Authorship and musical style in wes anderson's films from the 2010s

Autoria e estilo musical nos filmes de Wes Anderson dos anos 2010

Autoría y estilo musical en las películas de Wes Anderson de la década de 2010

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ABSTRACT
In Wes Anderson's films, the music was commonly characterized by pop songs, but Moonrise Kingdom (2012) shows a notable role for the classical music (already present in previous films, even if only as inspiration at times), in addition to consolidating the change of composer from Mark Mothersbaugh to Alexandre Desplat. As indicated by Hrycaj (2013) based on Gorbman (2007), Wes Anderson can be considered a mélomane director, responsible for "auteur music", with a central role in musical choices. Focusing on Anderson's films from the 2010s, we evaluate changes in stylistic aspects in the use of music, including "montage sequences" and slow motion. As a methodology, we map music in films, film analysis and we use interviews with the director and collaborators.
Key words: cinema; music; style; Wes Anderson; authorship.

Introduction

Scholars, such as Hrycaj (2013), have characterized the music in the films of American auteur director Wes Anderson by the presence of popular repertoire. However, in *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012), there are notable changes: the predominance of pre-existing classical works, and the consolidation of new music composerfirst introduced in the previous film, *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (2009): the French Alexandre Desplat.[1]

The aim of this paper is to evaluate how these two changes, along with the stylistic elements of "montage sequences" and slow motion sequences during which music is present – as described by Hrycaj (2013) in Anderson's films up to *Fantastic Mr. Fox* – manifest in the director's films from the 2010s: *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012), *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014), *Isle of Dogs* (2018), and *The French Dispatch* (2020).

It is important to note that classical music has always been present in Anderson's films prior to *Moonrise Kingdom*, even if to a lesser extent or merely as an inspiration, as we will further discuss. Regarding the coexistence of the pre-existing repertoire with Desplat's music, essential research includes that of McQuinston (2017) and Clark (2020). The former analyzes only *Moonrise Kingdom* and *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, while the latter also analyzes *Isle of Dogs*, but not *The French Dispatch*.

As noted by Hrycaj (2013), based on Claudia Gorbman (2007), we consider Anderson to be a music-loving director, responsible for "*auteur* music". Gorbman's concept (2007) characterizes directors who maintain significant control over the music in the film, regardless of the composer with which they work, based on their own musical choices, as Anderson does.

1 Before Desplat, the composer of the score for all of Anderson's films was Mark Mothersbaugh.

According to Seitz (2023), Anderson is always present during the recordings of the music in his films. Desplat comments: "Wes might instead go into the recording of the full orchestra and take only the tracks of the bassoons, for example, and only play those at the start of the scene. And then the piano that was originally meant to start might come in a bit further along" (SEITZ, 2023, p. 205). In the recording of the score for *The French Dispatch*, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet reported that Anderson "knows exactly what he wants [...] and until he [has] what he [wants], he would do it again" (SEITZ, 2023, p. 214).

More than that, Anderson's musical taste plays a crucial role in his films. For the promotion of *The Darjeeling Limited* (2007), the director created a playlist on iTunes showcasing his favorite songs along with his comments about each.[2] Additionally, Hrycaj highlights the musical inspirations behind *2000 Man*, by the Rolling Stones, for *Bottle Rocket* (1996); *These Days*, by Nico, for *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001); and *Noye's Fludde*, by Benjamin Britten, for *Moonrise Kingdom*. In these cases, the music came first, with Anderson stating in an interview: "A lot of times, music helps inspire an idea... I may not even have the script yet; I just know I want to use a song, and I'll write a scene around the song" (MILLER *apud* HRYCAJ, 2004, p. 238).

Music supervisor Randall Poster, whom Anderson met while editing *Bottle Rocket*, his first feature film, is one of the collaborators who has remained throughout all of his films.This partnership has greatly contributed to the director's style, something Poster himself confirms in interviews: "I just [...] help him [Anderson] put mortar on the bricks and come at him with musical ideas and listen to what he has to say and read the scripts as they evolve, and we sort of take it from there and keep going" (GROSS, 2012a, n.p.).

In this article, we also consider, as previously mentioned, the change of composer to Alexandre Desplat, which does not imply that there is no longer a recognizable "Andersonian style".[3] The music chosen by Anderson is so distinctive that online fans use the characteristics found in the soundtracks of his previous films to establish certain musical expectations for upcoming films. Additionally, fans create playlists of soundtracks as if they were Wes Anderson themselves.[4]

The methodology of this article includes a general mapping of music use in Anderson's films, film analysis, and collection of information regarding repertoire selection through interviews, including some previously mentioned with Anderson and Randall Poster.

Wes Anderson and the classical repertoire

The first film by Wes Anderson with pre-existing classical repertoire is *The Royal Tenenbaums*. The director noted that the overall inspiration for the film was the purchase of a CD by Maurice Ravel with his String Quartet in F Major (DILLEY, 2017). This is the work playing at the beginning of the film to introduce the main characters, whose childhood 22 years before briefly shown first at the sound of Mark Mothersbaugh's version of the Beatles' *Hey Jude*. Such a parallelism of sequences, especially considering such an iconic popular song as a counterpart, demonstrates the relevance of Ravel's work to Anderson and the structure of the film.

Regarding Anderson's prior film, *Rushmore* (1998), the director explains that he and Mark Mothersbaugh turned to the Baroque composer Antonio Vivaldi to find inspiration for the "spritely score they were attempting to create" (PEREZ, 2007, n.p.). Indeed, part of the original soundtrack resembles to Vivaldi's concertos, particularly the *Concerto for Mandolin in C Major*, which appears in François Truffaut's films (*La mariée était en noir*, 1968, and *L'enfant sauvage*, 1970). Truffaut, a director of the French New Wave, explored themes that resonate in several of Anderson's films, such as child abandonment.[5] On the other hand, Mothersbaugh mentions in an interview that Anderson did not like instruments with deep low sounds, and that he loves the sound of the mandolin,[6] an instrument quite common during the Baroque period and in Vivaldi's works.

There are, in fact, preexisting works by Vivaldi in three of Wes Anderson's films: *Royal Tenenbaums*, *Grand Budapest Hotel*, and *French Dispatch*. As Donald Greig (2021) observes, post-war cinema saw a revival of Vivaldi, and we can also observe a significant presence of his music in contemporary cinema, particularly through his *Four Seasons*. Greig (2021) notes that the use of Baroque music is due to its metric rigidity and symmetry effects, as well as the persistence of certain clichés from the silent film era, such as associations with meanings of religiosity,

2 This is an example that makes Anderson a transmedia director (Clark 2017), but we do not develop this aspect in this text.

3 David Bordwell (2014, p. 17) considers the style as a "film's systematic and significant use of techniques of the medium".

4 This can be seen, for example, on The Yankee Racers forum, in a post titled *Wes Mixtape*, which features songs that could have been (or perhaps could be in the future) included in Anderson's films

5 American Express released a commercial (*My Life, My Card*, 2006), in which Anderson acts as a metalinguistic version of himself as a director, similar to Truffaut in his film *La nuit américaine* (1973), even using the same musical score by Georges Delerue.

6 Interview with Mark Mothersbaugh featured on the Blu-ray extras of *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2004) from the Criterion Collection.

an indeterminate "past", and notions of nobility or elegance. Some of these characteristics, such as metric rigidity, appear to have been important to Wes Anderson, given the author's previously mentioned intentions. Although he drew upon Vivaldi, he avoided the cliché of the *Four Seasons*.[7]

The soundtrack of *Grand Budapest Hotel* consists almost entirely of original music by Alexandre Desplat, but Vivaldi – specifically, the first movement (Moderato) of the *Concerto for Lute and Plucked Strings* (in Siegfried Behrend's arrangement from Vivaldi's *Trio Sonata RV 82 for violin, lute, and continuo*) – appears shortly after the 14-minute mark in the film, right after the intertitle "One month later" and the voice-over of the narrator-protagonist Zero Moustafa: "so my life began". We see a hotel hall from the first half of the 20th century (the story takes place in 1932), with a grand chandelier, and we follow Zero's initiation process as a lobby boy, with the approval of the concierge, M. Gustave. In this case, Vivaldi's music aligns with the cliché of elegance and an "old" time associated with that setting. It is also interesting to note that, although the music appears to be diegetic in this sequence, Vivaldi was rarely performed until 1947 (TOURNÈS, 2008), revealing a diegetic incongruity,[8] though one of little consequence to the general audience, particularly in light of musical conventions/clichés.

The only other piece of classical music in the film is *Rosen aus dem Süden* ("Roses of the South", composed in 1880), a waltz by Austrian Johann Strauss Jr., likely diegetic music coming from the carousel where Zero and his girlfriend Agatha are enjoying themselves.

In *French Dispatch*, we hear Vivaldi's *Concerto in C major RV 558*, a concerto for mandolin, which is also diegetic. It is featured in the second story of the film, "The Concrete Masterpiece", about the painter imprisoned for murder, Moses Rosenthaler. The first movement of the concerto plays during the opening of the prisoner-artist's exhibition for art critics and collectors, held inside a prison compound. The music is clearly diegetic, beginning right after the event organizer requests "Music!" and a trio with two mandolins and a cello appears on screen.

Two other pre-existing pieces of classical music in this film are *Arabesque* by Claude Debussy, featured in the first story, "The Cycling Reporter," in a brief transition scene where we see cats on the rooftops of the small town of Ennui-sur-Blasé, while hearing the cyclist-reporter's narration (this piece of music is frequently used in contemporary cinema); and, in the third story, "Revisions to a Manifesto," set during the May 68 protests, alongside many diegetic popular songs, we hear *Fugue No. 2 in C Minor* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* by J. S. Bach during a debate between boys and girls. Though the music is extradiegetic, it is performed by the Swingle Singers, a group that was highly fashionable in 1960s France.[9]

However, it is in *Moonrise Kingdom* that classical music plays an essential role within the film's soundtrack, particularly the works of English composer Benjamin Britten: *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34*; the movement *Playful Pizzicato* from *A Simple Symphony, Op. 4*; various excerpts from *Noye's Fludde*; the choir *On the Ground, Sleep Sound* from the opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and the song *Cuckoo* from cycle *Friday Afternoons, Op. 7.* Wes Anderson notes that some of these pieces were significant during his childhood, as he participated in a production of *Noye's Fludde* (a work from 1958), much like the protagonist Suzy in his film, as he recounts:

> My friend Sanjay and I played a pair of otters, and my older brother sang an elk. This was in 1979 at St. Francis Episcopal Day School, 345 Piney Point Road, Houston, Texas, 77024. I remember the full details and zip code because there was a poster contest each year for our school book fair, and that was the key information (GILES, 2015, p. 46).

On the role of Britten's music in the film, Wes Anderson notes:

> Britten is the big one, [...] The other music to me is stuff on the side, but Britten is what the movie is sort of built on. [...] I've always been interested in Britten, and it happens that he's written and made quite a number of pieces that are expressly for children, so that was sort of what I built from the sound of the movie—the world of it (PINKERTON *apud* GILES, 2015, p.45).

7 In *Asteroid City* (2023), Wes Anderson's most recent feature film, pre-existing classical music makes only a brief appearance. It is the famous *Canon* by Baroque composer Johann Pachelbel, which may be seen as a cliché, but at the same time reflects the significant presence of this work in the music industry at the time of the film. It appears in the black-and-white sequence, in which the supposed interpreter of one of the story's protagonists (in color) encounters the author of the script and places a vinyl record on the turntable.

8 Note that diegetic is not synonymous with "realistic": it is music that belongs to the narrative world of the film.

9 Verbal information from Michel Chion, in conversation with LuízaAlvim on March 4, 2019.

In addition to Britten, whose works are almost always diegetic in the film (or begin diegetic), there are other pieces linked to the world of childhood, such as parts from the *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns. There is also an aria from Mozart's opera *Così Fan Tutte* playing from a radio, and the vocal piece *An die Musik* by Franz Schubert. Anderson mentioned that he strongly connects with this period (the 1960s) when classical music was widely present on the radio and played a significant role in children's education. Sophisticated works, such as *The Young Person's Guide*, "[...] are meant to have an audience of children but that are not written down to children, that are meant to kind of educate children in what classical music really is" (GROSS, 2012b, n.p.).

Giles (2015) provides a comprehensive analysis of the use of these pieces in the film; however, we will focus here on only a few aspects. It is interesting to note the didactic and/or childish nature of some of these works, the most evident being *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* by Britten. This piece is based on the *Rondeau* from the suite *Abdelazer* by English baroque composer Henry Purcell, which aligns with a general baroque musical spirit present in Wes Anderson's films, as seen in the inspirations and uses of Vivaldi. Conversely, Noye's Fludde is based on a medieval play (a "mystery", as they were called) about Noah's Ark.

As Gilles (2015) points out, these two works serve a structural function in the film. *The Young Person's Guide* is the first piece heard, introduced amid the intertitles of the opening credits after Suzy's brother places the record on the turntable. We hear the narrator present in the music[10] and Purcell's theme orchestrated by Britten while witnessing a variation of the "montage sequences", presenting each character and setting in a lateral tracking shot. At the end of the film, the narrator reappears by, announcing the Fugue variation, although what follows is another work by Britten, the song *Cuckoo* from *Friday Afternoons*. The announced fugue will be heard in the closing credits, initially mixed with *Volière* from *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns. The entire romantic adventure of the protagonists Sam and Suzy centers around the annual performances of *Noye's Fludde* at the island church: Sam and Suzy meet during one performance and reach the climax of their adventure in the following year's performance (cancelled due to torrential rain, but the music plays on a low volume from a turntable as the participants engage in the play, while subsequent sections of the work accompany the continuation of the sequence in an extradiegetic manner).

As Gilles (2015) observes, the film itself has a structure similar to *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, in which each family of instruments is successively presented. In the film, the various "substitute" families of the orphan Sam appear also successively until the climax of the cancelled performance sequence, where they all converge in the church.

In the end titles, Anderson takes up Britten's baton and puts a female narrator to present the orchestra of the film's original music composer, Alexandre Desplat, whose collaboration with the director will be addressed next.

Andersonian style and Desplat's style

In the Andersonian style, there was an influence from the change of partnership from Mothersbaugh to Desplat. McQuinston (2017, p. 482) cites music supervisor Randall Poster, and concludes that Wes Anderson has transitioned from "an expository, curated aesthetic toward something new, cohesive, and based on the sounds of existing music":

> We sort of try and land on a sound or a sensibility that his music is then filtered through. I think that's how Wes organises it. Our work together – picking songs but also landing on a sound for the score, helps him go to Alexandre, who can then create the music for it. (RICKETT, 2014 *apud* MCQUINSTON, 2017, p. 482).

Nevertheless, as mentioned, the Andersonian style remains recognizable. One example is the persistence of percussive music by Mark Mothersbaugh in *Moonrise Kingdom* and the fact that Desplat drew upon Mothersbaugh's timbres in his compositions for Anderson (MCQUINSTON, 2017; CLARK, 2020).. The snare drums remain in tense scenes, for instance.

On the other hand, while there is a considerable amount of pre-existing music in Anderson's films with Desplat, the rock'n roll of the Rolling Stones disappears, as does the variety of popular genres from the 20th century, such as pop songs, which decreases significantly. Remaining popular genres include French popular song in *Moonrise Kingdom* (the disc by Françoise Hardy is shown by the protagonist as her favorite) and in *French Dispatch*, in the story that revisits the May 68 movements in France; the country music of Hank Williams (from the 1950s)

10 As Giles (2015) notes, the film has also a narrator.

in *Moonrise Kingdom* and the Slavic folk music in *Grand Budapest Hotel*. In *Isle of Dogs*, there is a standout song in English, while the rest of the pre-existing music consists of traditional Japanese music and music from Japanese films.

In *Grand Budapest Hotel*, Desplat's music is predominant, as it is in *Isle of Dogs*. It is noteworthy that in both films, the composer draws inspiration from the traditional and/or symphonic repertoire of the film locations, namely Eastern Europe and Japan. This falls within what McQuinston (2017) referred to as "hybrid score," considering the strong connection between the original score and pre-existing music through musical elements such as instrumentation, melodic, harmonic and/or rhythmic material, and even musical style. McQuinston (2017) notes that in *Moonrise Kingdom*, Desplat shapes his music based on Benjamin Britten's, while in *Grand Budapest Hotel*, there is a certain predominance of plucked string timbres in connection with Vivaldi's music and with balalaika folk music. In this film, the connections to pre-existing music – which also reflect in the amount of original music – are more fluid than in the direct homage of *Moonrise Kingdom*, leaning more towards truly hybrid music, while still reinforcing the Andersonian style, even despite Desplat's central role.

Desplat talks about his inspiration in Eastern European music for *Grand Budapest Hotel*:

> Very early on, when I read the script [Anderson] mentioned some kind of a sound that would emerge from Mitteleuropa – what our imagination could hear from the Mitteleuropa mid-century sounds. And Mitteleuropa, for that film goes from Switzerland to Turkey. It's a wide band of land in which there are instruments and rhythms and melodies that you can quickly identify, of course you can think of the zither, the balalaikas, the percussion instruments that come also from the east, the Alpenhorns (YOTKA, 2014 *apud* MCQUINSTON, 2017, p. 487).

The reference to instrumentation is not fleeting, as Clark (2017) notes that it serves as the starting point for Anderson's conversations with Desplat, which was particularly important in *Grand Budapest Hotel*. Although this film does not feature a theme or characters associated with childhood, Clark (2017) considers that some timbres, such as that of the celesta, evoke this characteristic Andersonian universe. In *Isle of Dogs*, according to the author, the celesta also alludes to the visual style associated with the childlike nature of stop-motion animation.

In *French Dispatch*, there is a greater musical heterogeneity in terms of styles and genres, which aligns with what Julie Hubbert (2014) observes as a characteristic of music in contemporary cinema.[11] However, in the final sequence of the last story ("The Private Dining Room of the Police Commissioner"), the conflict between policemen and gangsters is accompanied by Desplat's ostinato composition with a jazz-like quality – this ostinato also appears in the chase in *Moonrise Kingdom* and in Gustave's escape from prison in *Grand Budapest Hotel*, which also exhibits a distinct jazz character, as noted by Clark (2017). These examples highlight a stylistic hallmark of the composer that spans several Wes Anderson films.

Andersonian style in montage sequences and in sequences with slow motion

Within the Andersonian style, Hrycaj (2013) points out that Anderson utilizes music in three ways: a) music associated with montage sequences; b) music used in sequences with slow-motion scenes; and c) music emanating from musical devices – iPods, turntables, and radios that express the characters' feelings. Hrycaj's analysis, however, concludes with *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, precisely when Anderson changes musical composers from Mark Mothersbaugh to Desplat. Since then, there have been some changes concerning the aspects outlined by the author.

The first aspect, montage sequences, is neither an invention of Anderson, nor is it exclusive to his cinema. This mechanism refers to montages that disassociate, in the visual field, temporal or spatial logic, while in the auditory field, the music continues to play normally. According to Kalinak (2010), montage is the oldest type of musical sequence, as music gives it a sense of unity. The montages seen in Anderson's films are defined as temporal and/or spatial leaps between scenes linked by continuously played music without interruption in the auditory field; that is, the music providing connection and unity to these scenes.

Since *Bottle Rocket*, there have been several montage sequences featuring popular music, although there are also some with original music by Mothersbaugh. To cite a few examples, in *Rushmore*, Anderson uses *Making Time* by the band Creation to showcase the various extracurricular activities of the protagonist Max. In *Royal Tenenbaums*,

11 In *Asteroid City* (2023), there is less heterogeneity, as much of the pre-existing diegetic music comes from the radio that the characters in the color story listen to. In this way, the pre-existing music has more of an anchoring function in the diegetic time of the film. In addition, it is generally at a low volume, consistent with principles of vraisemblance.

Judy is a Punk by the Ramones plays to illustrate Margot's various romantic relationships. In *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, *Gut Feeling* by Devo plays while the characters determinately return to work. There is also a montage sequence in *Bottle Rocket*, created using Mothersbaugh's music, when Anthony is writing a letter to his sister. Finally, Ravel's *String Quartet in F Major* features in the aforementioned sequence from *Royal Tenenbaums*.

In Anderson's films from the 2010s, this stylistic approach to using music in montage sequences changes slightly. Beginning with *Moonrise Kingdom*, there is a scene where Captain Sharp (showing Sam's photograph to various people) and the scouts search for Sam, with Britten's *Simple Symphony* playing in the background. We also hear Hank Williams' song *Kaw-Liga* while scenes of Sam fleeing the camp are shown. There is also a montage sequence during the correspondence exchanges between Sam and Suzy, with the choir *On the Ground*, *Sleep Sound* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* playing in the background; however, in this case, the music is not the most prominent element, but rather the voice-overs of the characters reading the letters. Additionally, there is the previously mentioned opening scene with Britten's music introducing the characters, similar to what occurs in *Royal Tenenbaums*. In this instance, the scene is a variation of the montage sequence, as the rhythm of the music does not dictate the montage, which unfolds much more slowly, with only four cuts.

In *Grand Budapest Hotel*, *Isle of Dogs*, and *French Dispatch*, there are no montage sequences related to music, but rather the narration is the element which provides unity to the sequence.

In *Grand Budapest Hotel*, one can cite either the sequence where Mr. Moustafa shows the hotel to the character of the Author, or the sequence introducing the members of the Society of Crossed Keys. In both cases, music is not the prominent element creating the temporal or spatial connection in the image, as was the case in earlier films; that is, it is not an image montage based on music. The music composed by Alexandre Desplat exists in the soundtrack, but it is not the most prominent element; rather, it is the narration. In this case, it is a more explanatory montage, where the voice-over explains what we see in the visual field.

When introducing what is the island of dogs, *Isle of Dogs* also employs a montage based on narration with music composed by Desplat in the background. There are other examples of narration-based montages, such as during the song *I Won't Hurt You* by The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band. However, there is a brief montage that uses the song *Kanbei & Katushiro/Kikuchiyo's Mambo* from Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954). The sequence in question consists of only four shots depicting the moment in which the character Atari first decides to leave the island. It is certainly not a montage associated with the music as seen in Anderson's earlier films, given that the musical moment is very brief and the montage itself is quite short.

Finally, in *French Dispatch*, there are also moments of montage associated with narration, such as when we are introduced to Moses Rosenthaler's past, when we see the monthly impasses between the older and younger generations of Ennui, or when J.K.L. Berensen narrates Rosenthaler's artistic presentations. Therefore, with the exception of *Moonrise Kingdom*, it can be said that there are no purely music-associated montages in any of Anderson's films from the 2010s.

Regarding the second aspect pointed out by Hrycaj, music used in slow-motion sequences can be found throughout the film, but most frequently in the final sequence. The vast majority of these slow-motion sequences are accompanied by rock'n roll music from the 1960s and/or 1970s. To cite a few examples, we have *Ooh La Laby Faces* and *A Quick One While He's Away* by The Who in *Rushmore*; *Everyone* by Van Morrison and *These Days* by Nico in *Royal Tenenbaums*; *Queen Bitch* by David Bowie in *The Life Aquatic*; and *Powerman and Strangers* by The Kinks in *Darjeeling Limited*. Hrycaj (2013) shows that several of these slow-motion sequences feature characters walking toward the camera, evoking a sense of triumph.

In relation to Anderson's films from the 2010s, this stylistic mode of using music in slow-motion sequences is profoundly altered. *Moonrise Kingdom* features a slow-motion scene after the two protagonists "secretly marry," but it is accompanied by an original composition by Desplat, *The Heroic Weather-Conditions of the Universe, Pt. 7: After the Storm*. A slow-motion sequence had not been accompanied by an original film score since 1996's *Bottle Rocket*. *Grand Budapest Hotel* and *Isle of Dogs* are the first two Anderson films that do not feature music used in slow-motion sequences. In *The French Dispatch*, there is only one very brief slow-motion moment when Simone walks through the exhibition of Moses's paintings, accompanied by the score composed by Desplat. This scene lasts 13 seconds only, and is followed by a voice-over narration. When we compare this to Anderson's earlier films, we see how insignificant this scene is, as, for example, in *Royal Tenenbaums*, *Everyone* lasts approximately 41 seconds, and in *Darjeeling Limited*, *Powerman* runs for 45 seconds. In these sequences, the music served as a prominent stylistic element, exemplifying *auteur* music, where the visual field was at the service of the auditory field; they were true musical moments within the film. In contrast, in the *French Dispatch* scene, Desplat's score is merely present to accompany the character's brief stroll.

Finally, the third aspect noted by Hrycaj, concerning music originating from musical devices that represents the characters' emotions, and they often use such devices to express their feelings to other characters. This aspect was the focus of one of the earliest articles addressing the use of music in Anderson's work: Carole Lyn Piechota (2006) explores the use of three songs in Royal Tenenbaums – *These Days*, *Needle in the Hay*, and *Fly* – and how they allow Richie and Margot to "reveal their pain and longing," in addition to being used "as catalysts and translators of the siblings' emotions." McQuiston (2017, p. 477) argues that what matters is agency: "the characters choose the music to play for themselves and for others, and Anderson's own musical taste influenced these moments." Other examples include: Jack Whitman's character in *Hotel Chevalier* and *Darjeeling Limited*, playing songs on his iPod to express his feelings about his girlfriend and his mother; Margot in *Royal Tenenbaums*, listening to Ritchie's record player to convey to her brother how she feels about him; Inez in *Bottle Rocket*, using her radio to end her relationship with Anthony; Max in *Rushmore*, playing a cassette tape to woo Miss Cross and tell her how he feels; Steve in *Life Aquatic*, using a cassette tape to express his sorrow over the loss of his son and friend; and Mr. Fox and his son in *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, playing a song on a walkman to celebrate their victory.

In Anderson's films from the 2010s, the use of diegetic music devices to express feelings decreases significantly. The only example is Suzy in *Moonrise Kingdom*, using her record player to show Sam her musical taste while they dance on the beach. *Grand Budapest Hotel* contains no intradiegetic devices playing any songs. *Isle of Dogs* features devices that transmit messages via radio and television, but there is no music conveying the characters' emotions.

In *French Dispatch*, there is a moment when character Zeffirelli plays the song *Aline*, performed by Jarvis Cocker, on the jukebox for Juliette, but shortly after the first verse, the song is cut off to make way for narration. This scene can be seen as a provocation from Zeffirelli to Juliette, given that the character had just expressed her disdain for the artist. However, we do not hear the complete song, so this sequence does not function like the previous ones mentioned. Additionally, there is a sequence in which Zeffirelli transmits a message over the radio, but it has no relation to music.

Therefore, all three aspects identified by Hrycaj (2013) have undergone transformations in the 2010s, with some becoming nearly extinct in Anderson's style.

Conclusions

In this article, we revisit previous analyses of music in Wes Anderson's films up to *Isle of Dogs* (2018), the application of Gorbman's concept of "auteur music" by Hrycaj (2013), and concepts such as "hybrid score" by McQuinston (2017), including the director's last film of the 2010s, *The French Dispatch*. Additionally, we compare the use of music in Anderson's films to studies of music in contemporary films, such as those by Hubbert (2014) and Greig (2021). With this, we aim to take stock of the prolific director's musical style in the 2010s and his authorial vision, even in collaboration with composer Alexandre Desplat and music supervisor Randall Poster.

In this way, we observe that Anderson seeks to challenge himself professionally with each film while maintaining his characteristic style. Desplat comments that, with Anderson, he strives to maintain "the same aesthetic musically," because he perceives, in fact, "a real continuity from *Mr. Fox* through now, but at the same time explore other territories." Desplat always feels the need to "do something new, but keep the same face, the same silhouette" as in the previous films (SEITZ, 2023, p.204).

With the consolidation of the change of composer, we observe that in *Moonrise Kingdom*, the amount of popular music drops drastically, giving way to larger portions of classical music. The challenges continue in the subsequent films: in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Anderson takes the risk of creating a film with a almost entirely original soundtrack, composed by Desplat (who won an Oscar for his work); in *Isle of Dogs*, Anderson expands his musical repertoire; and in *The French Dispatch*, we see his musical heterogeneity increase even further, all within a general Andersonian style.

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