty car window, momentarily hiding her. Walking toward Indy, we see her short black hair, monochromatic uniform, sunglasses, and rapier, which in combination do not seem to signify some archetypal character design. A steady, legato, saxophone alternates sliding steps with leaps of a third, over muted brass, enigmatically colouring Dr. Spalko's introduction.[4] The allure of intrigue seems to take prominence over creating a clarity of identity. Despite her relatively androgynous gender presentation, and her gender not influencing Indy's actions nor his relationship to her, the saxophone theme imposes codes of female-associated sensuality onto her. While Williams uses a noir-styled theme, Spalko does not embody the genre's typical femme fatale: her costuming does not change, she does not use sex as a means to an end, and her established goal and methods are scientific, as exemplified in her final line, "I want to know", a desire which becomes her undoing. Conversely, Dr. Elsa Schneider (Alison Doody), the themeless female lead of *The Last Crusade* (1989), *is* a traditional femme fatale: she sleeps with both Indy and his father to win their trust, and betrays them, siding with the Nazis, in pursuit of her own individual desires. There is, in other words, a tension between the Spalko character as represented narratively and visually, and her musical characterization. This semiotic friction is in some way ironed out in a concert hall presentation conducted by Williams, where a performance of her theme is accompanied by screened images of many femme fatales from film history, including: Alex Forrest (*Fatal Attraction*), Pussy Galore (*Goldfinger*), Veda Pierce (*Mildred Pierce*), Phyllis

[4] For a detailed transcription of Spalko's theme and all others throughout the series, see Frank Lehman's "A Guide to the Musical Themes of *Indiana Jones:* Music by John Williams" (https://franklehman.com/indiana-jones-themes/).

Dietrichson (*Double Indemnity*), Vivian Rutledge (*The Big Sleep*), Lynn Bracken (*L.A. Confidential*), Jessica Rabbit (*Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*), the series' previous female leads, and many more[5]. Certainly some characters fit the mould better than others, but all seem sexualised given the musical associations.

Fig. 1: Dr. Irina Spalko's steely introduction.

(© Paramount Pictures, 2008).

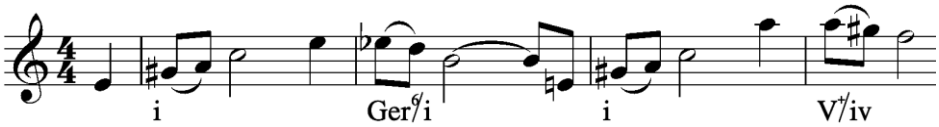

Fig. 2: Irina's Theme.

(Author's transcription).

In his musical references to film noir, and through the images screened alongside it (which, admittedly may not be under his control, but which he surely approves of) Williams is again tapping into an established cinematic FRC. In film noir, the femme fatale, or "fallen woman" archetype (Kalinak, 1982, p. 77), was sexualised through sensual motifs containing chromaticism, syncopations, and jazz harmonies. Building upon the jazz saxophone's racialised connotations and associating with the archetype's non-conformity to tradition and lack of morals (which in the time of the Hay's Code necessitated narrative punishment), this musical characterisation links to conceptions of otherness, deviancy, and excess (Butler,

[5] Official records on Williams's performance of the theme in concert have proved elusive to this author. Details on the screening were passingly mentioned in a review blog (Jeffrey Graebner, 2008), and only a bootleg YouTube video (lavaman, 2009) of a 2008 Hollywood Bowl performance seemed to document which characters were screened: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c70cJxPE04

With thanks to the *JWFan* community for pointing me towards this performance.

2017, p. 181). Despite Silver and Fuld (as cited in Butler, 2017, p. 182) noting that only ten per cent of classic noir featured lone saxophone, it became "part of the real and *phantasmatic* imagining of film noir" (Miklitsch, as cited in Butler, 2017, p. 181). Regardless of this tension between the idea and the reality of the genre, the jazz sound flourished in neo-noir. In his monothematic score to *The Long Goodbye* (Altman, 1973), Williams occasionally reorchestrates the title song in saxophone, and in jazz ensembles (McQuiston, 2016, p. 141)[6]. The instrument conjures noir-style atmospheres in Bernard Herrmann's *Taxi Driver* (Scorsese, 1976), John Barry's *Body Heat* (Kasdan, 1981), and, occasionally in Vangelis's iconic *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982). Jerry Goldsmith evokes a similar mood using jazz trumpet as the love theme in *Chinatown* (Polanski, 1974), frequently throughout *L.A. Confidential* (Hanson, 1997), and leading into the uneasy finale of *Basic Instinct* (Verhoeven, 1992). For the most part noir-styled trumpet or saxophone themes signify mystery, sleaziness, or sensuality. While not always directly linked to a femme fatale character, the affective associations remain largely constant—perhaps a signal of the associative stability of the idiom and timbre.

That this heavily coded noir idiom appears alongside Spalko aligns the character with the trope's rigid associations. This musical coding not only reduces Spalko to a stereotype which she otherwise evades, but it positions her in a manner which seems to deny agency: gender here takes prominence over her actions, even if these are villainous. Previous villains always exerted a certain dominance in the soundtrack in their (at times cartoonish but nonetheless menacing) marches. In *Crystal Skull* this more typical, now vaguely Russian-sounding, villainous rendering is strictly associated with Dovchenko and the Russian soldiers. Consequently, Spalko is doubly othered: she is set apart from her male subordinates (and the leading villains of the series) by virtue of her gender, and stylistically through the noirish theme which distances her from the otherwise traditionally symphonic score.

For the filmmakers, the debasing FRC may have been warranted previously in the series when female characters largely lacked narrative agency, while also acting as a means to invoke the musical spirit of the earlier Hollywood references. This repetition surely helped legitimize the trope and promulgate the code in New Hollywood. Spalko, however, represents a different type of character; one more active and capable, and befitting of the (admittedly slow) progress made in Hollywood representation. She initiates the narrative, has the advantage over Indy four times (during the opening, twice as hostage in the jungle, and in the finale), and proves capable in combat (besting Mutt) and intellect (working with Indy to solve Oxley's riddle). Yet she is musically defined by a sensual emotional excess which conflicts with her near-constant stone-faced expression, and dogged determinism. Whether in a neoclassical or noir vein, the FRC seems to be an engrained component of the scores of the series.

[6] Williams's noir language also manifests in the jazz score for *Catch Me If You Can* (Spielberg, 2002), and *Minority Report* (Spielberg, 2002) where he cites the influence of Bernard Herrmann and *The Maltese Falcon* (Huston 1941) (Audissino, 2021, p. 273).

Offering a potential insight into what a traditional villainous-styled music could have been are a selection of intimidating brassier iterations of her theme during the film's biggest action set piece, entitled "The Jungle Chase" on the soundtrack (although this is drastically shortened compared to the multiple cues of this lengthy sequence). Following Indy's escape, and liberation of Mutt and Marion, the trio attempt to snatch the skull from Spalko. The ensuing action involves exploding vehicles, the typical fisticuffs, a truck-top duel, cacti, monkeys, and is capped off with man-eating ants. Putting plotting complexities to one side, what is of significance to this author are the select appearances of the villain's theme. When Spalko is staring down Indy approaching in a truck after his initial scape, drawing her rapier as she prepares to duel Mutt, or in her brief victories when re-retrieving the skull (which changes hands frequently during the sequence), menacing statements are cued across the brass that are occasionally syncopated, lengthened or shortened so as to match the shot. Each of these thematic presentations are rather fleeting. Often overshadowed by diegetic sounds, they do not amount to an alteration of musical identity or prelude some form of thematic transformation. They merely adjust the pre-established motif so as to suit the frenetic energy of the lengthy action sequence. Given the primary thematic statements on saxophone, the timbre's culturally entrenched associations, and its dominance in the concert versions of her theme, it is clear that Williams has quelled the potential for Dr. Spalko's musical objectivity, musically typecasting her like the other leading women of the series—this time, however, in direct contrast to the character as written, and as played by Blanchett.

3. MASCULINE HEROIC CLICHÉ

Noting the Classical Hollywood influence on "Raider's March", Williams said "It's all in the manner of Max Steiner… things like the big hero's theme" (as cited in Audissino, 2021, p. 165). In addition to classical Hollywood symphonism, Williams also employed numerous leitmotifs and Mickey-Mousing techniques alongside the action, leading Audissino to dub him "the greatest heir to Max Steiner" (2021, p. 197). A neoclassical Hollywood sound dominated Williams's popular scores of the late 1970s. For the *Indiana Jones* series, Steiner's martial music to *Cimarron* (Ruggles, 1931) and *Charge of the Light Brigade* (Curtiz, 1936), and the leaping dotted theme to *Adventures of Don Juan* (Sherman, 1948) seem likely influences. (Ben Burtt, the sound designer for *Crystal Skull,* cited *Don Juan* as an influence on the sounds for the duelling scene (Bouzereau, 2008)).

"Raider's March" often punctuates moments of heroism in brass with fanfare-esque bravura or martial authoritativeness. Its repeated appearances in combat, alongside its rising contour and declarative articulation, effect a sense of optimism and marvel: its impetus continually propels action forward. These traits additionally situate it alongside the masculine-associated heroic leitmotifs of Indy's cinematic and operatic forebears—which themselves are often derived from militaristic or ceremonial musical traditions (Williams himself mentions the nostalgia associated with Sousa's marches in his discussion of "Raider's March" (Audissino, 2021, pp. 169–70)). This repeated affective sensibility associates the

theme with the genre's sense of adventurousness, as much as with the archaeologist himself. Consequently, it serves as a shorthand for bravery or daring, consistently links Indy to victory and continually re-signifies him as a site of power (Buhler, 2019, p. 280). Given Spielberg's and Williams's older Hollywood references, Indy continues the masculine-associated heroism of his musical and cinematic predecessors—becoming an unabashed stereotype of the genre. While his heroism has been discussed much by Audissino (2021, pp. 158–197), his one-time potential successor has not, as of yet, been studied.

While Williams linked Indy's theme to Steiner originally, Mutt's music seems to have more obvious debts to Erich Wolfgang Korngold; perhaps one of the most influential early composers of the adventure and swashbuckling genres. The *Kings Row* (Wood, 1942) theme is an oft-cited influence on Williams's title theme for *Star Wars*, but the ascending fanfare for heroism in *Captain Blood* (Curtiz, 1935), both the swaggering martial motif for the merry men and the hero's own triumphant motif in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Curtiz & Keighley, 1938), and the hurried heroic fanfare in *The Sea Hawk* (Curtiz, 1940), should each be noted as establishing the genre's musical vocabulary. Similar touchstones may have been the balletic action cues to Alfred Newman's score for *The Mask of Zorro* (Mamoulian, 1940) or Steiner's *The Flame and the Arrow* (Tourneur, 1950). Mutt's own sword-fighting and vine-swinging (à la Robin Hood) led Williams to describe his music as "a young hero's music in the tradition of a swashbuckler" (quoted from Bouzereau, 2008)[7]. Since *Crystal Skull*'s release "The Adventures of Mutt" has been a mainstay in Williams's concerts, evidenced by its many performances by the Boston Pops since 2008 and its presence on their "John Williams & Steven Spielberg: The Ultimate Collection" CD[8]. However, the truck-top duel between Mutt and Irina is the only time when it appears during the narrative. Contrary to Williams's description, it seems to be a swashbuckling action cue rather than a character-specific theme.

Mutt earns a more concrete musical association following this duel. A shortened and altered version of Indy's theme sounds three times as he swings on jungle vines to snatch the skull from Spalko.[9] High trumpets in octaves and the characteristic dotted rhythm ensure associations to Indy's theme are identifiable. Melodically, the antecedent phrase contrastingly descends to the tonic, while the consequent phrase ascends stepwise through the perfect fifth to rest on the dominant (similar to the fourth phrase of "Raider's March" which rises five steps, resting on the mediant) (Fig. 3 and 4). Mutt's variation is more compact and confident than the original. The variation continues to draw upon that same martial assertiveness, rhythmic propulsion and ascending melodic optimism associated with Indy's feats of daring. Yet here, the downward tonic descent (which restrains the range) and conclusion on the dominant simplify the melody. It has less of the yearning (occasionally dissonant) leaps and continuously ascending climaxes which make Indy's striving theme unique. The daring

[7] Williams would return to this swashbuckling style, and feature the saxophone once again, in his subsequent, and swashbuckling, score to *The Adventures of Tintin* (Spielberg, 2011).

[8] At Boston's Symphony Hall, the Boston Pops Orchestra have performed the piece under Williams's baton in their 2008, 2009, 2013, 2014, 2017 and 2018 seasons.

[9] A similar variation made a brief appearance in woodwind as Indy and Mutt shared a brief comedic moment in the Peruvian catacombs.

qualities and sense of struggle associated with Indy's hard-earned heroism, are seemingly replaced by Mutt's youthful confidence and feats of athleticism. Now, by way of Hollywood's historical representation of heroism and the continued masculinist associations of bold brass themes, this instance of variation seems to further cement the nostalgically crafted heroic spirit of Indy onto a revitalised and youthful male successor.

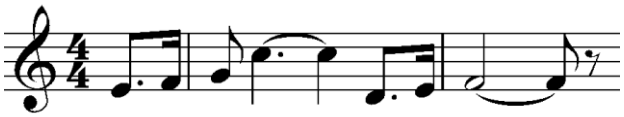

Fig. 3: Opening of "Raider's March".

(Author's transcription).

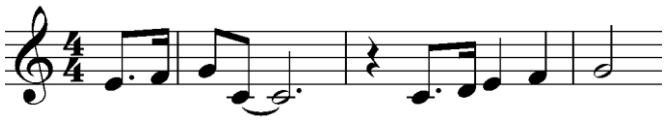

Fig. 4: Mutt's variation of "Raider's March".

(Author's transcription).

This feeling of succession is augmented further by homosocial familial bonding when Indy and Mutt are further musically tied through thematic recollection. *The Last Crusade*'s family theme had appeared previously in *Crystal Skull* alongside a picture of Indy's deceased father (Seán Connery). Following the climax it returns in warm strings and is repeated in light woodwind (Williams's traditional setting for the domestic or familial) as Mutt and Indy share a moment, and Indy mentions his father. Indy tells his son that knowledge was the extra-terrestrial's treasure, not gold. This significant lesson—potentially *the* thematic concern of the entire franchise—tees Mutt up with the advice which has served Indy so well in each of his adventures. In combination, the theme and lesson not only signify their mutual acceptance of one another, but hints towards the franchises potential patrilineal succession.

Just as Indy repairs his relationship with his father in *Crusade,* Mutt and Indy have formed a bond which resolves the paternal abandonment trope so common to narratives of heroism (e.g. *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*). This narrative device could also be seen as a necessity to "legacy films." The established characters and new ones must form an emotional connection so as to pass the franchise on to a worthy successor. (Harrison Ford serves a similar fatherly role for Rey in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (Abrams, 2015), and (partially) for K in *Blade Runner: 2049* (Villeneuve, 2017)).

The extension of this male legacy is teased further in the epilogue. Following the wedding of Marion and Indy, the church doors fly open blowing Indy's fedora off a hatstand. It lands at Mutt's feet. (The winds of change; a guide toward profit for Lucasfilm and Paramount). As Mutt is about to don his father's (and the franchise's) iconic hat—the "handover moment" (Golding, 2019, p. 73) —the "Raider's March" ostinato kicks in, hinting towards a prospective future for the franchise. But before the franchises legendary icon, and theme, are passed on, Indy snatches the hat just as the heroic melody introduces the credits.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Despite *Crystal Skull* offering Williams a chance to update the gender coding practices of his neoclassical style, the manner in which new characters Mutt and Spalko were scored shows just how rooted the neoclassical vocabulary, and the codified sound of genre films, is in binary gender representations. Williams continued to code the series' female characters with FRCs, and entwined the new hero's thematic identification with that of the legacy character. Few would have expected Williams's approach to the franchise's beloved score to change drastically; however given that Spalko, particularly, was less beholden to traditional female archetypes, her musical treatment seems like an opportunity subsumed by the influence of tradition. The musical treatment of Mutt as heroic adjunct to Indy demonstrates how encoded the "Raider's March" theme is with heroism, rather than Indy's identity specifically. As a result rather than new thematic associations along less rigidly and conventionally gendered lines, the score presented themes which frequently conflicted with character.

Since the score's release in 2008, Williams has taken a step back from composing for film, for the most part only returning for Spielberg projects or the *Star Wars* franchise. Neither, historically, have had nuanced female representations nor non-romantically coded themes. Spielberg films often reduce female characters to oblivious mothers (e.g. Mary Taylor in *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*) or boyish romantic partners (e.g. Dr. Ellie Sattler in *Jurassic Park*) (Friedman, 2006, p. 8), and earlier *Star Wars* trilogies have had only two prominent female characters: both romantically coded. However, Williams has ventured down less trite routes for the sequels' newer leads: Rey is characterised with several emotionally complex, minor mode leitmotifs which evoke a heroic spirit without relying on the pre-established signifiers; and Rose is associated with a youthfully spirited, chromatically-inflected theme. Neither of these characters serve romantic narrative purposes, nor have FRC themes. It may not be a stretch to suggest that the less stereotyped characters departing from traditional genre archetypes, in conjunction with different creative forces behind the camera (Michael Arndt (co-screenwriter of *Episode VII*) and Rian Johnson (director and screenwriter of *Episode VIII*)), grant Williams an opportunity to create more complex thematic identifications.

In his recent book, *Theories of the Soundtrack,* Buhler has detailed the "withering of leitmotif" practices and clear-cut musical identities in favour of "affective intensities" (Buhler, 2019, p. 279). Whether these contemporary approaches to scoring will continue in a manner reflective of progressive identities seems as influenced by the subject positions of the screenplays as it is by both the composer and their style. Such is the case for the next film of the *Indiana Jones* series, whose everchanging release date is—at time of writing—scheduled for June 2023. Spielberg has stepped back into a producing role, handing the reigns to a new director and screenwriter, James Mangold. Reports have not detailed Mutt's return to the series, and the casting of Phoebe Waller-Bridge has fuelled internet speculation that she may have taken his place as some form of successor or sidekick to Ford's archaeologist. These fresh faces have already challenged some of the conventionalised norms of film and TV in recent years: Mangold treating the superhero genre with grit and gravitas in *Logan* (2017), and Waller-Bridge adding grounded wittiness and sincerity to female-driven series like *Killing Eve* (2018–22) and *Fleabag* (2016–19). By the time *Indiana Jones 5* is released, Williams will be a nonagenarian. Whether his (presumably stylistically familiar) score will move beyond some of the franchise's traditional gender signifiers is a matter of speculation. The established retrospective gaze of the franchise and the composer are undeniably strong, but, perhaps, these influential fresh faces and viewpoints may reinvigorate Williams's popular sonic world with the gender parity it has consistently been lacking.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Audissino, E. (2021). *The film music of John Williams: Reviving Hollywood's classical style* (2nd ed.). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Buhler, J. (2019). *Theories of the soundtrack*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Edgar, G. (2021). "I am no lady when I fight!: Gender politics in the postwar swashbuckler score. In J. Buhler & M. Durrand (Eds.). *Music in action film: Sounds like action!* (pp. 37-58). New York: Routledge.

Friedman, L. (2006). *Citizen Spielberg.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Fülöp, R. (2012). *Heroes, dames, and damsels in distress: Constructing gender types in classical Hollywood film music* (Doctoral thesis). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. Retrieved from https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/95951

Graebner, J. (2008, September 6). John Williams: A Hollywood legend (concert review) [Blog Post]. Retrieved from https://blog.bigbeaks.com/2008/09/06/john-williams-a-hollywood-legend-concert-review/

Halfyard, J.K. & Hancock, V. (2012). Scoring fantasy girls: Music and female agency in *Indiana Jones* and *The Mummy* films. In J. K. Halfyard (Ed.). *Music of fantasy cinema* (pp. 175-192). Bristol: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Kalynak, K. (1982). The fallen woman and the virtuous wife: Musical stereotypes in *The Informer*, *Gone With the Wind*, and *Laura*. *Film Reader, 5*, pp. 76-82.

Kassabian, A. (2000). Hearing film: Tracking identifications in contemporary Hollywood film music. New York & London: Routledge.

Lehman, F. (2021). *A guide to the musical themes of Indiana Jones: Music by John Williams*. Retrieved from https://franklehman.com/indiana-jones-themes/

McQuiston, K. (2016). The soundtrack doth repeat too much: Or, the musical spectacle of keeping up appearances in Robert Altman's The Long Goodbye. *Literature/Film Quarterly, 2*(16), pp. 132-149.

Schneller, T. (2015). Modal interchange and semantic resonance in themes by John Williams. *Journal of Film Music, 6*(1), pp. 49-74.

Smith, S. C. (2020). Music by Max Steiner: The epic life of Hollywood's most influential composer. New York: Oxford University Press.

VIDEOGRAPHY

Bouzereau, L. (Director). (2008). *"Indiana Jones and the kingdom of the crystal skull" documentaries* [DVD]. United States: Paramount Pictures.

lavaman2000. (2009, March 17). John Williams Indiana Jones 4 Live HB 2008 [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c70cJxPE04

Spielberg, S. (Director). (2008). *Indiana Jones and the kingdom of the crystal skull* [DVD]. United States: Paramount Pictures.

Fecha de recepción: 27/10/2021
Fecha de aceptación: 19/01/2022