Film Music
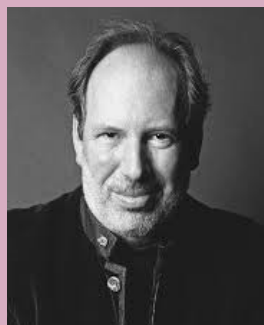
The Purpose...

*Most film music is background music called underscoring. Film music makes a film brilliant!

*Underscoring can add to the mood; it creates atmosphere, time and place. The opening of The Lion King is a perfect example.

*Underscoring can add dramatic impact. The dark sound of the Batman theme is a good eg

*It can add to comedy with unexpected twists in the melody and use of instruments. Listen to the Opening of Carry On Doctor

*It can add to fear when watching horror films. The theme from Halloween is atonal so there is no sense of key

*It can provide suspense. The theme from 28 Days Later grows in texture and volume

*Film music uses Leitmotifs. The leitmotif can be an idea, a character or place. Jaws is a perfect eg. We hear the music and we know the shark is coming even though we can not see it. The leitmotif is the shark in music form

Leitmotif	This is a musical idea. It might be in the melody, the rhythm or chord sequence
Diegetic Music	This is music the characters *in* the film can hear. This is the opposite to underscoring
Atonal	Music without a key has no melody—it sounds chaotic

Hans Zimmer...

*Hans Zimmer is a German film score composer and record producer

*Since the 1980s, he has composed music for over 150 films

*Hans integrates electronic music with traditional orchestral arrangements

*He began his career playing keyboards and synthesizers in a band

*His works include: The Lion King, Madagascar, The Dark Knight Trilogy, Gladiator, Pirates of the Caribbean, Inception, Prince of Egypt, Hannibal, The Thin Red Line, The Simpsons Movie, The Da Vinci Code, The Amazing Spider Man 2, Planet Earth II documentary, 2018 FIFA World Cup intro, Dunkirk… and much more!

Key music and artists to listen to...

Opening music of Carry On Doctor—Edmund Crispin (comedy)

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly—Ennio Morricone (Western)

Batman Theme—Danny Elfman

Batman; Dark Knight Theme—Hans Zimmer

Planet of the Apes (1968) - Jerry Goldsmith

Jaws—John Williams (see key Composer 4)

Psycho theme—Bernard Herman

Castaway Main Theme—Alan Silvestri

Back to the Future—Alan Silvestri

Chronicles of Narnia—Harry Gregson-Williams

Goldfinger (James Bond) - John Barry

Despicable Me - Pharrell Williams and Heitor Pereira

Guardians of the Galaxy—Tyler Bates

The Avengers Theme—Alan Silvestri

Lord of the Rings Main Theme—Howard Shore

28 Days Later Opening Theme—John Murphy

The Colour Purple Theme—John Williams

Halloween Main Theme—John Carpenter