



Sound, Screams, and the Score: An Exploration of Sound in Classic Horror Slashers

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The horrifying and macabre has long been a morbid interest to human beings. Subjects of horror in novels became especially popular in the nineteenth century. At this time, even music took a horrifying twist, as evidenced by Franz Schubert's famous lieder 'The Elf King' composed in 1815 (Lerner, 2010) and Hector Berlioz' 'Symphonie Fantastique' in 1830 (Donnelly, 2005). In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the fascination with the eerie shifted to the silver screen. Horror films have become an extremely popular facet of film, with many successful films spawning sequels, prequels, and remakes. Perhaps more so than other genres of film, horror film thrives on the creation of established franchises. The constant re-making of films does not change the fact that there is an ingrained formula for horror, and most do not stray off the path. Despite a sense of sameness in the visual, horror film sound can often be very innovative.

Through a combination of non-diegetic atonal music, theme songs, diegetic popular songs, ambient sound, and screams, horror film places sound on centre stage. Sound has proven an effective method for eliciting emotion in audiences, making it an intriguing subject for examination in an academic setting. For this reason, I will be exploring horror movie music and sound to explore how it is used to create fear within audiences.

This paper will discuss horror film music as it appears in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974), *Halloween*

(1978), as well as its representation in *The Berberian Sound Studio* (2012). *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Halloween* are considered to be classic horror films, alongside *Friday the 13th*, and *Nightmare on Elm Street*, made in 1980 and 1984 respectively. Each of these movies is considered a classic for a reason: they have each earned their place in memory for their innovation and terrifying characteristics, and have set many sound and music standards for later horror films.

Charles Darwin, pioneer of the theory of evolution, was quoted as saying that music was only capable of eliciting positive emotions, not horror, fear or rage (Lerner, 2010). What would Darwin have thought of the horror film, whose music and sound is based on the idea of sound creating horror? Though film is an audio-visual medium and the visual tends to play a more emphasized role within cinema, this is certainly not the case in horror (Hayward, 2009). In fact, it can be argued that sound plays an even greater role in the narrative than the visual, on the basis that much of the killer's movements are communicated through sound. Horror plays on the audience's fear of the unknown, and sound plays a huge role in this (Donnelly, 2005). Combining instances of diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, horror tracks are often atonal and dissonant, creating a creepy sense of the foreboding. Non-diegetic music is often atonal, and dissonant, refusing to become melodic. It is also closely related to modern art music

(Donnelly, 2005). The horror score has incorporated musical techniques such as stinger chords, droning tones, ostinati, and tremolos to create suspense and fear (Donnelly, 2005). It has also cleverly appropriated the direct style of modernist classical music, which is highly representational. Horror film sound is used as a means to directly communicate an emotion to the audience. K.J. Donnelly argues that horror film sound is an equal player in the role between the visual and the auditory, and I would agree (2005).

Diegetic sounds are often human, as the screaming voice and breathing represent a way in which horror is able to hold sway over the audience, as noted by film scholar Linda Williams (1991). Williams theorized that sound is used to have an effect over the body of the audience, and this is often done through the screams of the characters, in order to create a similar effect on the audience. Williams also noted that audiences tend to rate the success of the film in terms of the degree to which they were frightened. Often, horror film reviews describe audience members fainting or leaving the screening to convince potential movie-goers of its fear factor (Williams, 1991).

– The first wave of horror film – or Golden Age – is characterized by films such as *Dracula* (1931), *Frankenstein* (1931), and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931). These films focus on the fantastic, in both their villains and loca-

tion. Each of their featured monsters live outside of reality and allowed an escape for the audience outside of the everyday (Dixon, 2010). Thus, whereas the Golden Age movie monsters were all fantastic beings, the villains of the 1970's new wave horror films were much more human, reflecting a newfound interest with the horror of reality.

The subtle shift in horror from fantasy to reality had several impacts on both the audio and visual aspects of film. To begin, these newer realistic films focused primarily on violence and were accordingly more gory than Golden Age horror (Dixon, 2010). The interest with realism in film may have also coincided with the very public Vietnam War, which came to an end in 1975. Thus, horror films at this time were no longer such an escape from reality for audiences as Golden Age horror, these films were bringing 'reality' to the screen.

Music featured in first wave and second wave films differed greatly as well. Horror films created in the 1930s were considered part of Hollywood's Golden Age, and one defining feature of this time period was the role that symphonic scores played (Wierzbicki, 2012). Horror films from the 1960s onward featured scores that were non-orchestral in nature, much more dissonant, and used music that was not meant to be memorable or tuneful (Donnelly, 2005).

This was a pivotal time period in film. The collapse of the Hollywood studio system led to the end of the Golden Age in Hollywood, around the late 1960s (Wierzbicki, 2012). The downfall resulted in more independent film makers coming forward, as the major conglomerates no longer held such a monopoly (Dixon, 2010). This allowed film makers like Tobe Hooper and John Carpenter to make films on comparatively small budgets and have a chance at receiving mainstream attention. The lack of

major film studios making mainstream films also allowed independent film makers the opportunity to make films that otherwise might not have been allowed to be made, such as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Halloween*, which truly pushed the envelope in terms of what audiences were used to seeing on screen. Of course, the horror genre is often one area of film that continually works to redefine its own parameters, and is often innovative in many terms, including music. Musical innovation in horror will be discussed in more detail shortly. To begin, I will present a case study of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Halloween* to delve into their sonic landscape. This will be done in order to discuss how sound is used to create fear in film.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (1974)

"Once you stop screaming, then you'll start talking about it" (IMDB, film tagline).

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre took the film world by storm when it was released in 1974. It is now considered one of the best horror films of all time, and has inspired a sequel, a remake, and even a prequel. At the time of its release, however, several countries, including England and Finland, banned the film due to the disturbing nature of several scenes.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre is a typical feature length film at 1 hour and 23 minutes. It was directed by Tobe Hooper (IMDB). Besides the role of director, Hooper was involved in the film in several aspects, including producer of photography, and also music. Despite the job title incorporating music, the film features much more in the way of sound effects than actual music.

The film begins with a voice over, reading a short introduction which advises the audience that the events that they are about to witness are based on a true story about a tragedy involving five teenagers. The narrator mentions specifically two of the five characters, Sally and Franklin Hardesty. Despite implying its foundation in reality, the film is roughly based upon infamous serial killer Ed Gein, who was known for desecrating graves and using body parts for various items, including furniture. Gein was also known to have murdered two women. Thus, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was set up to be a horrifying film made all the more terrifying by its roots in reality as audiences were shocked by the gruesome events on screen.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre revolves around the group of five and their encounter with evil. One by one, they face the brutal Leatherface, whose weapon of choice is a chainsaw, and meet their demise. Only one escapes - Sally - representing the 'final girl' trope (Williams, 1991). Leatherface is assisted and encouraged by his equally frightening family. The family unit is an influential aspect of horror films, and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* offers an excellent example of the horror family in action (Kawin, 2012). Bruce Kawin theorized that the horror family is effective in that it exists outside of the established conventions of society, and mirrors a real life dysfunctional family, another way in which horror films are creating terror out of reality (2012). The family is made all the more horrifying in how they seem to support the extremely violent actions of one another.

Unlike the Hollywood studio system, which featured grandiose symphonic scores to accompany their films, and often a theme song (Wierzbicki, 2012), *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and indeed many horror films, feature minimal orchestral accompaniment. Instead of mu-

sic and songs, horror films rely on sound effects, ambient noise, and atonal music (Lerner, 2010).

The film begins silently as the directors credits pop up over a black screen. Shortly after, the narrator begins his initial warning to the audience about the gruesome events that they are about to witness. The words roll across a black screen, momentarily we are given the date of the massacre, and then we are left with several moments of silence and darkness before the sound suddenly cuts in. It is very faint, but there is the sound of a hi-hat audible, as a louder digging sound overthrows it. Thus, before the audience is able to see anything, we are introduced to the sound of a grave being robbed. In addition to the sound of digging, we hear laboured breathing, grunts, scraping sounds, and a knife being sharpened. We never get to see this act. As humans are very visually oriented beings, it is a bit disorienting to be unable to match an image to a sound, and Hooper uses this tendency to create a sense of unease and discombobulation in the audience. These sounds are interspersed with 'pictures' being taken by a camera. The audience witnesses a flash of light illuminating a close up shot of a grisly image of a decomposing corpse. While this alone is terrifying enough, it is the sound that accompanies these flash photos that truly creates a sense of horror. The sound is understood to be a mechanical sound of a camera, but it is unlike any camera heard. It has a distinct screeching, high-pitched sound, which feels dissonant and uncomfortable on the ears. It seems almost reminiscent of the shrieking violins used in the iconic *Psycho* (1960) shower scene. This sound plays on the fear of the unknown, as the audience is experiencing an almost alien sound over darkness and unexplained horrifying images. It truly is an unsettling way to begin a film. As this

progresses, we begin to hear the voice of a radio announcer fade in.

Though the film relies on diegetic sounds (the chainsaw and screams), the non-diegetic score is also used to create tension. The score was dually credited to director Tobe Hooper and Wayne Bell (IMDB). Hooper's contribution to the score marks a unique aspect of the film. Though the underscore is not complex, it is effective. The score is comprised of a percussive beat, presumably a hi hat, and synthesized keyboard music. It is atonal and dissonant, used more as a background sound than a melodic accompaniment. While the diegetic sounds remain relatively consistent throughout the film, the non-diegetic score is comparatively sparse, but is used to underline moments of fear. Often the sound might simply be a low note held over a long period of time, creating a droning effect in the score. An interesting technique used with the droning sound is to blend it with the buzz of summer insects, creating an even louder drone and intriguing melding of diegetic and non-diegetic.

What is perhaps most striking about this film is the use of the radio. Radios can be an effective plot tool, used to communicate information to the characters or act as a source of diegetic music. The radio in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* plays both of these roles. As previously mentioned, the radio voice begins to fade in over the opening scenes. The radio voice is heard as the credits continue over a red and black animated scene, creating a strange juxtaposition between the calm voice of the radio announcer and the vague animated red and black pictures on the screen, which resemble a skull. The radio voice masterfully flows over into the next scene, where the screen has faded from the red and black animation, to an image of the moon, to a

close up of a roadside dead armadillo; the voice on the radio remains constant. Interestingly enough as well, what sounded like a simple non-diegetic voice transitions into the diegetic, as the car that the teenagers are in opens up and the sound of the radio spills out. It is immediately clear to the audience that the sound of the radio is originating from the van. For the remainder of the film, the radio retains a diegetic status.

In the opening scenes as the teenagers are driving, we hear the radio announcer reporting the grave-robbing crimes, an early indication of what is to come. This news report comes to an end, and the radio begins to play folk tunes. These folk songs have a distinct Western style to them, and are upbeat and cheerful. This is an effective use of diegetic music as it helps to create an emotional dissonance within the viewer. The audience is aware that something terrible will befall the teens, yet the music and the atmosphere of the road trip feels relaxed and laid back. This music continues to play even after they have picked up the hitch hiker, who quickly reveals a psychotic and threatening nature. Another significant instance of the use of radio is during Sally's flight from Leatherface. She arrives at the gas station seeking refuge from the killer, only to discover that the man at the gas station is part of the murderous clan. He ties up Sally and drags her to his truck. All the while, the radio is playing upbeat folk tunes, creating an effective emotional dissonance in the scene. It is my belief that the radio music in this scene overwrites the fearful emotions that we have just experienced during the chase scene, giving one the feeling of being on an emotional roller coaster. It also makes one feel all the more uneasy as the upbeat music plays, leading to a slight confusion as to the emotions in the scene.

The radio represents the only diegetic music. There is a good deal of diegetic ambient sound as the film was

shot outdoors. The audience can hear the sounds of birds, winds, and passing cars. The ambient natural sounds are effective at increasing the sense of isolation in the countryside, as the cars are infrequent and only the teens are roadside. When the teens are outdoors, there is always a faint buzzing of summer insects. In addition to the expected natural sounds, the sound best associated with this film is the chainsaw. Though it seems that horror films typically favour silent killers, Leatherface's chainsaw is anything but. The roar of the weapon is often heard throughout the film, announcing its presence before its appearance. This is an excellent example of Michel Chion's term, "acousmatic sound," which is any sound that is heard yet whose source is not seen on screen (2009). The power of the acousmatic is that the audience recognizes that it does exist diegetically. Its power in the film comes not with the terror of the unknown, but the fear that something is coming. In this way, the chainsaw was a powerful choice for weapon, as it sounds frightening and emphasizes the disconnect of Leatherface between humanity and animals.

The human voice is an integral aspect of the horror film, whether it be the distorted and frightening voice of the movie monster, or the frantic, blood-curdling screams of the victim. The voice helps to communicate fear to the audience (Chion, 1999). *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is no exception to this, and features a fair amount of screaming and pleading from the victims. There are several interesting uses of the human voice that deserve recognition. The first of which is the moment when the group has just entered the Hardesty's grandfathers' home, and the sounds of their laughter can be heard upstairs as Franklin sits in his wheelchair alone on the first floor. He mockingly imitates their laughter, but what was most intriguing to me was the fact that the laughter from

upstairs at times sounded eerily close to screams. Perhaps this was done to emphasize the close relationship between fear and pleasure, a relationship echoed in the horror film as a whole, as audiences experience terror as a source of enjoyment (Hanich, 2010).

The most significant use of the human voice – or lack thereof – in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is Leatherface's. Though we do at times hear slight grunts, and indistinguishable babbles, Leatherface remains distinctly mute and unclear (Kawin, 2012). As theorized by Michel Chion in *The Voice of Cinema*, this represents a unique character in film: the mute. Chion created the concept of the "acousmètre," an omniscient character who is heard, yet not seen. This creates a forceful impression of a powerful being (Chion, 1999). The counterpart to the acousmètre is the mute, whose power is gained through their seen and unheard traits. Leatherface fits the role of the mute perfectly. He is frightening because we cannot understand his speech, and thus have difficulty connecting and feeling empathy for him. He is arguably even more terrifying as we never see his face. As the name Leatherface implies, he wears a face, one that is not his own. Leatherface's mask is made out of the face of an unknown victim. The use of a mask increases the disconnect created by his muteness.

Unlike many modern horror films, silence does not play a large role in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Though there are moments of silence, these are more accurately described as "relational silences," as theorized by music scholar Paul Théberge (2008). Examples of this are in moments when the camera zooms out to observe the van driving and we lose the sound of the radio, but the ambient natural sounds take over. Thus, though the film is not truly silent, different aspects of

the score have taken over and we experience a relational silence between the radio and nature.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre is a classic film that helped to set and define horror movie tricks and tropes, while also incorporating many film music techniques. These techniques include the use of a mute character, acousmatic sound, relational silences, and ambient sound. The film is punctuated by the screams of the victims. The score is filled with atonal, dissonant sounds, which is often only a single note or chord, to create a sense of tension and dread in the audience. Perhaps, though, the film's lasting mark on horror film sound is the iconic and dread-inducing chainsaw.

Halloween (1978)

John Carpenter's *Halloween* has become even more famed than *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, though undoubtedly drew inspiration from it. The antagonist featured in *Halloween* has become one of the most well-recognized movie villains: Michael Myers. Myers is discernible for his trademark mask, which is in the form of a distorted and emotionless human face. *Halloween* set horror film standards both narratively and musically. In contrast to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which featured a non-diegetic score sparingly and relied on ambient and diegetic sound, *Halloween* has a more fleshed out score and a reduced emphasis on diegetic sound. It bears many similarities to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, such as the muteness of the villain.

Halloween takes place on Halloween night in 1978, fifteen years after the antagonist Michael Myers murdered his older sister at the age of six. Myers spends the subsequent fifteen years in a mental institution, carefully watched over by Dr. Loomis. On Halloween night of 1978,

Myers escapes by stealing a car, his intention to return to his childhood home. He sees three teenage girls, Laurie, Annie, and Lynda, walking and begins stalking them. Laurie and Annie are babysitting for the evening, and Lynda intends to come over with her boyfriend Bob. One by one, they each fall victim to Michael, with the exception of Laurie, who is able to fend Michael off with the assistance of Dr. Loomis. Laurie becomes the 'final girl', and escapes with her life, though in subsequent sequels, Michael returns to try and kill her.

Similar to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Halloween's* director, John Carpenter, worked on the musical score for the film but is entirely credited with the score, unlike Hooper. Carpenter wrote two themes for *Halloween*, and though today they are instantly recognizable and fear-inducing, they did not exist originally within the film. Carpenter decided to add in the music after a critical reviewer felt the film was not scary (Hayward, 2009). After composing the synthesized score, Carpenter watched the film with and without music, and was taken aback by how much the addition of music changed the emotional tone of the film (Hayward, 2009). This example further emphasizes the critical role that music and sound play in horror films. Interestingly, in the film credits, the score is only represented by a nod to 'Michael's Theme', and is credited to the Bowling Green Philharmonic. In reality, no such orchestra exists, and this was merely Carpenter's reference to his home town of Bowling Green, Kentucky (IMDB). Carpenter was the sole contributor to the score.

Carpenter's score is comprised of two themes for Michael. Each of these themes is played on a synthesizer and features pitch drops in sequence (Donnelly, 2005). Carpenter took inspiration from minimalist art music composers Steve Reich and Philip Glass, and this is evident in his score, which is dissonant and atonal (Donnelly, 2005).

As is typical in horror films, the score features music techniques such as droning, ostinati, and stinger chords. Stinger chords are especially present in the film and often mark frightening moments when Michael suddenly appears on screen. Thus, these stingers are used to emphasize his appearance and add to the shock value of these moments. The droning and ostinati are used effectively to both increase tension and confuse the viewer. This effect is created through repetition; the two themes repeat numerous times throughout the film, which creates the sense of impending danger, but also do not ever lead to a climactic moment, leaving the audience guessing as to when the attack will happen (Donnelly, 2005). This is a clear indication of how music is used to incite emotion and create a physical response, as described by Williams in her discussion of horror as a body genre (1991). Horror film music need not be complex, and indeed is quite transparent in its motives, yet it is an effective way to increase fear experienced when watching a horror film. A further way in which the human body is effected through this music is the technique of using low, repeated notes, which can create the sense of a heartbeat. As fear increases and the victim becomes more frantic, often this low beat will speed up, perhaps creating an unconscious indication to speed up the viewer's heart rate as well. This effect can be seen in *Halloween*, though infrequently, the pace seems to quicken slightly during Michael's attack sequences.

Though Kawin noted that popular songs are rare in horror films with the exception of the credits, *Halloween* breaks this tradition with its inclusion of one popular song (2012). It is assuredly no coincidence that Carpenter chose Blue Oyster Cult's 'Fear the Reaper' to be this song. We hear the song as Laurie and Annie are driving

to their babysitting jobs, and Michael is following them, unbeknownst to them. Laurie and Annie have the song playing on the radio, thus representing the only instance of diegetic music in the film, and a rather clever joke on the part of Carpenter. As previously mentioned, it is not typical that popular songs appear in horror films, though Donnelly notes that in *Halloween*, it is likely that this song was included for two reasons; to give an air of modernity to the film, and to appeal to a younger audience (2005). This could also be an attempt at creating an anempathetic musical moment. Anempathetic is a term originally coined for movie music by Michel Chion, and applied to horror film by Stan Link, who discusses anempathetic music's use in creating emotional intensification through the use of music which seems contrary to the action. I see 'Fear the Reaper' as acting in this way in that it is an upbeat, rock song. Despite the morbid title, it has an emotional tone that is more fun than imposing. This goes against the feeling of the audience who are aware that Michael is following the teens.

Besides these examples, sound in the film is heard as expressed through human voices. We hear the characters through their dialogue and their screams. Dialogue occurs in discussions and over the phone, as the girls call one another at their babysitting jobs. The telephone is used to create fear as Laurie picks up a call and does not hear anyone speak on the other end except for the sound of chewing. Though it is later revealed that this was Annie, we are still put on edge in the moment, as we cannot know who is on the other end, or what they want. A particularly compelling use of the telephone is another call to Laurie, this time from Lynda. Lynda and Bob are alone in the home that Annie is supposed to be working at, and so when Laurie picks up a call from Lynda and hears breathless gasps, she assumes that Lynda is playing a joke on

her with her boyfriend Bob by making sexually suggestive sounds. Laurie does not realize that Lynda is in fact being strangled by Michael. This is another instance in which the line between pleasure and pain is blurred by sound (Hanich, 2010).

Similar to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Michael is a silent villain. We do not hear him speak or attempt to speak, as Leatherface does, but only utter grunts as he is physically exerting himself. Michael gains the power of the mute, a privileged position in which the audience assumes they possess some sort of secret knowledge (Luko, 2016). This secret knowledge might be Michael's motivation for killing. A distinct difference between Michael and Leatherface is the motivation behind their silence. Though it is not expressly said in the film, Wheeler Dixon notes that Leatherface's character was meant to have a mental disability, and this is the reason he is unable to communicate. This is not the case with Michael, whose silence is self-imposed, as confirmed by Dr. Loomis, who explains that Michael has not spoken since the day he murdered his sister. Thus, the source of his muteness is also the source of his threatening demeanor. We do not understand what drove Michael to do this, and we cannot connect with him emotionally, as he does not speak and we do not see his face. There is an exception to this: in one moment when Laurie rips Michael's mask off, we are given a brief image of his true face. Though Michael is not considered an acousmètre when he becomes visible, I consider this an example of de-acousmatization in a sense. De-acousmatization is simply the moment in which the acousmètre is revealed, and thus loses their omniscient power (Chion, 1999). They are no longer an invisible entity. Michael loses that which makes him terrifying: his apparent disconnect with humanity.

Ambient sound also plays a role in the film. The film is set on October 31st, thus we often hear the sounds of leaves crunching, as well as children trick or treating outside. One common movie trope is the use of lightning and storms during horror, and *Halloween* uses this trope during Michael's escape from the institution (Dixon, 2010).

Discussion

In her article on the physical aspects of film, Linda Williams notes that next to pornography, horror is seen as the lowest form of film in cultural esteem (1991). Whether this is true or not, it is clear that there is much more to horror film sound than simply screams and slashes. The music, while not played in a complex manner, serves a complex function: to elicit fear in the viewer. It is perhaps one of the few film genres in which sound plays a role equal to that of the visual.

A wonderful example of the power of sound in horror is the 2012 film *Berberian Sound Studio*, directed by Peter Strickland (Lodge, 2012). This film follows Gilderoy as he provides sound effects for what he believes is a horror film, a fact that is vehemently denied by his supervisor. Throughout his work on the film, as he mixes screams, whispers, and the sound of stabbing, he slowly begins to become a part of the horror. The constant sound of screaming that surrounds him erodes his mental framework, until the lines between reality and fantasy become blurred beyond his recognition. The significance of this film revolves around the apparent power of music and sound. Gilderoy does not receive the opportunity to see the film beyond the opening credits, yet simply working on the soundtrack becomes a strain to him. It is an interesting perspective, as the film at once takes some of the potency of sound

out (the audience is able to see the behind-the-scenes of how the sounds are created through foley) yet also increases the power of the sound as we are able to directly observe the physical and mental effect that they have on Gilderoy. This film is indeed a testament to the power and influence of horror film music.

Thus, as evidenced by the two case studies of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Halloween*, music and sound is an integral aspect of the horror film. This is further proven by the fact that in both films, the directors also played the role of composers. Music and sound in horror functions differently than in other genres; the emphasis is less on orchestral scores or pop songs, but on atonal/dissonant sounds, sounds effects, and screams. If there is music, it is more similar to twentieth-century art music, a fact that both places it outside of the mainstream and also points to its innovative style. Sound effects play a greater role as many of the shocking and violent moments would lose some of their strength without sound or music, such as stinger chords, to highlight the horror. The human voice is also used in different ways outside of dialogue. Screaming is arguably the most significant sound in a horror movie. It is what is used to communicate a sense of fear to the audience. Though an entire discussion and examination of sound in horror film would indeed be outside of the scope of this paper, the discussion of sound in both case studies has shown that at least in horror, audio is the dominant medium.

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