

Drama or Comedy? Music for a Disaster Artist

¿Drama o comedia? Música para *The Disaster Artist*

Lucía Pérez García

Universidad de Sevilla, España

Abstract

The music of The Room (Tommy Wiseau, 2003) and of The Disaster Artist (James Franco, 2017) is very different in structure and in meaning, but underneath there is an important connection between the two films through it. The release of The Disaster Artist has changed the meaning of The Room totally, and the music plays an important role on this change. Through the analysis of the different music elements, resources and solutions, as well as the analysis of the creative process and the critic and audience reception, I want to demonstrate the importance of the music as a key element in both films.

Keywords: Film Music, Drama, Comedy, Critic.

Introduction

Before talking about the music in *The Room* and in *The Disaster Artist* we can relate to Michel Chion. According to him, film music serves “to prolong the emotion of a phrase beyond the unavoidably brief moment in which it was pronounced, to prolong a glance beyond the fleeting moment in which it shines, to prolong a gesture that is no more than a gesture” (Chion 1997, 196) That statement, which is irrevocably true, could seem disproportionate in reference to a film that tells the story of the making-off of the worst film ever. Even more disproportionate in reference to the one which is considered “the *Citizen Kane* of bad films”. However, once you watch both films and listen to the music, you realized how true it is, how the music can dig in the deepest soul of a film that does not look like having one, how the music can extract the light from the darkness and, which is more important, enlighten the viewer.

The Room was released in 2003. Directed, written, produced and starred by the mysterious Tommy Wiseau. It is one of the most important cult movies of film history, the top of the so-called “so bad it’s good” movies. The music was written by the Bosnian composer Mladen Milcevic. He studied at the Music Academy of Sarajevo, at Wesleyan University and at University of Miami, where he concentrated in electronic music composition. He has worked in modern dance performances, video sculptures, installations and experimental animated films. But, from his beginnings, he has written music for theatre, television, documentaries and films too.¹ In 2016 he even wrote the music for *Room Full of Spoons*, a documentary directed by Rick Harper about the making-off of the movie.

The Disaster Artist, based on the book by Greg Sestero *The Disaster Artist: My Life Inside The Room* (Sestero and Bissel, 2013), is directed, produced and starred by James Franco. The film, released on December 2017 and winner of the Concha de Oro at the San Sebastian Film Festival, tells the story of *The Room* from the inside—not only the process, but the feelings put in it. The music is written by the American composer Dave Porter who studied electronic and classic music composition at Sara Lawrence College, and was an assistant at Phillip Glass’ Studio in New York. He is known by his television works like *Breaking Bad*, *Bette Call Saul* or *Preacher*, for which he obtained the ASCAP Composer’s Choice Award by his peers as Best Television Composer of 2013.

Both films have different tone. While the first pretended to be a melodrama—now becoming into a cult movie and positioning as a black comedy—the second is a film about dreams. Among the several elements that highlight the differences, the music is one of the most important. But, at the same time, it is a chain that connects them.

With this article I want to analyze the music of these two films, showing the differences and similarities, finding the changes along the time, and studying the different point of view that the released of the Franco’s film have given to *The Room*. For this purpose I divide my study in five categories: Creative process, Drama, Comedy, Songs, and Other resources.

In the first category I relate to testimonies, interviews and reviews so I can build the entire process that let me answer some questions about the technical aspects and, which is very important for the study, the intentions of both, directors and composers, as well as the participation of the audience.

For the other categories I use a specific analytic toll for the analysis of film music, whose efficacy has been proved in previous studies (Justo Estebaranz and Pérez García, 2015, 2016). The information obtained and the subsequent analysis of the dates will let me reach to a conclusion.

Creative process

The creative process is as important as the result when we talk about art—much more when the discipline we are talking about is cinema and the age is today. The social and economic context is decisive, sometimes, even more than the cultural.² In this case, the power of the media and the changeable taste of the audience make the process a long phase which never end.

As far as the music, the process starts with contracting a composer, follows with the communication between him and the other members of the crew, the

composition, recording and editing of the score and even the edition of the soundtrack, continues along the time the film is remembered and re-watched, and the music is listened within and without. So, there are three essential agents: the composer, the other members of the crew—principally the producer and the director—and the audience—formed by general viewers and critics.

The Room is probably the best example of a long creative process—in which the music plays an important role. The film was conceived as a drama, but the time, just like Greg Sestero affirms, has become it into a comedy: “Tommy Wiseau intended *The Room* to be a serious American drama, a cautionary tale about love and friendship, but it became something else entirely—a perfectly, literal comedy of errors.”³ From the first release, the film was seen as a complete failure. Professional critics saw it as a total fiasco. The *Variety* critic Scott Foundas—the only professional who went to the premier in 2003—described his feelings with adjectives like “Extreme unpleasantness” or “ludicrousness.”⁴ From then now, many critics have destroyed the film in their reviews, however, the audience disagrees. It is precisely that fiasco which makes the film attractive to them. The more user reviews you read in the specialized websites,⁵ the more you realize how all the mistakes, bad decisions, and horrible details are precisely the most celebrated things. Even, when Tommy re-defined his movie as a black comedy, people started complaint. The mistakes became intentional, and were precisely the unintentional and insane behavior of a disaster man which built the film success.

So, the author intention is an important point. This issue has been discussed many times from the perspective of the art criticism. In 1946, W. K. Wimsatt and Maurice C. Berasley conceived the term “intentional fallacy”, arguing that: “the intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work or literary art.”⁶ From this point of view, we can’t relate to Tommy’s intention. And this is true until a certain point, as we never know how Tommy is going to make with his film. The mystery that surrounds his extravagant character makes impossible to decipher his real intention. The film will be always alive at the mercy of his author. And, along with it, all the elements which compound it, like the music. But, on the other hand, it is the changeable intention which allows us to redefine the film elements again and again, and give them a new life by ourselves.

For Mladen Milicevic the intention was clear. He got involved with the film through the editor Eric Chase, who was his closest contact and who gave him the feedback. Tommy, who was—and wanted to be—in charge of everything, only gave him a first pattern: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Elia Kazan, 1951).⁷ The Tennessee Williams’ masterpiece is one of the greatest dramas of the twenty century, winning the Pulitzer in 1947. The film won four Oscars, and its music, composed by Alex North, was an inflexion point in film history as it meant the definitive introduction of jazz on film music. So, Milicevic got puzzled when Tommy told him that he was making such a film:

You can imagine my surprise comparing it to *Streetcar Named Desire*. I thought, ‘OK...this would be fun to do.’ You know? It was just so off-the-wall. So I started working on that. And I didn’t have that much interaction with Tommy whatsoever on the creative side of it. It’s was all done by communication between me and Eric Chase.⁸

As Tommy wanted to make a big drama, Milicevic wrote a first version in a dark tone, but the editor asked him for something happier.

For me, the film was kind of tragic. I wanted to make it the way I assumed Tommy wanted it to be. He wanted this to be a dark drama...if you were to see a plot of the movie: There’s a guy. His best friend cheats with his girlfriend and he commits suicide...So that was my guidance, emotionally; for it to be much darker...So apparently that’s not what Eric saw.⁹

Finally, he wrote a theme in C minor with a bouncy piano, some parts reserved to the woods, a short introduction for harp with ascending *glissandos* and different synthesizer effects. Supposedly, this theme highlighted the drama, but the audience—as an interactive part of a hilarious performance¹⁰—turned it into a comical theme. This way, the movie took a new life that the script would not have allowed by itself¹¹. Only if you watch the movie as an intentional comedy, the music becomes dramatic again, although in a mocking manner.

The last step was the edition of the soundtrack. Usually, the composer and other members of the music department choose and arrange some of the themes, so the tracks of the CD are a bit different of the real themes listened on the movie, as they have to tell the story without images. But Tommy Wiseau, making use of his personal creative process, took all the music directly from the editing system and put it on the CD—so “the loudness of every cue is actually the way it appears in the movie”¹². We will never know if Tommy’s behavior was intentional. The only thing we know is that the music, in that way, it is far from the drama again.

But the process does not end here. The release of the *The Disaster Artist* has changed the way in which audience and critic see *The Room*, and so the music. Again, if we relate to the user reviews from the premier of Franco’s movie, we can realize how people ask for re-watch the movie. And not only watch it, but to do it through different eyes. As a viewer wrote after watching *The Disaster Artist* “we won’t make laugh at you any more, Tommy. But hopefully we’ll keep laughing with you”.¹³



Figure 1: First bars of “The Room” by Mladen Milicevic, and transcribed for solo piano by K. L. Schneider. Source: Mladen Milicevic, email message to author, July 10, 2017.

With *The Disaster Artist*, indeed, we do not laugh at Tommy. Contrary to *The Room*, in this film the collaboration between composer and director was very close¹⁴. Both, James Franco and the composer Dave Porter, worked together in order to find the correct tone for the movie. And both of them talk about the time spending in getting the tone. According to Franco, they always approached the film as a movie with funny situations but with a dramatic soul and a dramatic spine, highlighting the music as one of the essential elements to reach this objective.¹⁵

They avoided the original soundtrack. “We were really trying to tell our own story...I wanted my music to be very different and also differential to the music that comes first...in some ways I tried to do very much the opposite of what the original composer did”,¹⁶ told Dave Porter. So, they wanted neither a dramatic nor a comical score.

It was tricky, because the tone of this movie it’s very tricky,” said James Franco, “It’s funny obviously, but again, as we said, from the outside we are not trying to do parody, not trying to do a spoof, not trying to do, you know, poke fun... Actually, what we tried to convey through the score in general was Tommy’s heart I think, you know, and the heart of the friendship. To play against rather than accentuate the insanity, the behavior. To sturdily convey to the audience the passion and the heart and soul that Tommy was trying to put in his movie.¹⁷

And it really gets it. By watching the film you notice from the beginning that the music is building a dream. It is driving the movie ahead. The key, contrary to the music of *The Room*, is mostly major. And the presence of the music is very specific. There are not tons of music but only short themes in those moments in which it is dramatically necessary. The themes are concise, and go straight to the point, from the inside to the outside.

In this case, the intentions are very clear. There is not a constant creative process neither, as the live of the film has just started. There is neither cult nor rituals yet. There is only the bond between the film and the audience. And this is exactly which keeps the process alive. Those who saw *The Room* and read the book before James Franco’s film will feel the music different. Much more if they have a previous knowledge of Franco’s life and work. So, while the time comes, the experience and the knowledge, as in all the films, are the key to the creative process of the music.

However, this film is part of *The Room*’s creative process. In it, we can hear some representation of Milicevic’s music. There are moments full of drama—from the movie inside the movie, from the movie itself and from the main character—like the theater scenes. And there are funny moments like the recreations of the original scenes in the final credits. In those moments of drama, the music becomes almost comedy, although we can share Tommy’s feelings. So, the drama appears again, but mixed with humor. In those of pure comedy, the music lost completely his melodramatic notion becoming into a joke.

Drama

According to Lucio León, “the musical code match with the genre...it establish the musical discourse; timbre, orchestration, rhythm, harmony are at the service of the narrative structure, in which the most decisive thing is the genre” (Blanco 2010, 57). So, as we are talking about a film that was conceived as a big drama and a film that underneath is also a drama, it is necessary to dig into this facet of their music.

The Room has 68.42% of music, a high percentage close to genres like adventure, epic and, of course, melodrama¹⁸. The over-score is one of the characteristics of this genre which, according to Susan Hayward, is inclined to excess “as an expression of what cannot be said on the level of sexuality and repressed desire” (Hayward 1996, 92). So, if we dig in Tommy’s intentions, the music of *The Room* fits perfectly. He wanted a big drama. Johnny, the main character, cannot express his real feelings until the end, when he commits suicide. Meanwhile, he is the perfect friend, the perfect boyfriend, the perfect son in law... he is or he want to be, because he is betrayed by his beloveds all the time. Furthermore, the whole movie is an expression of what Tommy is trying to say to us. And the main theme talks about all these topics. The instrumentation, for example, responds to the expression of the individual feelings, mostly repressed. The piano is used traditionally in dramas associated with the individual emotional expression (Brownrigg, 2003: 156). And the electronic part complements the instrumental by increasing the drama. The synthesizer gives a darker background, a little bit of tension and highlights specific moments with effects like feminine voices, harpsichord, harp arpeggios or woodwinds sounds.

The main theme is Johnny’s leitmotiv. He is the protagonist of the action and feelings—not only his feelings, but those of the whole cast of the characters—a circumstance that makes the score almost monothematic, although there are some details which talks about other characters, like Lisa.

The initial theme sets the action in a typical San Francisco location. All is beautiful and peaceful. It is a sunny day. The flowers are colorful. People walk and drive as every day. And Johnny, who rides on a cable car, is happy to get home with Lisa, his girlfriend. The initial theme is probably the happiest variation of Johnny’s leitmotiv. All is calm by now, but the betrayal

is waiting for Johnny, and the music knows it. We can guess through some resources that give us some clues. The first and the clearest of all is the minor key. Secondly, we notice acceleration on the piano in at bar twenty, mixing groups of sixteenth notes with silences. This part is introduced by an expressive effect and accompanied by a percussion pattern which transmits seriousness and urgency. And thirdly, the woodwinds which, as we will see later, will be connected with the lie.

This theme, despite everything, is the cheerful. We will listen to it again in those scenes in which Johnny shares his best wishes and feelings. When he gets drunk with Lisa in order to relax, when he speaks with Denny on the rooftop about how people should love each other so we can build a better world, when he tells the story of how he met Lisa, or when he runs and plays with Mark in the park. However, those scenes have a sad background, as he is being betrayed by all them, even by Denny. Milicevic describes the third scene that way:

That scene, if you look at it isolated, it's happy. Two guys running, playing ball, etc. But if you look at it contextually, here's a guy who cheats, who is fucking your fiancé, going out in the field and pretending that everything is ok. So that's the line that I was drawing. I wasn't going with what you are actually seeing. I was going with the underlying plot, which is, 'Something is wrong with this friendship'.¹⁹

But there are real drama scenes, mostly in the final part of the film. Johnny is noticing the betrayal. He becomes sadder and sadder. He does not want to blame his friends. He does not want to get angry. But the music betrays him too by report his mood to us. We know, by means of the music, that Johnny's life is not beautiful and that he can face his friends, even betray them by recording their conversations. The drama of those moments is highlighted by the synthesizer. The piano almost disappears, only emerging in specific moments, always referring to Tommy. Then, its lively sound becomes dark and the *tempo* gets slower. There are two particular moments in which the main theme gets this shadier form: after the fight with Mark in the party, and when he dies. In the first, it is the piano which speaks about the disillusion. In the second, as Tommy is dead, the piano vanishes. There is not Tommy anymore. There is not a life instrument which speaks for him. Now, his voice is over. The synthesizer takes the main theme as if it was his soul, his tortured and dead soul.

However, this very drama is precisely which makes the scenes funnier. The terrible acting and some gestures like the chicken one, get into poking fun as much as the music gets into drama. And the more we watch the movie and notice the goofs, the more the music gets into mock. That is what we see in the scenes of *The Disaster Artist* in which the original movie footage is showed.

This is a very interesting issue as it involves two times, two places and three different knowledges which are changeable as we can be two and be in two at the same time—The year of the original film and the

present time; inside the movie and outside; and Tommy, real audience into the film and present-day audience.

The first scene to consider is the premier of *The Room*. We see people laughing at the movie in the theater, but we don't laugh at all. Now, we know that Tommy was trying to make his dream come true. Instead of enjoying the moment, we feel sorry for him. The music, which the original audience who attended at the premier understood as funny because the reasons I have explained before, it is very sad for us now, and not only for us but also for Tommy. The Tommy inside Franco's film is sharing his feelings with us.²⁰ But, it could happen that people who attended the original premier be now in the theater watching *The Disaster Artist*. In that case, they can remember their reaction at *The Room* and take a chance: adjust it or keep it through their memories.

The second is not only one but all the reproductions of the original scenes which are showed at the final of the film. We see the original and the exact reproduction at the same time and notice how bad were the originals. Like the credits and post credits scenes, those are hilarious. This way, the role of the original music is to highlight the comedy in the highest way.

But Dave Porter's music for *The Disaster Artist* is totally different. From the beginning, the music is drawing a dream. The film starts with a series of shoots in which some actors talk about his amazing experience with *The Room*. The music grows progressively, enlarging an optimistic mood and encouraging not only the film itself, but the audience who is watching it. The dream is about to begin.

The whole score deal with this tone. While the music in *The Room* is related to Johnny's feelings, in *The Disaster Artist* is telling Tommy's story from the inside to the outside. One can ask if it is not the same. And yes, in many ways, Johnny's character is the alter ego of Tommy. Both feel as if the world is riding against them. But, instead of Johnny, Tommy gets over all that by changing the meaning of his work, the meaning of his life. And he does it with his friend Greg. He is not he. He is they²¹. This is what the music tries to convey: the strings, always growing; the synthesizer, as an energetic device; and the guitar, an instrument closer to the earth which means relationship and friendship. When Gregg saws Tommy for the first time, the theme starts to work. We can't hear the guitar at this very moment. They do not know each other so there is no friendship yet. There is only something that Gregg can feel—and special energy, motivation, fearless, life. The guitar sounds for the first time in the scene in which they promise each other to make their dreams come true. The friendship is there, from them to forever. There is a dream too. That is why the guitar will appear in those moments in which they talk about the film—their film. This instrument will only disappear when the two friends argue, to return when Tommy comes back eight months later to watch Gregg's play at the theater. Then, the guitar shows us the reconciliation. So, there is not sad on the score. Through it, we can feel the same energy that Tommy is giving to Gregg all the time. Only when they move away—so the guitar—the

music gets down, with the strings playing the main role, principally the melancholic cellos.

Comedy

The Room can be a comedy by itself, but his music is not at all. The composer conceived it as dramatic music, and that it is. However, as I have said before, it is our concept of the movie which makes the music so laughable. There is only one moment in which the music becomes a bit comical, that is the scene with Michelle and Steven eating chocolates on the sofa. The flute *arpeggios*, along with Steven's face and lines ("Chocolate is the symbol of love"), make the scene funny—maybe, the only one which is funny by concept and music²².

The Disaster Artist is different. Franco describes his movie not as a comedy but as a film with funny situations. The score confirms this. It is essentially dramatic, but it has some comical moments that are emphasizing by Porter's music. First, there are the scenes associated with Tommy's way of life and his disorganized house full of freaky things: weird self-portraits, awful masks, a bright kitsch unicorn, a bird print—like Norman Bates—, a plastic goat, some rests of fast food, etc. Gregg's reaction before such a peculiar place is describing by the music with a synthesizer *ostinato* that sounds almost like circus or fair music. Is Tommy a clown? No. The notes of the motivation theme tell us the contrary.

The other moments are those related to the shooting of the most famous and hilarious scenes of *The Room*: the suicide one, those in which Johnny "recites" his most legendary lines ("I did not hit her...", "Oh! What a story Mark!"), or the breast cancer one. Those moments are accompanied by percussion themes. That way, the surrealistic situations are presented like wild jungle, a mess in which people get crazy about Tommy's incompetence and weirdness. At the same time, the *ostinato* increases the tedium of the crew, becoming it into a never ending comedic tedium.

Songs

Both films have songs, but the meaning and the quantity of them are completely different. About the 17% of the music in *The Room* is dedicated to the songs, all of them non-diegetic. The process was supervised by Tommy personally—much more than the score development. He works together with the two unknown performers Kitra Williams and Clint Jun Gamboa.²³ He gave them instructions about.²⁴ So he really got involved on it. However, this is one of the most criticized elements of *The Room*.²⁵

There are four songs in *The Room*: "You're My Rose," "Baby You and Me," "Crazy," and "I Will." All of them were created specifically for the sex scenes. However, the length of the scenes—exactly the length of the songs—suggests the opposite. Regarding the style, Tommy talked about *Guns N' Roses* and Country music,²⁶ but finally the songs were written and sung in R&B style. This makes the scenes even more

uncomfortable because the images are so repulsive that the slow rhythm produces a disgusting effect on us. The songs do not work at all. We want to stop them, but the music takes its time. However, today those scenes and their songs are one of the points included in the viewer's guide of *The Room*.²⁷ This circumstance talks again about the changeable meaning of the music—a music which was conceived as dramatic and romantic has become into a mock.

James Franco has another concept of the songs. He uses a great deal of source songs (38.82%), choosing them from the perspective of his experience,²⁸ and always paying attention to the main subject of the movie—the dreams. There are thirteen songs in the film. Contrary to *The Room*, mostly are used diegetically and symbolically.

Some of the songs relate to Los Angeles and the dreams that are intrinsically associated with it. Those are Marky Mark's "Good Vibrations," or Rob Base's "Its Takes Two." From the background, both describe the glamour of the city of stars: fashion actresses, limousines, high rises, castings, premiers. The two friends have "good vibrations" about their dreams. It is only the beginning band they are completely motivated. They feel like the "number one." Neither of them fit with the period, but the meaning is clear.

On the other hand, there are the songs related with the friendship—maybe the more important ones. The first is Rick Ashley's "Never Gonna Give You Up," a song that links perfectly with Tommy's feelings about Gregg. It settles the friendship. Just moments before—with the motivation-friendship theme on the background—the two friends made a promise: "Always believe in each other and we'll never forget dream." Later on the car they sing along with the radio: "Never gonna give you up / Never gonna let you down." On the other hand there is the Mexican song "Cielito." Gregg is going to leave Tommy's house and invites him to a Mexican restaurant. He wants to live with his girlfriend, and Tommy feels bad. He feels betrayed. The song is about how to get over sad. So Tommy, "canta y no llores." It is a very conventional resource, but it works, much more because the Mexican air becomes the situation comical.

Finally, the central one: "Rhythm of the Night." It is the song of the movie. It sounds diegetically inside it and non-diegetically in the final credits, but its meaning is a bit intricate. The scene in which the theme sounds is both funny and sad. Tommy and Gregg are celebrating. Gregg has an agent. Tommy loves the song and dance bizarrely. The dream is about to come true. But it is, at the same time, the breakpoint of the friendship. Gregg meets a girl and Tommy is very jealous. The rhythm of the night is finished for him. As far as the end credits, the songs expands the final mood of the film—the joy and the success. There is no jealousy any more. The friendship is forever. The dreams keep going.

Along with this, there is the original score of *The Room* that sounds in the theatre and in the credits scenes. It presence was necessary but, as I have said before, it meaning is changeable according to the situation and with our movie.

	<i>The Room</i>	<i>The Disaster Artist</i>
Total:	5.950	6.202
Silence:	31.58%	48.76%
Music	68.42%	51.24%
Diegetic music:	5.50%	17.09%
Source music:	-	38.82%
Non-diegetic music:	94.50%	82.91%

Figure 2: Percentages of music elements in *The Room* and in *The Disaster Artist*. Source: own elaboration.

Other resources: oneiric music and metadiegetic music

There are some resources in *The Room* that fall into the changeable meaning of the music I have been talking about. The most interesting is what Vlada Petric calls oneiric cinema. That is when we accept as reality events on the screen which are perceived as absurd or impossible in a rational level (Milicevic 2013, 3216). This is handling by the composer with meta-diegetic music, defined by Claudia Gorbman as the music that works as the subjective expression of the characters (Wierzbicki 2012, 183). And this is what Milicevic does in the suicide scene.

The various flashbacks about Lisa's betrayal along with Johnny's ridiculous behavior and acting make the scene a little irrational for us. As the flashbacks are almost in a subconscious world and the climax is in slow motion, the music comes from Johnny's darkest emotions. It is like a shady nightmare—unbearable for our cinematic taste, so comical, and dramatic for Johnny—remarks by the music. The volume rises as the fury increases, the disturbing sound of the theremin links with the blur sound of the flashbacks, and Johnny's leitmotiv finally close the circle by finding its real meaning while Johnny is committing suicide in slow motion.

In *The Disaster Artist* there is no meta-diegetic music, but his own score makes us understand the suicide scene of *The Room* and its music. Tommy wanted the scene extremely dramatic. He was making "real acting". He put all his effort on it. So, if we notice such an effort we feel the music less ridiculous. However, it never works very well—the drama over the drama like several layers of misery it is not a good solution.

Conclusions

The Room and *The Disaster Artist* are inseparable films. Not only from the point of view of the argument, the critic reception and the distribution but from the perspective of the music and its meaning. The music resources and solutions are very different, but the creative process includes the two films, making the second a turning point in the life of the first. The music of

The Room, which has been conceived as comical and ridiculous during years, it has changed because of the release of *The Disaster Artist*. The music of Franco's film makes us understand Tommy's motivations, and appreciated his work as the work of a man who follows his dreams. His endless friendship with Gregg and his eternal fight touches our hearts so much that we never perceived *The Room* as a failure anymore but as a dream that we all would want come true for us. Now, we do not laugh at the music of *The Room*, instead, we laugh with it and understand its purpose. We laugh with some of the themes of *The Disaster Artist*, but in general, we can even cry of emotion. We can be touch by Milicevic's music when James Franco as Tommy leaves the screening in tears. Such is the power of film music. Now, much more than ever, the words of Gregg Sestero have found its real pace: "*The Room*, I already knew, was a lot of things. A bad film, a funny film, a bizarre film, a glorious film, a vain film, an absurd film, an incompetent film, a powerful film, a fascinating film, a disastrous film, an independent film, an inexplicable film, and finally, a brave film" (Sestero and Bissel 2013, 258).

Final Notes

¹ Loyola Marymount University. <https://expertfile.com/experts/mladen.milicevic>

² According to William Kinderman: "Cultural products inevitably arise from a context, a submerged landscape that is often not easily accessible." Refer to Kinderman, 2012: 1.

³ Sestero/Bissel, 2013: *The Disaster Artist*. XIII.

⁴ Foundas, Scot (2003): "The Room". En: <http://variety.com/2003/film/reviews/the-room-1117921325/> [29 abril 2021]

⁵ For this research I have consulted specifically: *IMDb*, *RottenTomatoes*, *Metacritic* and *FilmAffinity*.

⁶ Wimsatt/ Bearsley, 1999: 344.

⁷ Litowitz, Drew (2013): "Meet Mladen Milicevic, the College Professor Who Composed the Music for 'The Room'". En: <https://noisy.vice.com/en_uk/article/rb5a56/mladen-milicevic-the-room-soundtrack-interview> [April 6 2021]

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ The audience sings dances, claps and shouts. In the viewer guide distributed in the first Spanish public release of *The Room*, in the 2011 edition of the *Festival de CineCutre*, one of the rules was sing the theme of the TV series *Full House* (1987) every time that San Francisco is showed. Viruete, José, (2011): "The Room, la nueva peor película de la historia". En: <http://cinemania.elmundo.es/blog/the-room-la-nueva-peor-pelicula-de-la-historia/> [4/6/2021].

Mladen Milicevic tells about people dancing. Refer to Milicevic, interview.

Other guides to audience participation call for singing "Mission Impossible Theme" while Johnny connect Lisa's tape recorder. Refer to Christopher Ratcliff, "The Room: the ultimate audience participation guide for beginners," *Methods Unsound*, February 16, 2016, <http://www.methodsunsound.com/the-room-newbies-guide-to-audience-participation/>

¹¹ Foy, Matt, 2012: 4.

¹² Milicevic, interview.

¹³ Charles (2017), *Planeta Wiseau* [FilmAffinity] October 1. En: <https://www.filmaffinity.com/es/user/rating/215873/669752.html> [consulta: 4 julio 2021].

¹⁴ Dave Porter said: "I loved working with him, obviously terrific, terrific mind and such a talent". En: <https://youtu.be/TdQILCR6wi8> [consulta: 27 junio 2021].

James Franco has worked close with other musicians in some projects. Maybe, the better example is the composer Tim O'Keefe, who wrote the music for Franco's *The Sound and the Fury* (2010) and *As I Lie Dying* (2013), and released the album *Let Me Get What I Want* (2016)—based in Franco's poems inspired by The Smiths' music—along with a short film and a series of exhibitions. James Franco talked about his involvement with the music in this project. His testimony serves to understand his interest and knowledge, and his relationship with music: "Well, I do it a lot. (Laughs.) When it comes to Daddy, I didn't train as a musician or make songs my entire life like Tim. I've been a big music fan, but I just haven't been doing that. So when I approach something like this I want to give it the respect that it deserves. I want to be sure I work with great people who know what they're doing like Tim or Andy... I am a sort of earnest amateur. I'm not coming to this trying to take over the music biz... I'm going to enter it at a certain level and to me that's okay". LeDonne, Rob 2016.

¹⁵ San Sebastian Festival. 2017. Press Conference Winners – 2017

¹⁶ "Composer Dave Porter Interview Midnight Madness #TIFF17."

¹⁷ "San Sebastian Festival (2017) Press conference 'The Disaster Artist'."

¹⁸ The reference percentages for this affirmation have been taken of my PhD and some of my papers, for which I have analyzed a sample of 72 films. Refer to Justo Estebanz and Pérez García. 2015, 2016, 2017.

¹⁹ Milicevic, interview.

²⁰ In his book, Greg Sestero described his feelings at that very moment as the music makes us feel in *The Disaster Artist*: "He'd inflict his vision on the world whether the world saw it or not. He was a movie star whether the world saw it or not. In getting here, Tommy had sometimes been destructive and sometimes cruel. But how could I—how could anyone—not be moved by Tommy, who'd fought so hard against the unforgiving confines of his star-crossed life?" Refer to Sestero and Bissell 2011, 258.

²¹ Tommy repeats the same words many times along the movie: "our film", "our dreams"...

²² Milicevic points out this scene as one of the funniest of the film: "There are very funny moments in this movie. Happy moments in the movie are when they are wearing tuxedos and throwing a ball outside. Or when Michelle and her boyfriend are making cut in the room eating chocolate. Everything else is dark." Milicevic, interview.

²³ They met Tommy through Kitra's girlfriend's husband. Clint was just a very good friend of Kitra. Lyndsey Parker, "What a story! 'The Room' soundtrack writers talk working with Tommy Wiseau". Yahoo! Entertainment, January 11, 2018. <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/story-mark-room-soundtrack-writers-talk-working-tommy-wiseau-210728922.html>

²⁴ Kitra Williams affirms that: "He gave us like an outline of what was going to be going on in each particular scene, and what he wanted." Refer to Lyndsey Parker, interview.

²⁵ Among the user reviews, it is one of the various topics. On the other hand, the professional critic Scott Foundas talked about those scenes in his review for the premier: "extreme unpleasantness of watching Wiseau (as banker Johnny) and actress Juliette Danielle (as his fiancée) engage in a series of soft-core sex scenes." Refer to Scott Foundas, "The Room"

²⁶ Lyndsey Parker, interview

²⁷ "Singing along to "You Are My Rose" and lifting one's phone/lighter. Let's not forget that we are all part of the same wave of undeniable good." Refer to House of Quesy, "A Viewer's Guide To *The Room*," AV Club, March 11, 2009, <https://www.avclub.com/a-viewers-guide-to-the-room-1798215944>

²⁸ "Press conference 'The Disaster Artist'"

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