

# **The Use of Choral Music in late Twentieth-Century and early Twenty-first Century Film Scores**

**by Micah Bland**

**University of Texas at San Antonio**

mdb04a@acu.edu

AMS-SW Conference, Fall 2013

Rice University, Houston

## **Poster Abstract**

This presentation will trace the use of choral music in film of the late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century to determine the reasons for its increased use and demonstrate ways in which composers incorporate choral writing as an element in their musical scoring.

The study statistically analyzed the choral sections of films by four prominent composers: Ennio Morricone, John Williams, Hans Zimmer, and Howard Shore. The findings were that Morricone acted as a pioneer, composing choral music for film starting in the 1960s. The remaining three composers demonstrated a surge in their use of choral music a decade or more after the start of their careers. The neglect of choral singing in earlier films can be associated with a lack of funds and fear of covering up dialogue. On the other hand, Howard Shore's inclusion of the choir can be traced to his love of opera.

Finally, the study analyzed the methods in which composers wrote for the choir. The results showed the greatest amount of choral writing in films during moments of conflict, ninety-one minutes total in the films analyzed. Fifty-seven minutes of choral singing accompanied scenes of travel, and the remainder of scene categories analyzed included less than thirty minutes of choral singing.