MUSIC IN THE MOVIES: 
AN INVESTIGATION INTO CREATIVE MUSIC SEARCH 
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MUSIC SYNCHRONISATION
We are investigating the communication and search process of creative professionals looking for music to accompany moving images. This is known as Music Synchronisation. They are searching for unknown items on behalf of others, rather than for recreational use.

CREATIVE MUSIC SEARCH
Music has been used to accompany moving images since the days of silent movies, when a pianist or orchestra performed to enhance the action and emotions portrayed on-screen. Collections of music have been organised for this purpose by descriptive facets (‘Chase, Impatience, Happiness’) since the early 20th century. Record companies and music publishers attempt to place music in films, TV and commercials to generate income and promote their artists.

This process, known as music synchronisation, benefits both the music Owners and the film-making Users, who are frequently not looking for known items and search for unknown music using verbose and subjective queries.

Although attempts have been made to disintermediate the process using bespoke B2B music search engines these do not appear to be widely used by creative music searchers, who rely on relationships, in-depth product knowledge and ‘gut feeling’ to source music. On investigation of the organisation of the music in these search engines and in depth analysis of a collection of real queries, it seems that there is a mismatch of meanings between the User and the Owner.

However, although the development of these tools would benefit from a more detailed domain analysis, there is a will to disintermediate, as evidenced by the very existence of these search engines and their increasing sophistication. The development of creative music search is not restricted to professional use. General users would also benefit from improvements in this area, for finding music to accompany slideshows and home movies as well as unknown item search when faced with the difficult decision of what to listen to next from their digital music collections.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH
We have interviewed professionals involved in creative music search for synchronisation, analysed the organisation of music in specialist search engines and a collection of written music briefs. We are currently collecting and analysing the results of observations of relevance judgements given by experts who have listened to sets of music generated from briefs applied to these search engines. During 2010 we plan to continue to analyse our data and examine in particular the way participants determine and communicate musical meaning. We hope our research will inform the library community in general and the music information retrieval community in particular about the information needs, communication processes, meaning making and relevance judgements of users doing this type of searching and inform systems development in this area.

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