



instructor corner

Corinne Spacagna, B.A.
Piano Instructor

Music and Emotion in Film

The other day a student of mine asked if I could teach him the "Tony Stark" song. My heart fluttered as I turned to the piano, asking as coolly as I could through my excitement, "Oh, this one?" I plucked out the Avenger's Theme. My student grinned from ear to ear as he assumed his best Iron Man pose.

When we watch The Avengers fight their enemies and hear their heroic theme song, or when we listen to Frozen's Elsa sing "Let it Go" as she finally embraces her magic, we feel inspired and energized with our favorite characters. It's no secret that adding music to movies significantly increases our emotional responses to them.

My favorite film-score phenomena happens when composers use just one melody or "theme" over and over while making slight changes to it, so each time we hear the theme we feel something different. Think about Pixar's

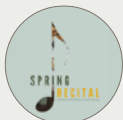
Up. The same "Married Life" theme whimsically accompanies Carl and Ellie's blossoming relationship, but the whole atmosphere shifts suddenly as we grieve with Carl instead -- all within the first five minutes of the movie! One simple melody is repeated with slight variations made to the orchestration (which instruments play the music), the tempo (speed), and the dynamics (volume) among other techniques, that all help the audience empathize with Carl's happiness, grief, and finally, his peace.

There are many techniques that musicians use to help support emotional atmospheres. So the next time you're watching a Marvel or Disney movie or practicing for your lesson, try to focus on the feeling of the music-- what about it helps you root for the hero? Are the trumpets heroically blaring at their highest volume, or is the violin slowly and gently crying? The possibilities are endless!

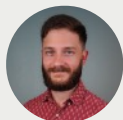
upcoming events



MAR 15-18 SAMA is closed for Spring Break



MAR 23 Spring Recital Sign-up starts



MAR 23 Jonathan Curtis's Birthday

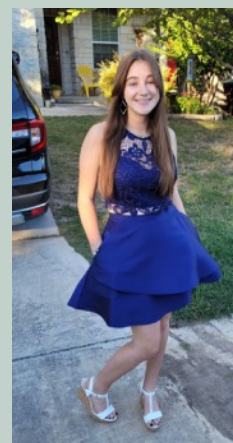


MAR 25 Randy Naranjo's Birthday

student of the month

“Addison K. started taking lessons about six months ago and already there's been huge improvements. She has gone from the beginner method book to her first classical sonatina, which she has memorized on her own. We have been able to discuss more advanced topics such as musicality, phrasing, advanced techniques, etc. Not only is she incredibly skilled, she is also incredibly sweet. Her bright attitude makes her a joy to teach and we have fun in our lessons. She has decided to enter in the San Antonio Piano Guild Auditions this coming summer and has been taking the task seriously.

- Andi Tupponce, B.M., Piano Instructor



Congratulations to the students of Maria Crystalia on placing in the Janice Kay Hodges Piano Competition. **Leilani T.** placed 2nd in Grade 10, and **Aaron D.** placed 3rd in Grade 11. We commend your hard work and determination!