

TAGBLATT

To see with your ears - The 8th International Film Music Competition in Zurich

The joint competition between the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich and the Zurich Film Festival puts young composers in the spotlight

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The music of the five finalists will be performed live by the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich under the baton of conductor Frank Strobel.

What would "Once Upon A Time in the West" become without the wailing theme on the harmonica? Can "2001: A Space Odyssey" still be memorable without the heroic fanfare? Where there is a film, there is also film music. Film music not only serves as a cinematic visual amplifier, but often times even as the essential control of emotions. As a matter of fact, our ears might catch musical up-and-downs before our eyes can follow plot twists.

Nevertheless, "the reality for film music composers is tough," says Don Davis who has written many notable scores in films such as the "Matrix" trilogy. After being a film music composer himself for many decades, he has come to a realization - "As an instrumentalist, you can prove yourself in auditions if you play well. As a film music composer, you are selected by a director who is usually not a musician himself."

Conductor with score and screen

Being good is not enough - one must find a way to draw people's attention to you music. Therefore, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich and the Zurich Film Festival have been jointly organizing International Film Music Competition over the past few years to help composers in that specific regards. With our growing success: 145 composers participating in the first year in 2012 has now added up to 345 submissions from 46 countries with five of them will be selected as finalists on Saturday. Furthermore, we proudly announce that music composed by the 5 finalists will have the opportunity to have the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich bring their music to live in front of the audience under the baton of our very own film music expert Frank Strobel, who will be conducting the scores while the short film is projected on stage. After all, each musical detail has to ultimately precisely timed to picture so it doesn't intervene the pace of the film.

The candidates are tasked to set music to short film "Danny and the Wild Bunch," a partially animated film directed by Robert Rujan. Although the general subject being children's book characters coming to life might seem lighthearted overall, the story still travels through uneasiness and tension. "Some candidates struggled with the fact that the film is very narrative itself," Frank Strobel stated his observation. However, the five finalists including Ching-Shan Chang (Taiwan), Olivier Depierre (Switzerland), Carl Falkenau (Sweden), Andrey Mordovsky (Russia), and Gus Nicholson (Great Britain) might have found a solution! "One of them changed the film drastically by adding their own personality," says Strobel.

The secret power of Music

But what makes good film music? "It's all about the film instead of the music," explains film music composer Don Davis who is the jury president of the competition this year. Conductor Frank Strobel explains: "the music should not repeat what already is in the film. Rather, it should elevate it to the next level by helping the film tell stories." He adds, "the power of music is enormous!"

Davis has a similar view regarding this subject, and adds "Bad film music can break a film, it is relatively harder the other way around." He continues, "Although great music cannot save a bad film - It's like putting lipstick on a piglet-piglet remains piglet, there are numerous possibilities for the music the same film can be set to. You will be able to witness it for yourself on Saturday."

Filmmusik-Wettbewerb von TOZ und ZFF und Filmmusik-Konzert «Beyond the Matrix», Moderation Sandra Studer. Samstag, 28. September um 19 Uhr.

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