

Analysis of music in the film grease

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



I think the effectiveness of a musical film in comparison to a film score in a non-musical largely depends on the target audience of the film, genre of film, and plot of the film. In musical films like Grease, Chicago, Les Misérables, West Side Story, and Mama Mia, the musical and choreographed aspects of film work with the plot in an effective manner. I feel like [romantic] comedies (e.g. Mama Mia and Grease) and dramas (e.g. Les Misérables and Chicago) are the two genres that are best made into musical films.

Musicals are able to break down language barriers, telling the plot of the film through song which evokes plenty of emotion that is universally understood. West Side Story is a perfect example of a musical where choreography and music helps the audience to understand the story even though they might not understand every word of the lyrics. Musicals are able to effectively tell a story if the plot is more simplistic. Contrary to [romantic] comedies and dramas, turning an action or science fiction film into a musical would be simply ridiculous.

If we were to imagine an action film like The Dark Knight or Star Wars as a musical, I don't think these films would ever be nearly as successful as they have been today. One reason for this is the target audience for films like Star Wars and The Dark Knight have the potential to be vastly different from the type of people who enjoy watching musicals like Dream Girls and Rent. The plot for The Dark Knight and Star Wars largely benefit from the music being comprised of a film score that is not classified as a musical.

It would also be difficult to convert these genres into a musical because the plots are often too complex to understand if everything is sung. The scores in non-musicals serves to implement the plot, not to tell the plot which can often be taken more seriously by the viewers. " Summer Nights" (0: 14: 04) Is the first song In the film, Grease, that gives us an introductory look Into what the characters are going to be like. Sandy Is seen as very Innocent and sweet from the way she recounts her and Dandy's summer romance from an emotional perspective- " he got friendly holding my hand".

Dandy's telling of his summer romance is a little more crude and revealing about the physical aspects of the romance -" she got friendly down in the sand". The song establishes Danny as he cool leader of the greaser clan known as the " T-birds" and Sandy as the new girl who the schoolgirl clique, " The Pink Ladies", have their eye on to recruit. This song also introduces the other eight main characters (the rest of the T-birds and The Pink Ladies), allowing each of them to ask questions that reveal their characters.

The next song that helped to further develop some of the characters is " Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee" (0: 27: 30) which is a comedic song performed by Orzo and The Pink Ladies. A taunting, underlying tone In the music is heard right away. Razz's tough and arctic tone Is established through her lyrics In this song as she is mocking the Innocence of Sandy. When the characters are mocking Sandy inability to Inhale properly whilesmoking, we hear a clapper Instrument to compliment them coughing.

The rest of The Pink Ladies: French, Marty, and Jan, seem to follow their leader, immature and highly compliant to what Orzo wants them to do or

think. " Hopelessly Devoted To You" (0: 32: 00) is a ballad performed by Sandy which has a slower tempo than the other songs we have previously heard in the film. The song starts off by sing heavy strings to create an emotional feel then later we hear the piano. This is a character song which enables Sandy to express her romantic feelings for Danny, and reflect on their relationship.

The chorus, " hopelessly devoted to you" is how Sandy feels towards Danny and these feelings are emphasized by the repetition through the song. " Greased Lightning" (0: 37: 20) is performed by Danny and the T-birds and serves to establish the major cultural influences of the sass's: cars and rock and roll. We hear 3 stingers using ascending notes played on brass at the beginning of the Eng to compliment Dandy's ideas of what the car could be (automatic, systematic, hydromantic).

There is also a lot of call and response between the protagonist, Danny, singing the main course and the T-birds backing him up by providing musical responses to his lines. This song uses heavy percussion, piano, bass, and brass instruments to create a genuine rock and roll feel. The tempo stays consistent throughout the song except when it slows down at the ending chorus. The ending chorus is also where we hear drums and vocals being harmonize. " Sandy" (01: 19: 10) reformed by Danny is Dandy's counter song to " Sandy's Hopelessly Devoted To You".

This is also a ballad as it expresses the deep emotions Danny has for Sandy and shows how vulnerable he is without her. We see a different side of Danny here because he is not acting tough or cool; he is being raw and real.

This song uses empathetic sound as we can hear Danny on the verge of crying at some points in the song which causes the viewer to empathetic with the sadness he feels. " Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee (Reprise)" (01 : 31 : 38) is a turning point for Sandy's character.

The song tarts out as wholesome and pure, like she is, accompanied by the piano in a high key with a light tone (we hear consonance). Then the lyrics get more powerful along with the intensity of the music (crescendo and lower key on the piano) as she decides to say goodbye to her innocence. " You're the One That I Want" (01: 36: 47) performed by Danny, Sandy, Pink Ladies, and T-Birds shows how the characters have succumbed to their feelings. Danny has become the man that Sandy wanted him to be all along and vice versa.

We hear a riff on the piano to introduce the new, sophisticated Sandy. The causal harmony between Danny and Sandy is symbolic of the new found harmony in their relationship and the all black costumes they are wearing is symbolic of both their maturity. This is an example of a rhythm song because it is driven by energetic rhythm patterns. Personally, this is my favorite song of the film because I feel it has the catchiest underlying beat and I felt that the choreography and props were used really effectively to capture the viewers attention. " We Go Together" is a production number which involves the full cast and expresses the major changes in the plot from the opening to closing act. This cheerful tune is expressive of the happiness found by the entire cast and all the main characters are happily coupled off. Grease does include a lot of dancing which I found to be quite effective. It is more visually

appealing and helps with the flow of telling the story through song. If at some points in the film the characters were just standing there rather than moving around and dancing, the audience is more likely to be disengaged. Dancing also provides the catchier.

Dance is also an important part of detecting a character's emotion through song; in the song "Mimi Are The One That I Want", Sandy is seen to have a new gained confidence and attitude which is reflective not only in her lyrics, but in her dancing as well. I find it effective that performers in musical films treat their song and dance numbers as if there is a live audience watching. It helps to engage the audience more because they feel as though they are more closely connected to the performers. It also helps the performers find the emotional energy to perform different songs and dance if they have an audience's energy to thrive off of.