

All Ears

Music and Sound in and Beyond Disney Theme Parks



June 20–21, 2024

University of Central Florida

Rosen College of Hospitality Management

9907 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819

themeparkmusicandsound.org

Music, Sound, and the Moving Image

The first international scholarly journal devoted to the study of the interaction between music and sound in moving image media, including film, television, music video, advertising, computer games, mixed-media installation, digital art, and live cinema.

The editors welcome contributions seeking to build upon the existing scholarship on film music and film sound, but also to challenge its theoretical assumptions, and to extend its boundaries to include the full variety of moving image media and traditions.



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Conference Schedule at a Glance

Asynchronous Online Papers

Kate A. Galloway	Whistling Birds, Banjo Bears, and Grunting Reindeer: Sonic and Musical Animal Encounters in Disney Theme Park Attractions
Elizabeth Hunt	Grim Grinning Adaptations: An Analysis of Musical Continuity in Film Representations of 'Haunted Mansion'
James Ellis	Riverboat Resonance Remapped: Exploring 'Jungle Cruise' through Intertextual Storytelling Media

Thursday 20th June

8:30	Registration and Welcome "To all that come to this happy place, welcome..."
9:00	Panel 1: "All Aboard the PeopleMover" Music, Sound and Immersion
Matt Lawson	The Magic Stops with the Music: The Impact of Music and Silence on Guest Immersion at Disneyland Paris
Anna Marinela Lopez	Dream a Fantasmic Dream: Immersion, World Building, and Nostalgia in Disneyland's Fantasmic!
Kincaid Rabb	Where Did That Sound Come From?: Diegesis and the Themed Experience
10:30	Break
10:45	Panel 2: "Wondrous Journeys" Staging Music and Sound
Clair Nguyen	Respelling Magic: Interactive Wands and Parkgoer-driven Soundscapes at the Wizarding World of Harry Potter
Alex Bádue	Ecosystem Marketing and Stage Musicals at Walt Disney World
Len Testa	Buddy Baker Archives
12:15	Lunch
14:00	Panel 3: "Listen to the Land" Spaces and Landscapes
Carissa Baker	Defining Paradigms in the Evolving Musical Landscape of Theme Parks
Olivia Zorab	The Lost Kingdom – From Maps & Muddy Puddles to Mega-Music Scores
Scott A. Lukas	Sonic Landscapes: Navigating Theme Park Soundscapes through Eurorack Performance and Sonic Discourse
15:30	Break
15:45	Keynote address: Ron Fish Sponsored by the Royal Music Association and the UCF Themed Experience Program.
17:15	Announcements
17:30–19:00	Dinner

Friday 21st June

9:00	Panel 4: “Uncovering the PhilharMagic” Analytical Approaches
James Bohn	Theme and Variations as Figurative and Literal Travel: Music in “it’s a small world”
Amy Hatch	Death, Purgatory, and Warnings: The Use of ♭2 in Disney’s Haunted Mansion, The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, and Splash Mountain
Gregory Camp	Inside the Scores: Towards a Poetics of Theme Park Music
10:30	Break
10:45	Panel 5: “America on Parade” Staging History
Reba A. Wissner	Hearing History: Music in the Freedomland Amusement Park, 1960–1964
Andrew Moenning	Constructing the “Golden Dream”: Music and American History at Walt Disney World
Andy Fry	Dixieland at Disneyland: Performing “New Orleans Jazz”
12:15	Lunch
14:00	Panel 6: “It’s a Small World” Transnational Perspectives
Thomas B. Yee	“Minnie, We Love You!”: the Rehabilitation of Cultural Aroma in the Stage Shows of Tōkyō Disneyland and DisneySea
Thomas L. Wilson	Another Arabian Night: Alan Menken’s Sindbad at Tokyo DisneySea
Maria Schreurs	‘It’s a Small World After All’: Mapping the Similarities and Differences Between Music in De Efteling and the Disney-Parks
15:30	Break
15:45	Panel 7: “The Great Movie Ride” Between Screen and Space
Dan White	Wizarding World Music: Sounds, Scores and Serenades
Jessica Getman	Sounds of Sith: Sonic Signifiers of Danger in Disneyland’s Galaxy’s Edge
Lauren Crosby	Cantina Band Covers: Genre Evolution in Adaptations of “Mad About Me”
17:15–17:30	“There’s a Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow”: Concluding Discussion and Next Steps

All listed times are given in EDT.

All presentations will take place in Room 111 at Rosen College.

The dinner banquet will be held in the Disney Dining Room at Rosen College.

About the Conference

This two-day conference offers research talks and demonstrations on music and sound in and beyond Disney theme parks from academic researchers, industry professionals, or anyone with experience, knowledge and insight to share. We think this might be the first conference dedicated to this topic!

About the Keynote Speaker

Sponsored by the Royal Music Association and the UCF Themed Experience Program.

Ron Fish is a composer and sound designer, who has worked across games and theme parks, including an extended period of work for Disney Imagineering. Ron is an award winning composer and sound designer for film, video games and theme park entertainment. He has been recognized by BAFTA, Interactive Arts and Sciences, MPSE, Promax, G.A.N.G., Navgtr, and the Thea Awards. Ron was with Walt Disney Imagineering for eight years. He was responsible for composing music and designing sound for many of the featured rides throughout their theme parks worldwide. As the head of audio for Disney's Playmation, he worked in the Research and Development Department at Disney on the application of audio in VR and AR, as it applied to the Star Wars Challenge project. Ron has scored some of the most successful video game franchises, including titles such as Batman Arkham Asylum, Batman Arkham City, and God of War 1, 2, 3.

Organizers

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Conference Program

Asynchronous Online Papers

Whistling Birds, Banjo Bears, and Grunting Reindeer: Sonic and Musical Animal Encounters in Disney Theme Park Attractions

Kate A. Galloway

Disney brands themselves as a socially responsible company actively engaged in environmentally sustainable practices presenting a positive environmental legacy for young people and future generations. This environmental action and the aesthetics of sustainability are audibly present in the music and sound design of their animated features. For instance, Marion Darlington, a female whistlers trained at professional whistler Agnes Woodward's The California Institute for Artistic Whistling, provided bird sounds for many of Disney's early animated features, including *Cinderella*, *Bambi*, and *Snow White*, but went uncredited for her nonhuman animal musical performances (Eley 2014). These sound design and musical choices notably carry over into Disney's audio animatronic theme park film adaptation attractions and Animal Kingdom's wildlife exhibits that present the actual world equivalent of their animated animals. While some nonhuman animals receive musical treatment, singing, dancing, speaking, and performed by human voice actors (e.g., the audio-animatronic bears who sing and perform as a part of the *Country Bear Jamboree*) while others only communicate in species-specific forms of acoustic communication (e.g., Kristoff's reindeer companion Sven in *Frozen* as featured in Epcot's *Frozen Ever After* attraction). In this presentation, I examine a range of instances where human performers participate in the sonic representation of anthropomorphized and non-anthropomorphized nonhuman characters to illustrate how music and sonic design choices in Disney theme park attractions highlight the importance of media narratives in shaping environmental attitudes and how environmental issues are represented, including the sensory and sonic environments of actual animals experienced in Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park.

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Grim Grinning Adaptations: An Analysis of Musical Continuity in Film Representations of ‘Haunted Mansion’

Elizabeth Hunt

This paper discusses the adaptation of ‘Haunted Mansion’, one of the most popular and beloved Disney theme park rides, to the world beyond Disney’s theme park in the form of movies. In this paper, I present a case study of three film adaptations of the ‘Haunted Mansion’:

- *The Haunted Mansion* (2003)
- *Muppets Haunted Mansion* (2021)
- *Haunted Mansion* (2023)

I will discuss the differences and similarities in these adaptations with a focus on musical branding and analysis of the song ‘Grim Grinning Ghosts’. With music by Buddy Baker and lyrics by Xavier ‘X’ Atencio, ‘Grim Grinning Ghosts’ appears throughout the ‘Haunted Mansion’ as continuous underscore. By first presenting an introductory analysis of the use of music within the ride itself, I will contextualise ‘Grim Grinning Ghosts’ to demonstrate how the music aids the dark ride format in cohesively moving between scenes and set pieces, conveying narrative, and creating atmosphere. I will then demonstrate that, due to the prominence and importance music in the ‘Haunted Mansion’ ride, ‘Grim Grinning Ghosts’ has continued to be an important tool of sonic branding for the film adaptations of ‘Haunted Mansion’. This will be demonstrated through close textual analysis of specific moments of the three films, as I will discuss harmony, melody, leitmotif, and lyrical quotation alongside theme park iconography. This paper closes with brief reference to music in *The Haunted Mansion* (2003) videogame to demonstrate ‘Haunted Mansion’ as a multimedia franchise.

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Riverboat Resonance Remapped: Exploring ‘Jungle Cruise’ through Intertextual Storytelling Media

James Ellis

The multi-sensory nature of theme park rides involves participants in the adventures they conjure. Putting transmedial adaptations which have used a theme park ride as their template in dialogue, this paper will outline how music enhances this involvement, revealing how multimedia examples both embellish the original ride experience through new musical stimuli whilst reshaping the initial audiovisual framework. The riverboat ride *Jungle Cruise* featured in Disneyland’s grand opening in 1955. It has since spawned further installations whilst inspiring two intertextual, audiovisual media examples: the videogame *Disneyland Adventures* (2011) and the film *Jungle Cruise* (2021). Both latter examples feature heightened, and often swashbuckling, charged musical features in comparison to primarily relaxed soundscape environments heard on the ride attraction. By drawing on theme park music analysis (Carson, 2004; DeAngelis 1997), film studies (Donnelly, 2001), park experience scholarship (Mauch, 2024) and ludomusicology (Moseley, 2016; Isbister, 2017), this paper seeks to illuminate the juxtapositional musical soundtracks and soundscapes utilised by *Jungle Cruise* ride and media examples, leading to potentially contradicting emotional outcomes for participants, players and viewers respectively. It will be revealed that the gamified musical soundtracks of the audiovisual examples seek to imbue *Jungle Cruise*’s original ride attraction concept with a sense of peril and thrill, emotions seldom present when aboard the riverboat ride experience. The result is a semiotic remapping of the musical text of the theme park ride, creating intriguing intertextual examples, both engaging their audience but potentially creating a schism between the original text and their audiovisual media counterpart.

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Thursday 20th June

Panel 1: “All Aboard the PeopleMover” Music, Sound and Immersion The Magic Stops with the Music: The Impact of Music and Silence on Guest Immersion at Disneyland Paris

Matt Lawson

A tired family of four disembark a Eurostar train at Marne-la-Vallée–Chessy, Disneyland Paris. Five minutes later, they are dancing down Main Street USA to the sounds of ragtime piano music; the careworn faces now etched with genuine untroubled smiles. The sounds of a streetcar rumbling past briefly adds to the soundscape, but it soon disappears into the distance. Two minutes later, the family find themselves in the Wild West, with Elmer Bernstein’s title theme to *The Magnificent Seven* adding a spring to the step of our intrepid travellers. This pattern of musical saturation continued through Adventureland, Discoveryland, Fantasyland, the restaurants, the restrooms, the park courtyard, Disney Village, and the hotel lobbies. It later occurred to the father of the group (me) that the family had been subject to musical accompaniment for 8 straight hours.

This two-part paper takes a multidisciplinary critical and anecdotal view of the music in Disneyland Paris and its environs. Theme Park music will be analysed using theoretical frameworks established by film and video game music scholars to formulate a methodological Venn diagram of film, video game, and theme park music theory. Walking through a theme park has been likened to being *in* a film or video game, and the diegetic musical immersion is a key factor in prompting this response. The first half of this paper will work towards a theory of musical theme park guest immersion. Secondly, this paper will examine what happens when a lack or ceasing of sonic accompaniment contributes to a jarring removal from immersion, with particular emphasis on PA announcements and responses to emergency situations or ride breakdowns, as well as impromptu guest access to backstage areas. As with film, one only notices the importance of music when it isn’t there, and this notion will be applied to real-world theme park scenarios.

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Dream a Fantasmic Dream: Immersion, World Building, and Nostalgia in Disneyland's Fantasmic!

Anna Marinela Lopez

"Welcome to *Fantasmic*," is met with resounding cheers as the lights around the Rivers of America dim. An electronic hum begins to echo while Pirate's Lair begins to darken and is lit by glimmering lights beginning one of several of Disneyland's nighttime spectacles. The show premiered in 1992 and has continued to enchant audiences since. *Fantasmic!* details the power of dreams and the imagination through the eyes of the illustrious Mickey Mouse journeying through different settings of various Disney movies. What is it about *Fantasmic!* that not only draws enormous crowds to it every night but allows it to tell a compelling narrative through a kaleidoscope of various Disney intellectual properties?

Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of immersive theater (Kokai and Robson 2019; Machon 2013), double-diegesis (Camp 2017), musical topophilia (Bolderman 2020), and place theory (Tuan 1975), I argue that Disneyland's *Fantasmic* is a form of immersive musical tourism that transforms theme park spaces into experienced places that have meaning to individuals, and as a result, Disney fans. I analyze *Fantasmic!* through a lens of musical worldbuilding by examining how the show utilizes Disney intellectual properties through projections, fireworks, live actors, and most importantly, the music to create a meaningful immersive and nostalgic experience.

By viewing *Fantasmic!* through these various lenses, I demonstrate the vast significance that Disney theme park shows have on the Disney experience and consequently contemporary U.S. culture.

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Where Did That Sound Come From?: Diegesis and the Themed Experience

Kincaid Rabb

Where Did That Sound Come From?: Diegesis and the Themed Experience is a presentation on the theory that I have developed on adaptation of the concept of diegesis within the theme park story attraction. This presentation centers the adaptation of filmic diegesis to the theme park medium, extrapolating on how terminology must be adapted to work in experience design space. Using the writings of past scholars to demonstrate an evolution of the concept of diegesis (Plato, Nietzsche, Gorbman, Stilwell) and synthesizing those writings with the works of scholars on spectatorship and apparatus theory (Carroll, Châteauvert/Gaudreault, Gunning, Rabinovitz), this presentation will provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the roles and responsibilities of curated sound in themed story attraction environments. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of the Disneyland/Walt Disney World attraction *Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run* as a case study on distinctions between identifying diegetic sound, extradiegetic sound, and non-diegetic sound, through which I will demonstrate the direct application of this unifying sound theory. As a reintroduction on the terminology of diegesis as it can be applied to the attractions of theme parks and other immersive experiences, *Where Did That Sound Come From?: Diegesis and the Themed Experience* will create clarity of definition for story-based attractions, expand the field of scholarship, and build a better onramp for understanding theme park sound at large.

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Panel 2: “Wondrous Journeys” Staging Music and Sound
Respelling Magic: Interactive Wands and Parkgoer-driven Soundscapes at the
Wizarding World of Harry Potter
Clair Nguyen

Universal Orlando’s Wizarding World of Harry Potter immerses parkgoers in a soundscape enriched by music and sound effects. At the park, Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley serve as recreations of fictional urban soundscapes (Eisenberg 2023) supplemented by “scripted spaces” (Waysdorf and Reijnders 2018) and BGM loops that evoke filmic memory (White 2021). This presentation focuses on the interactive “magic” wand as filmic recreation and paid access to a subset of sounds within the park’s dense soundscape. I propose an analytical framework that blends music theories on phrase structures (Rothstein 1989; Caplin 2013), ludomusicology on player-drivenness (Collins 2013; Kellman 2020), and transmedia concepts (Jenkins 2006; Ryan 2016) to categorize over thirty parkwide wand interactions, or “spells,” by their sonic markedness, actions, and functions.

My case studies classify spells as scripted, spontaneous, or synchronous to determine three levels of individualized interactivity between a parkgoer and magical sounds. Once activated, scripted spells like the troll ballet play autonomously from start to end. Spontaneous spells like Dervish and Banges’ music box offer moderate interaction where parkgoers can spontaneously start and stop a song in manners that may or may not complete a melodic phrase structure. The moving skeleton is a synchronous spell that mirrors parkgoers’ wand movements and dances at the wand’s command. Rigorous categorization of spell types provides data on how the wand prompts physical action and funnels attention to specific sonic events inside a soundscape. This user-centered interactivity is key to how parkgoers suspend disbelief and immerse themselves in the wizarding experience. Always.

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Ecosystem Marketing and Stage Musicals at Walt Disney World

Alex Bádue

The franchise of a Disney title comprises film, toys, accessories, as well as presence in theme parks, on Broadway, Disney on Ice, Disney channel, Disney+, and Disney Cruise. Performances of songs from animated films activate a franchise and establish innovative and engaging touchpoints with audiences by connecting with them both emotionally and nostalgically. This paper demonstrates that three stage versions of animated musical films at Walt Disney World, *Voyage of the Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast Live on Stage*, and *Festival of the Lion King*, have reimaged and reinvented these titles' franchises, ensuring that customers experience something "new" through music and live performance.

I use Philip Kotler and Christian Sarkar's concept of ecosystem marketing, which consists of positioning a product across platforms and media to gain and engage customers. These attractions amplify the Broadway aesthetic that inspired their original animated film counterparts without expanding them to a full-blown piece of musical theater, and they coexist with parades and other musico-theatrical attractions (like *Fanstamic!*) in the park itself, thus providing a comparative approach to study how the musicals in the park operate within the ecosystems of these titles. The songs are the main conduit of the attractions since these are abridged versions of the animated films that presuppose audiences' familiarity with plots and characters. I consider the order of songs in each attraction (which differs from that in the films), form of presentation (linear narrative, revue of songs), reliance (or not) on orchestration and vocal techniques from the films, and employment of visual effects (puppetry, acrobatics). I conclude that through music these attractions promote absorption of and immersion into the titles' ecosystems through both active and passive participation.

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Len Testa

- Three from Marc Davis' late 1970's proposal for an Enchanted Snow Palace attraction, one of Disney's first attempts at the story that would become Frozen
- Three from EPCOT's unbuilt Africa World Showcase pavilion
- Two that appear to be from EPCOT's early ideas for The Universe of Energy
- The earliest known version of the song This is America, from Marc Davis' first treatment for EPCOT's American Adventure

The talk includes overviews of each attraction using concept art to describe its setting and tone, giving the audience context as to how the music was to be used.

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Panel 3: “Listen to the Land” Spaces and Landscapes
Defining Paradigms in the Evolving Musical Landscape of Theme Parks
Carissa Baker

As the theme park industry has matured and become truly global, the musical landscape has also transformed. Now, it is more common in smaller theme parks or in amusement parks to create original music or utilize the services of a soundtrack production company. This shift aligns with the continued growth of thematic content, narrative aspects, and immersive design within these spaces. Theme parks are rife with musical layers, from background music loops and attraction soundtracks to recorded or live music found in entertainment offerings. This presentation examines theme parks in the top three world regions (North America, Asia, and Europe) and proposes several categories of musical orientation. Factors considered include whether there is a corporate sound or not, application of intellectual properties or original music, and the presence of diegetic or non-diegetic features. Sites may utilize only a single type, for example a park with an in-house composer that establishes a unique sound or a location that relies on curated non-original music. Other parks present a complex landscape of sound, from original compositions and thematic but non-original music to intellectual properties belonging to a park’s corporate owner. After considering the patterns of musical categories within global theme parks, the presentation suggests an evolution of paradigms. Some theme parks have adhered to a dominant paradigm while others have been more, or significantly less, experimental. To conclude, the presentation will speculate on what this evolving landscape of theme park music might mean for the future of the industry and its fans.

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The Lost Kingdom – From Maps & Muddy Puddles to Mega-Music Scores

Olivia Zorab

I’m Olivia Zorab, a professional, female Theme Park composer with an MA in Music for Film & TV from The University of Bristol. Since 2013, I’ve created original thematic music for many areas of Paultons Theme Park – the UK’s No.1 family theme park with 1m+ annual visitors. This case study will examine how I created 160 minutes of original music for Paultons new, multi million-pound dinosaur themed area featuring 8 interwoven rides over four acres and overcame unique compositional challenges.

This talk will cover:

- Creative concepting, theming and musical identity – style and length of track based on guests ages and estimated time in the area; seasonal adaptations; how to not irritate the staff (!); guiding clients from maps & muddy site visits to a score they love; and applying lessons from scores for previous smaller attractions.
- Orchestration – creating concepts that complement vs compete. How I gave all 8 rides a unique identity whilst avoiding musical cross-pollination of tracks – a real challenge in a compact Park that has 70 attractions over 140 acres.
- Broadening the score – taking the score ‘beyond the Park’ into cinema advertising and promotional music assets used from launch to this day.

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Scott A. Lukas

The Eurorack performance will serve as a dynamic sonic illustration, showcasing a sonic explanation of key points in the talk. Concurrently, the talk will delve into the theoretical underpinnings drawing from Michel Chion's acoulogical treatise, John Cage's work specific to understanding dynamics of intended versus unintended sound in theme park design spaces, and other works that focus on sound and culture, with specific attention to anthropological and ontological issues.

[illegible]

Friday 21st June

Panel 4: “Uncovering the PhilharMagic” Analytical Approaches

Theme and Variations as Figurative and Literal Travel: Music in “it’s a small world”

James Bohn

There is arguably no greater period of growth of Disney attractions than the period leading up to the 1964 World’s Fair. In terms of music, the most important development was the theme and variations attraction. At the Fair, this approach was used in both “it’s a small world” and the Carousel of Progress.

The concept involves dubbing synchronized musical variations on multichannel tape in the same tempo and the same key. In practice, each variation can be sent to a different set of speakers, each of which is associated with an individual scene or area of an attraction. Ultimately, guests experience these variations by travelling through space, rather than having the variations presented in linear time. This use of spatial theme and variations was so successful, it became one of the most common musical approaches in Disney Imagineered dark rides for decades, being used in: The Haunted Mansion, If You Had Wings, “it’s a small world,” Journey into Imagination, Pirates of the Caribbean, El Rio del Tiempo, Walt Disney’s Carousel of Progress, and The World of Motion.

Investigating the thirty arrangements of the song for the original version of the attraction lends an opportunity to appreciate Bobby Hammack’s orchestrations. Through this we can hear how a simple 32 measure theme can be drawn out into a sophisticated, intricate musical experience that allows the music to change in a seamless and nearly subliminal fashion as we travel through three-dimensional space.

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Death, Purgatory, and Warnings: The Use of ♭2 in Disney's Haunted Mansion, The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, and Splash Mountain

Amy Hatch

Music from the Classical and Romantic eras and later, such as film music, incorporated ♭2 both melodically and harmonically to incite a variety of musical “associations” from exotic cultural representations to sadness and death. A clear example of this association occurs in “Sally’s Song” from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993), in which Sally’s premonition of Jack’s death is harmonically alerted using ♭II. Not only does this example highlight ♭2 in film music, but also in intellectual property (IP) used throughout the Disney parks, particularly its connection to the Haunted Mansion as a seasonal overlay in Disneyland. Because Disney is known for using music to “create aural soundscapes” to achieve immersion, this begs the question: If a film from the Disney franchise used ♭2 to highlight death, does other original, dark themed Disney IP, specifically in pre-recorded attraction music, also contain similar features?

In this paper, I explore the use of ♭2 — melodically, harmonically, and through key schemes — in Disney’s Haunted Mansion attraction and its relevance to the theme of death. Composed by Norman “Buddy” Baker in the key of A minor, *Grim Grinning Ghosts* includes the intriguing triadic bII harmony (B♭M), which becomes a central entity among other chords among the six-bar phrase. I conclude that the pitch B♭ is the symbol of death within the Haunted Mansion. To support this claim, I also analyze the progressions of Disney’s *The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror* and recently shuttered *Splash Mountain* to find connections of purgatory and warning, respectively.

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Inside the Scores: Towards a Poetics of Theme Park Music

Gregory Camp

Since beginning its world-dominating theme park project in the 1950s, the Walt Disney Company has built its theme park attractions around its ever-expanding film properties from the classic Disney animated and live-action films to newer IP acquisitions like Marvel, Star Wars, and Indiana Jones. The designers of the parks draw from the scores of these films to help bring their audiences into the three-dimensional fictional worlds they construct. An aesthetic transformation occurs as film music, composed to be heard as part of a passive audio-viewing experience, becomes accompaniment to a live ride, show, or immersive area. The transformations go beyond the mere re-positioning of the music: composers and arrangers alter the fabric of the pre-existing music itself to fit these new uses. My primary case studies are Disney studio composer Buddy Baker's adaptations of film music for theme park rides like 'The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh', and the use and adaptation of film scores by John Williams (notably from the Indiana Jones and Star Wars films) for both rides and ambient spaces in the Disney parks. This paper argues that a unique 'theme-park' style of composition and arranging exists, which uses tropes such as big themes, large instrumental masses, few layers of texture, loud dynamics, sharp transitions, alternation with sound effects for masking those transitions, and reliance on audio-visual synchresis to aid perceptual cohesion. I seek to demonstrate that theme park music is not just a rehashing of pre-existing music but is rather its own audio-visual narrative genre.

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Panel 5: “America on Parade” Staging History
Hearing History: Music in the Freedomland Amusement Park, 1960–1964
Reba A. Wissner

In 1960, the Freedomland, U.S.A. Amusement Park opened in The Bronx, New York. Created by the same designers as Disneyland and unofficially dubbed the “Disneyland of the East Coast,” Freedomland was shaped like the United States and centered on significant historical events over the past 200 years of American history such as the Chicago Fire and the San Francisco Earthquake. It also allowed visitors to experience historical times and events such as early 20th century New York City, Mardi Gras, and the Old Southwest. Because the park’s attractions were based on history, music director Paul LaValle was hired to compose and arrange music that would be played by live costumed bands such as a German “oompa band” in the Little Old New York area and a square dancing band in the Old Southwest area which would be called by famous square dancer Piute Pete. Music by composer Jules Styne and lyricist George Weiss was written specifically for each area and piped through the park’s sound systems. There were even operas written for and performed in the Freedomland Opera House and Saloon. When the park closed in 1964 to clear the land for a housing development that still stands today, most of the documents were destroyed, and the music played by the bands remained unknown. Using archival documents, I have determined the likely music that was played in Freedomland and discuss how it helped visitors immerse themselves in the park’s historical areas, including how it contributed to the park’s goal to accurately present American history.

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**Constructing the “Golden Dream”:
Music and American History at Walt Disney World**
Andrew Moenning

Throughout the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida, several attractions and areas exist that are dedicated to “retelling” American history. Disney-critical scholar Stephen Fjellman proposes these “Distories” (portmanteau of “Disney” and “histories”) function as curated nostalgic commodities, where guests are introduced to an American mythology of exceptionalism, pioneering innovation, and the American dream. Indeed, critic Mike Wallace suggests that Walt Disney has taught more people history in a memorable way than ever communicated in the American classroom. And yet, as musicologist Gregory Camp has noted, trenchant critique of Disney’s practice often does little to theorize the way these “texts” inform guest experience.

In this paper, I analyze the musical content of several distinctly American locations at the Walt Disney World Resort, such as The American Adventure (EPCOT), Voices of Liberty (EPCOT), The Hall of Presidents (Magic Kingdom), and Disney’s Wilderness Lodge (Resort Hotel). I theorize that the music of these and similar locations can be categorized into a square of binary oppositions defined by the parameters of original/non-original music and the use/disuse of expressly American content. Conceptualizing the music in this manner dismantles a monolithic understanding of “Disney music,” allowing for an appreciation of the musical particularities that affect guest experience in differing ways. In this framework, the use of original patriotic music, film score stylings, the classical canon, and American folk song are put forth as distinct, valuable, and effective means of constructing American “Distories” through sound.

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Dixieland at Disneyland: Performing “New Orleans Jazz”

Andy Fry

In the 1962 television feature *Disneyland After Dark*, Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory and other veteran New Orleans musicians reunite to play aboard the Mark Twain riverboat. As dancing waiters distribute (non-alcoholic) mint julep to a large, multi-generational audience, we witness “the improbable spectacle of Walt Disney [acting] as a godfather to traditional jazz” (*Down Beat*). Since its opening in 1955, Disneyland had featured New Orleans jazz, beginning with a house band of Disney animators, the Firehouse Five Plus Two. From 1961, banjoist Johnny St Cyr, famed for his 1920’s recordings with Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton, led a band of fellow old-time musicians, the Young Men from New Orleans, in nightly performances.

This paper explores the mutual attraction of Disneyland and Dixieland, in the context of a revival of traditional jazz that was especially strong on the West coast. As the revival helped to secure a place for New Orleans musicians and their city in jazz historiography, a burgeoning tourist industry constructed “New Orleans jazz” not as a time that was past but as a place one could visit. If Preservation Hall’s establishment in New Orleans in 1961 was a small sign of that movement, Disneyland’s first major extension five years later brought a (still extant) replica of the city’s jazz-infused French Quarter. Drawing on oral history, reception texts, and assorted media, I argue that Disneyland at once cemented New Orleans jazz’s place in American history, and relocated its story in the register of myth—if not fantasy.

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Panel 6: “It’s a Small World” Transnational Perspectives

“Minnie, We Love You!”: the Rehabilitation of Cultural Aroma in the Stage Shows of Tōkyō Disneyland and DisneySea

Thomas B. Yee

The infamous 1992 opening of Euro Disney was plagued by poor cultural awareness. In contrast, Tōkyō Disneyland and DisneySea launched successfully, with DisneySea reaching 10 million guests within its first year. One significant reason is that the Oriental Land Company (オリエンタルランド) operates Japan’s Disney resort rather than the Disney company, yielding cultural adaptation decisions to Japanese cultural stakeholders. “ ‘Minnie, We Love You!’: the Rehabilitation of Cultural Aroma in the Stage Shows of Tōkyō Disneyland and DisneySea” explores cultural adaptations in three Tōkyō Disney resort stage shows and theorizes ‘cultural aroma’ and ‘glocalization’ as useful concepts for examining cultural representation in Japan’s Disney resort.

Modern Japan’s media exports often exhibit mukokuseki (無国籍, ‘without nationality’) to better sell to non-Japanese audiences – however, in Tōkyō Disney parks, the reverse is true. Problematizing Iwabuchi’s widely-applied concept of ‘cultural odor,’ which insinuates that marks of Japanese culture are undesirable, this study rehabilitates ‘cultural aroma’ to describe cultural adaptations aiding foreign franchises’ performance in Japan. Another helpful term is ‘glocalization,’ accommodating a global brand or product to a local market’s needs. The presentation then turns to analyze musical cultural representation in three case studies from Tōkyō Disneyland and DisneySea stage shows. ‘Duffy & Friends’ Wonderful Friendship’ embraces kawaii (可愛い, ‘cute’) aesthetics, depicting stuffed animal characters especially popular in Japan. ‘Minnie, We Love You!’ and ‘Festival of Mystique’ cast Minnie Mouse as a J-pop aidoru (アイドル, ‘idol’), narratively featuring Minnie in ways not seen in the U.S., while Mickey functions as an accessory to Minnie’s adventures and heroism.

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Another Arabian Night: Alan Menken’s Sindbad at Tokyo DisneySea

Thomas L. Wilson

In 2001, Tokyo DisneySea opened as the first water-based Disney theme park. Central to the concept was seven “ports of call,” including the Arabian Coast which featured theming combining the worlds of Disney’s Aladdin and the world from the 1901 French version of 1001 Arabian Nights. “Sindbad’s Seven Voyages,” a musical boat dark ride, opened to mixed reviews from attendants.

The ride was refurbished and the narrative dramatically altered in 2007. Renamed to “Sindbad’s Storybook Voyage,” the new version of the ride featured a song with lyrics by Glenn Slater and music by Alan Menken. The song features striking resemblance in form to “It’s a Small World.” Likewise, Menken’s music incorporates topics signaling Arabic origins while occasionally featuring mechanical puppet performers on Arabic instruments: rebab, riq, arghul, and darbuka. Sindbad carries an oud throughout the ride’s narrative and performs near the end. However, the timbres of the song draw heavily from a Western orchestra that functions as the underpinning throughout. Near the beginning of the ride, low bowed strings supplant a puppet playing the rebab. Nevertheless, the ride and song remain popular among the primarily Asian visitors to the park with many Japanese artists virally covering the song on YouTube.

This paper will examine the layers of colonial intersections by examining the Arabian Coast at Tokyo DisneySea, the adaptation of 1001 Arabian Nights, the American composers Menken and Slater, and the inspirations from the Sherman brothers’ “It’s a Small World” and its associated rides at Disneyland and beyond.

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‘It’s a Small World After All’: Mapping the Similarities and Differences Between Music in De Efteling and the Disney-Parks

Maria Schreurs

‘There’s so much that we share, and it’s time we’re aware it’s a small world after all’. Often cited to be the most played song of all time, ‘It’s A Small World’ from the eponymous Disney-attraction is also one of the most notorious compositions in the theme park sphere. Due to the song’s repetitive melody and simple lyrics, composer Richard Sherman has stated that people ‘either want to kiss me or to kill me’ for writing it. Interestingly, around 4500 miles away, in the Netherlands, a similar sentiment is shared about an around-the-world dark-ride with a distinct theme song...

Carnaval Festival, located in Dutch theme park De Efteling, was directly inspired by *It’s a Small World*. Like its Disney counterpart, *Carnaval Festival* depicts celebration through many different countries and is underscored by a catchy melody written by Dutch comedian Toon Hermans. However, like *It’s a Small World*, *Carnaval Festival*’s main melody is notorious and extremely divisive, as it is frequently voted ‘the most annoying earworm of The Netherlands’.

Despite the obvious parallels between the two attractions, the use of its music actually underlines some fundamental differences between the Disney parks and De Efteling, which functions as a good representation of theme park culture in Europe. This conference paper will take the case studies of Disney’s *It’s a Small World* and De Efteling’s *Carnaval Festival*, comparing them to one another. I will go over the history of both theme parks, the conception of both rides and their distinct theme songs, the similarities and differences of these attractions, and finally the relationship between Disney and De Efteling and the influence they have on each other.

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Panel 7: “The Great Movie Ride” Between Screen and Space
Wizarding World Music: Sounds, Scores and Serenades
Dan White

The Wizarding World areas of Orlando’s Universal Studios (Diagon Alley) and Islands of Adventure (Hogsmeade) are saturated with enchanting sounds and music, creating an experience for each guest that is most akin to starring in and directing a *Harry Potter* movie in which they are the central protagonist. This includes the adaptation of numerous film cues in background music loops, as well as to underscore rides such as Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey, and live performances by wizarding musicians such as the Frog Choir or Celestina Warbeck and the Banshees. Traditional concepts of diegetic and non-diegetic music do not apply readily to theme park music and thus require some stretching, but terms introduced by scholars such as Ben Winters (‘intra-’ and ‘extra-diegetic’, 2010) and Daniel Yacavone (‘world-in’ and ‘world-of’, 2014) prove useful in theorising the various musical elements of these parks areas. These three musical elements form the paper’s case studies as we analyse their narrative and worldbuilding roles, exploring the relevance of the aforementioned terms and expanding our understanding of the use and adaptation of originally filmic music in theme park attractions.

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Sounds of Sith: Sonic Signifiers of Danger in Disneyland's Galaxy's Edge

Jessica Getman

As fans walk into Galaxy's Edge at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, they are met with the swoops of landing spacecraft, the bloops of droids, and the excited tones of the Black Spire radio station. For fans of the *Star Wars* franchise, walking into Batuu's Black Spire Outpost transports them into George Lucas's world of fantasy, technology, warring ideologies, and defiant heroes. Disneyland immerses us through architecture, landscaping, food, shopping kiosks, costumed cast members, and sonic ambiance. Part of the fun is immersion not only in a much-loved world, but also in the tension of *Star Wars*' good vs. evil dynamic—the nervous thrill of danger in the park's rides, character confrontations, and Rebel Alliance missions; the park's soundtrack plays up this excitement. From the staticky hum of Kylo Ren's lightsaber, to the musical leitmotifs of the Galactic Empire, to the attenuated vocalizations of the stormtroopers as they wander the park to confront spectators, Galaxy's Edge reminds us aurally that we may be having fun—but the thrill is in the danger.

This paper explores moments in the park's soundtrack—sound effect, diegetic, and underscore—that clue us in to the peril around us, particularly in the "Rise of the Resistance" ride, Oga's Cantina (with DJ R-3X), and the First Order stage show. Drawing on Philip Tagg's exploration of musemes, Frank Lehman's catalog of *Star Wars* leitmotifs, and Emilio Audissino's review of John Williams' *Star Wars* style, aural signifiers of danger and their effects on park-goers will tease out how Galaxy's Edge aurally boosts spectator immersion and the thrill of opposing the Galactic Empire.

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Cantina Band Covers: Genre Evolution in Adaptations of “Mad About Me”

Lauren Crosby

The Walt Disney Company’s 2012 acquisition of Lucasfilm Ltd. ushered in a new era for the Star Wars franchise that includes adaptations for television, video games, and theme parks. The music of these adaptations and their interaction with John Williams’s original soundtracks for the nine films of the Skywalker saga has been the topic of much recent scholarship (Bradford, 2022; Camp, 2022; Crosby, 2022; Lawson, 2022). These studies focus primarily on allusions to Williams’s Romantic underscoring and memorable character themes, giving little attention to adaptations of diegetic music from the original trilogy. To fill this void, this study provides a comparative analysis of performances of the first diegetic Star Wars music “Mad About Me” (also known as Cantina Band Music I) within the Star Wars universe. Building on existing analyses of covers of popular songs (Mosser, 2008; O’Hara, 2022; Rusch, 2013), this study highlights variations in timbre, form, and melody in adaptations of the base song for video games, television, and Disney theme parks. These alterations in the cover versions of the tune result in a dramatic genre shift—Jazz to EDM—that not only represents the transition from diegetic film music to the double-diegesis of the theme park experience (Camp, 2022), but also reframes a 1970s cultural phenomenon to be more culturally relevant to a new generation of fans.

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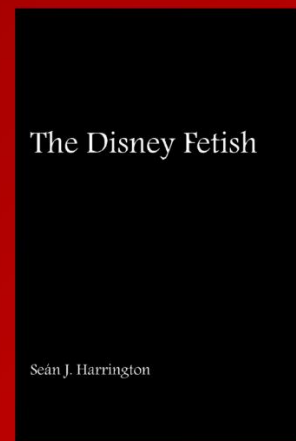
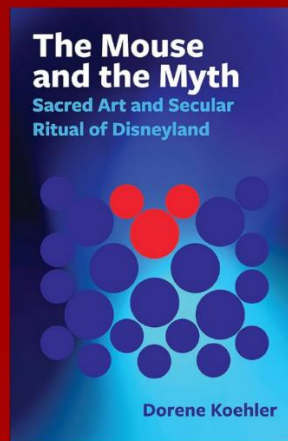
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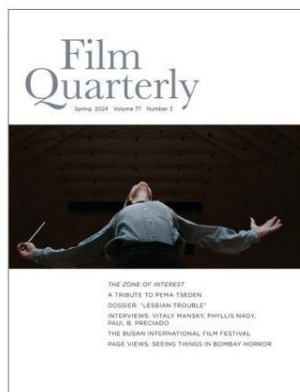
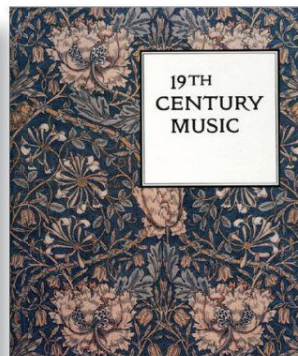
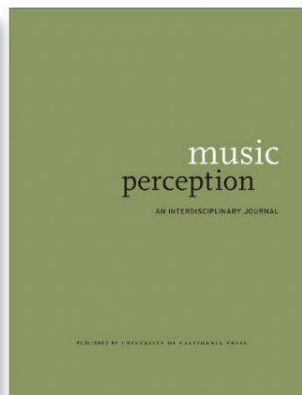
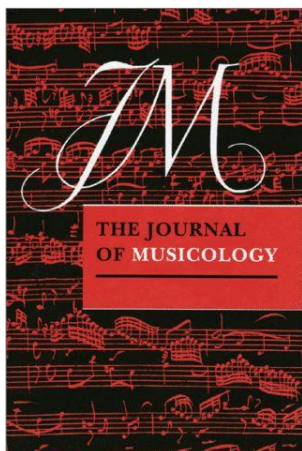
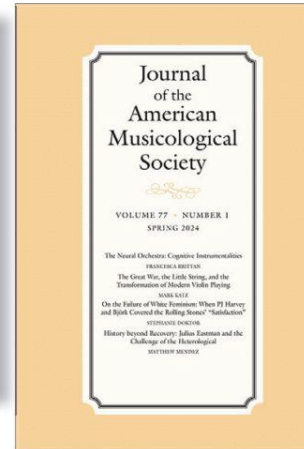
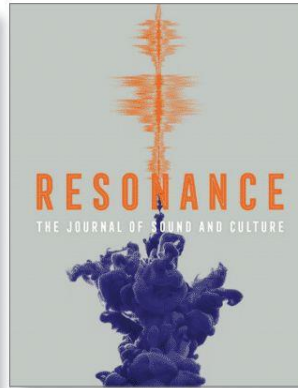
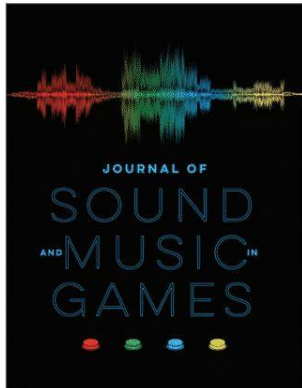


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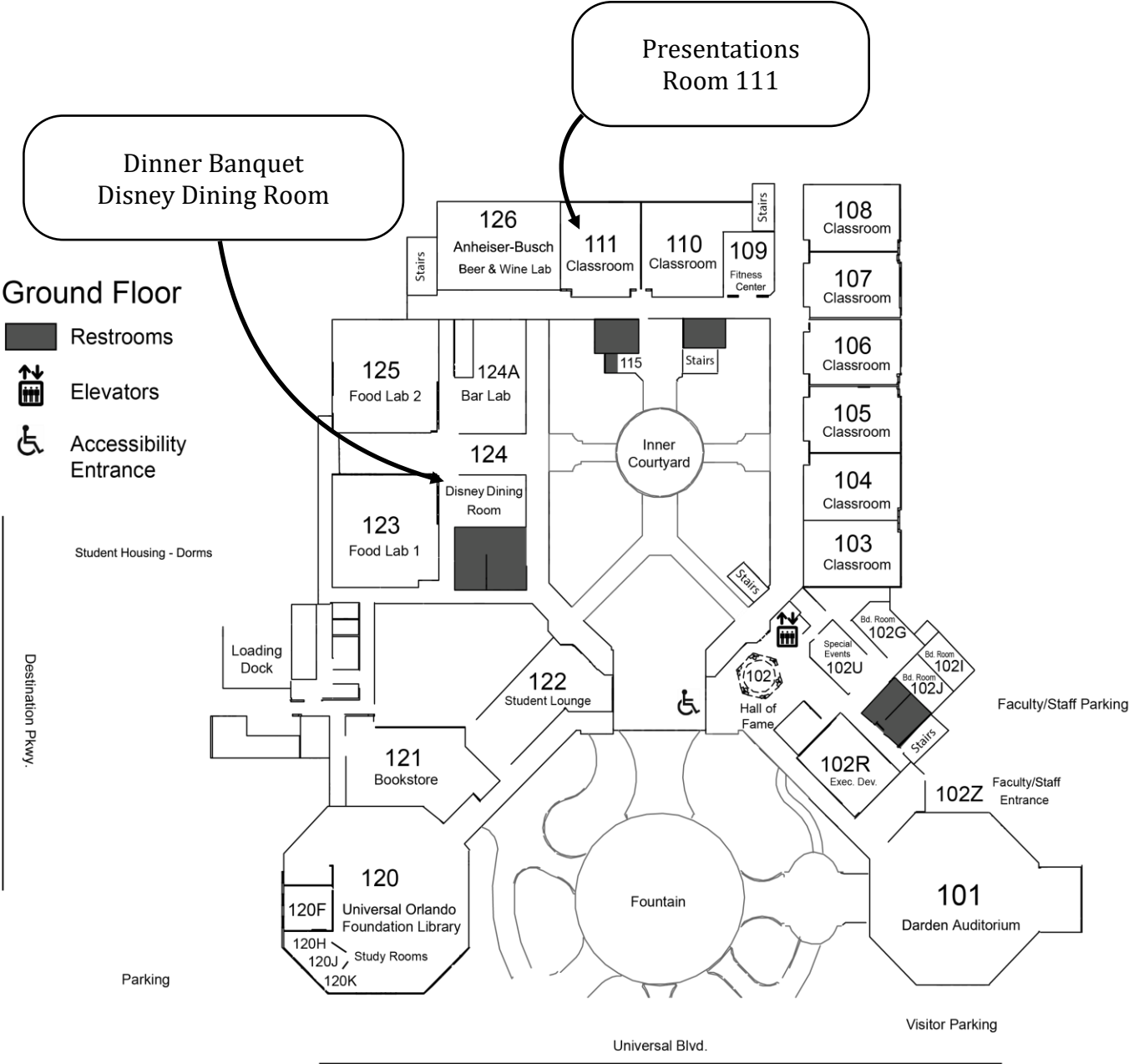
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