

<b>Institution: University of Sussex</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: UoA 35 Music</b>
<b>Title of case study:</b> Changing public experience and understanding of silent film through music
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Hughes' impact arises from his music for films without sound, which has rendered historically important silent films, and more recent silent film formats, accessible to contemporary audiences. Critics, programmers and broadcasters have all recognised this impact in their commissions and programming of Hughes' scores, and Hughes' work has also impacted upon the way in which museum curators display film and other archival materials. The films include commercial DVD releases of classic silent films by Sergei Eisenstein and Yasujiro Ozu, music for Joris Ivens' film <i>Regen</i> (1929), music for a new film by photographer Sophie Rickett, and music for a documentary image sequence of photographs from the Imperial War Museum archive.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Ed Hughes joined Sussex in 2003. Between 2001 and 2007 Hughes' compositional research was focused on music for early silent film. This research responded to theoretical questions raised from the 1920s in journals such as <i>Close Up</i> (1927–33), and in the writings of the Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein, the composer Hanns Eisler, and others, which investigated the possibility of producing new audio-visual relationships between music and the moving image. Silent film-makers of the 1920s and 1930s experimented with new visual languages, but the subsequent standardisation of film methods means that the filmic languages of directors such as Eisenstein, Ozu and Ivens can now seem remote. In his work, Hughes re-examines the contrapuntal relationship between music and the moving image to enhance the immediacy and impact of early silent films.</p> <p>In a major two-year project from 2006–08, Hughes composed new scores for Eisenstein's films <i>Strike</i> (1924) and <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (1925). Hughes put into practice Eisenstein's concept, articulated in the essay 'Non-indifferent nature', that the 'beats and accents' of the film image might synchronise with the acoustic beats and accents of the music, as evidenced in Eisenstein's supervision of Meisel's scoring of <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> in 1926. By using principles derived from an understanding of montage and other experimental filmic forms in the music itself, Hughes' own scoring of <i>Potemkin</i> (2007) developed this principle with a more extended network of audiovisual beats and accents. The music also responded to the spatial constructions of the film's <i>mise-en-scène</i> [see Section 3, R1].</p> <p>Hughes' investigation of a very different set of practices in the early cinema work of Yasujiro Ozu similarly sought to bring out and articulate for contemporary audiences the unusual and meticulous cyclical structures, and subtle use of montage, which are the hallmark of Ozu's work, yet which are easily overlooked, in part because of these films' surface-level engagement with Hollywood gangster films and pulp fiction genres. Hughes has also written critical commentaries on his approach to creating music for Ozu's films in the booklets accompanying these releases [R2].</p> <p>Hughes has also undertaken research into, and composed a new score for, Joris Ivens' film <i>Regen</i> (Rain; 1929), for which Hanns Eisler also composed a score that was the basis of discussion for Eisler's influential book with Adorno, <i>Composing for Films</i> [R3]. The theoretical background for Hughes' work on this film was published in the article by Hughes, 'New technologies and old rites: dissonance between picture and music in readings of Joris Ivens' <i>Rain</i>' [R4].</p> <p>The use of music that matches or counterpoints the rhythm of the film editing and the spatiality of the film image, had also been developed by Hughes in collaborative projects with contemporary film- and video-makers, including a score for photographer Sophy Rickett's silent film <i>Auditorium</i> (2007), commissioned by Glyndebourne Opera and Photoworks, which explored the relation between architectural, filmic and musical space [R5], and a soundtrack for <i>Dark Formations</i> [R6],</p>

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

an audiovisual creation exploring how music can enhance the museum visitor's experience of archival images from World War Two kept at the Imperial War Museum, undertaken in collaboration with photography historian David Chandler.

Hughes' film scores have also been discussed in critical literature on film music, which have further added to their impact. His Eisenstein scores are discussed in Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) p. 269; his score for *Regen* is discussed in Johannes Gall, 'A rediscovered way to describe Rain', in P. Schweinhardt (ed.) *Kompositionen für Film* (Wiesbaden: Breikopf und Härtel, 2008), p. 118.

**3. References to the research**

- R1** Hughes, E. (2007) Music for Sergei Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin* and *Strike*. In Eisenstein, *Silent Classics*, Volume 1, Tartan DVD TVD3742/1 (London: Tartan, 2007). [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Eisenstein-Collection-Vol-1-Battleship-Potemkin/dp/B000NDETN8/ref=sr\\_1\\_9?ie=UTF8&qid=1384809359&sr=8-9&keywords=eisenstein+dvd](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Eisenstein-Collection-Vol-1-Battleship-Potemkin/dp/B000NDETN8/ref=sr_1_9?ie=UTF8&qid=1384809359&sr=8-9&keywords=eisenstein+dvd)
- R2** Hughes, E. (2013) Music for Yasujiro Ozu, *The Gangster Films: three silent films. The Ozu Collection*, British Film Institute, BFIVD951 (London: BFI 2013). + Hughes, Critical Commentaries on the scores: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/blu-rays-dvds/ozu-collection-gangster-films>; music for Ozu, *I Was Born, But...* with soundtrack by Ed Hughes. In *The Ozu Collection: Good Morning + I was Born But...* British Film Institute, BFIB1070 (London: BFI 2011). <http://www.bfi.org.uk/blu-rays-dvds/good-morning-i-was-born>
- R3** Hughes, E. *Light Cuts Through Dark Skies* (2001). Commissioned by Bath International Music Festival. First performance 1 June 2001. An accompaniment to *Regen*, a short film by Joris Ivens (1929). (University of York Press. ISMN M 57020 665 0).
- R4** Hughes, E. (2007) 'New technologies and old rites: dissonance between picture and music in readings of Joris Ivens's *Rain*', in *Composing for the Screen in the USSR and Germany*, Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (eds) (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press).
- R5** Hughes, E. (2007) Music for *Auditorium*. Composition for orchestra and four-channel tape to accompany a film by Sophy Rickett. Commissioned by Glyndebourne Opera and Photoworks. First live performance: 17 November 2007, Glyndebourne Opera House. Also installed as a four-channel recording with Sophy Rickett's film at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill from 29 September 2007 to 8 January 2008 (University of York Music Press. ISMN M 57020 993 4).
- R6** Hughes, E. (2010) Score for *Dark Formations*. Audiovisual project devised with David Chandler (Professor of Photography, University of Plymouth) in collaboration with the Imperial War Museum Archives. Live performance at Kings Place, London, on 27 September 2010 (University of York Press. ISMN M 57036 355 1).

Outputs can be supplied by the University on request.

**4. Details of the Impact**

Hughes' music restores the excitement and meanings of early silent films by translating experimental visual forms such as montage into the music itself, thus rendering these iconic films more immediate and accessible. His music for more recent experimental film forms also brings silent images to life. In both forms his work has impact upon two kinds of users: (1) arts professionals, including critics, broadcast programmers and arts curators; and (2) contemporary audiences for film.

### 1. Impact on Arts Professionals

The version of Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* with Hughes' music was used by documentary filmmaker Mark Cousins in 'The Story of Film: An Odyssey' (2011), a major Channel 4 documentary series on the history of film, in which Hughes' version of the famous Odessa Steps sequence was used to explain Eisenstein's principles of montage [see Section 5, C1].

The British Library's exhibition 'Breaking the Rules' (2007–08) on twentieth-century avant-garde art, presented Eisenstein's *Strike* with Hughes' music performed live as part of a series of events in the Atrium of the British Library [C2].

The scores for Ivens' film *Regen* and for Eisenstein's *Strike* have had impact upon international arts programmers: *Regen* has been presented at the 'Hanns Eisler' public symposium in Berlin, 1 November 2008, including an evening public performance attended by 250 people, and at the Institut für Neue Musik – Studios für Filmmusik, Freiburg, 9 May 2012; the score for *Strike* has been presented in Tel Aviv, Israel, 17 December 2011, conducted by Ilan Volkov [C3].

The version of *Auditorium* with recorded sound track was used to educate and inform curators on the uses of music in the display of visual materials in museums and galleries when it was shown to international gallery and museum curators at the V & A 'Displaying Music' event, 15 July 2011 [C4]. The film has also been selected for presentation by film and gallery curators more widely, including Tate Britain (08 March 2008), Brixton Ritzy (19 April 2008), Palazzo Santa Margherita, Modena (20 April 2008), and Nichido Contemporary Art, Tokyo (10 April 2009) [C5].

*Dark Formations*, which presents a video sequence of documentary photographs of World War Two bombing raids from the Imperial War Museum archive, with music by Hughes, has also impacted upon the way in which museum curators present archive images, as evidenced by Roger Tolson, Principal Curator, Imperial War Museum: 'The methodology of *Dark Formations* has been a direct stimulus to how to re-think the selection, narration and display design of disparate groups of material, and one that I believe will enrich these and future displays' [C6].

### 2. Impact on Film Audiences

Despite the importance of music for our experience of film, its effect is often subliminal and unrecognised by film audiences. Indeed, some film-makers argue that the music for a film *should* be unnoticed, making it difficult to evaluate the nature of the impact of Hughes' music on audiences directly. However, Hughes has also explained his methods extensively through engagement with film audiences and viewers – e.g. he was interviewed on BBC Radio 3's flagship contemporary music programme 'Hear and Now' on 3 May 2008 in relation to his score for *Strike*, a 12-minute section of which was then broadcast in the same programme [C7]; an extract from *Auditorium* was heard and discussed on BBC Radio 3 on 2 December 2008 in 'Performance on 3' as part of the 2008 British Composer Awards feature [C8].

Hughes' scores for the commercial Eisenstein and Ozu releases have contributed to the consolidation of a market for silent film, which has appealed especially to the UK market for DVD and Blu-ray releases in which high-quality, imaginative audio tracks are strongly appreciated. UK and international DVD sales for the Ozu releases are estimated by the BFI at around 3,000 as of 11 March 2013. The Tartan Eisenstein discs had sold 1,765 units as of 11 March 2013, although these figures do not include international and web distribution [C9]. Many of these sales are made to institutions, thus increasing their audience reach substantially.

Sam Dunn, Head of BFI Video Publishing, comments on the impact upon national and international audiences of Hughes' Ozu scores: 'Working with Ed Hughes on the BFI's on-going Ozu Collection has been a fantastic experience. His scores are of a consistently high standard, making these rarely-seen silent works accessible to modern audiences and film scholars alike. Not only that, but his compositions are meeting with the approval of the Japanese licensors, thereby transcending cultural difference and functioning on an international stage' [C10].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- C1** *The Story of Film: An Odyssey* (2011), television documentary series, written, directed and narrated by Mark Cousins, Episode 3, 1918–1932: The Great Rebel Filmmakers, More 4, 17 September 2011 at 2100 hrs, with repeats, broadcasts and screenings worldwide. Series released on DVD (2011). More 4 Weekly Reach: 12,404,000 (21.6%).  
<http://edhughes.org.uk/impact> or [http://youtu.be/vGzTyu-\\_ZDY](http://youtu.be/vGzTyu-_ZDY)
- C2** *Breaking the Rules: The Printed Face of the European Avant Garde* (2007–08), exhibition and performances series, 9 November 2007 to 30 March 2008, British Library, London, UK.  
<http://edhughes.org.uk/impact>
- C3** *Light Cuts Through Dark Skies*, screening of *Regen* (1929) with live public performance of music by Ed Hughes, by Ensemble Klangexekutive conducted by Manuel Nawri 2 November 2008; *Light Cuts Through Dark Skies*, screening of *Regen* (1929) with live performance of music by Ed Hughes, Ensemble des Instituts für Neue Musik, directed by Manuel Nawri, Institut für neue musik der Hochschule für musik Freiburg, 9 May 2012; *Strike*, screening of *Strike* (1924) with live performance of music by Ed Hughes, Israel Contemporary Players conducted by Ilan Volkov, Hateiva Concert Hall, Tel Aviv, 17 December 2011. <http://edhughes.org.uk/impact>
- C4** V & A Displaying Music Event (2011) New approaches to integrating music with visual art in gallery collections. Convened by Flora Dennis (Sussex) and Liz Miller (V&A).  
<http://edhughes.org.uk/impact>
- C5** Evidence of exhibitions of *Auditorium*: <http://edhughes.org.uk/impact>
- C6** Email from Principal Curator, Imperial War Museum, 25 October 2013. Written for purposes of impact corroboration. Original document can be made available for audit.
- C7** *Hear and Now* (2008) Episode 3 May 2008, interview between Alwynne Pritchard and Ed Hughes, including performance of *Strike* composition, BBC Radio 3, 3 May, 2230 hrs.  
<http://edhughes.org.uk/impact>
- C8** 'Performance on 3', 2 December 2008, at 19.00. Ed Hughes 'Auditorium' (extract).  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00fs4ry>
- C9** Figures for BFI and Tartan sales provided by Operations Coordinator, British Film Institute in email of 12 March 2013 (also employed by Tartan at the time of the Eisenstein release). Written for purposes of impact corroboration. Original document can be made available for audit by the University.
- C10** Email from Head of BFI Video Publishing, 7 November 2012. Written for purposes of impact corroboration. Original document can be made available for audit by the University.