

Ratatouille: A Narrative Analysis Between the Gutter and the Dream



Written by Tess Tyler

Ratatouille – A Narrative Analysis

The Music Between the Gutter and The Dream.



The success of all Pixar animations is due to their infallible ability to emotionally stir their audiences, both young and old. There are many different elements and artistic departments that come together that make Pixar movies so incredibly entertaining: innovative animation, exceptional story development, impressive voice acting and in this particular case of *Ratatouille* - a magically intelligent score. It is known that director Brad Bird, and composer Michael Giacchino worked very closely together on *Ratatouille*, carefully discussing the emotional content of each character, as well as the definite moral content of the story. Brad Bird confidently explains why he chose Giacchino for this project thusly: 'One of the reasons I picked Michael was that he had tremendous range, and he had a whole bunch of different sounds on his palette.'¹ After close analysis, it is unquestionable that the musical score contributes significantly to getting these vital components across to its audience, and furthermore contributing to the film's monumental success.

¹ *Ratatouille – Behind the Music with Michael Giacchino*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2WQdR7Ti-o>, Interview with Brad Bird

To divulge further into how the music contributes so generously to the film, we must define the key themes of the story. Similarly to the majority of other Pixar productions, the main themes of a Pixar story always touch upon cleverly disguised, serious and socially advanced subject matters. In regards to *Ratatouille*, the story touches upon issues such as dysfunction within the family (here reflected in Remy's relationship with his father), financial difficulty (Linguini's desperation to find and keep a job), grief (the death of Linguini's mother), power struggle within the workplace (Chef Skinner) and lastly, yet perhaps most crucial to the film's overall moral compass – the struggle in persevering to follow ambitions and dreams, despite all the obstacles one finds along the way. I will be discussing all of these subjects, and how the musical score enhances them. Furthermore, I will be discussing what kind of impact this has on the emotional content of the film, and how this affects the audience. To understand how the key subjects are enriched by the music, it is important to familiarise ourselves with the musical themes that are linked to each of the main characters. Michael Giacchino has skillfully associated musical themes to the characters of Remy, Linguini, Gusteau and Chef Skinner. This is not a new film scoring technique for Giacchino: 'I really love working thematically, because if you're going to tell a story with music you need themes to represent the characters; so as you're listening to the soundtrack you can kind of follow along with what's happening in the story'. These themes are the backbone of the musical score, effortlessly and succinctly introducing us to each character. Giacchino expertly manipulates, develops and bends these themes in order to alter how the audience perceives two key things: the inner emotions of the character in focus, or the environment in which the scene is taking place. Giacchino achieves this so successfully within this film, that the audience can't help but feel a deep

understanding of both Remy and Linguini's characters. This is what I believe, to be the key to unlocking the secret of a great animation picture.

French Music Influence

Randy Thom, Supervising Sound Designer / Mixer:

*'For Ratatouille we certainly needed to tip our hats to the authenticity of Paris and being in Paris, France.'*²

Brad Bird has chosen to inform his audience of the French setting of Ratatouille before the film even begins to start! Like any other Disney Pixar production, the screening begins with the iconic Disney Castle and Pixar lamp production logos. Bird has decided to include music as soon as the Disney castle appears and before the feature commences. Giacchino overlays the ethereal musings of popular French singer, Camille, accompanied by glockenspiel and accordion. This captures the spirit of the film perfectly, as Camille's voice instantly exudes an ambience of playfulness and magic. The voice mirrors Remy's character, which is also playful, yet ambitious and always determined in working towards his dream of being a chef. The use of the accordion is simple, yet incredibly effective. Its inclusion instantly informs the audience of the French setting of the film, and also gives light to the French music theme that runs throughout the movie. When we hear the glockenspiel, our senses are heightened to the magical and wondrous quality of the film; letting us know that we, the audience are about to go on an adventure. As the Disney castle fades out, the Pixar lamp icon comes to screen and we begin to hear the vocal

² VIDEO: <http://soundworkscollection.com/videos/ratatouille>, *The Sound of Ratatouille*, Randy Thom Interview

melody of the French national anthem being played on the flute. As I will discuss in further detail later, the flute is the instrument that Giacchino employs to represent Remy within the score. We are already being introduced to the protagonist's character without even seeing him! The same melody is then transferred over to the clarinet – an instrument that was an integral instrument in gypsy jazz bands in France from the 1930s. Furthermore, this highlights the peasant culture in Paris – a theme that is embedded into the morals of this film's story. Once the film begins we hear a narrator (with a French accent) describing Gusteau, and the food culture in Paris. The music accompanying this is typical of French folk music. The waltz-like time signature on the plucked double bass and accordion playing the melody noticeably reminisces of French peasant music. The accordion was introduced to France by Italian immigrants in the 19th century, and was often thought of as an exotic, romantic and sophisticated instrument when it first arrived in Paris. However, the portability of the instrument brought its sound to the streets, where it 'became the music of the working class and the middle-class slummers; and was subsequently appropriated by French Gypsy culture.'³ The accordion is also a historical marker and symbol for the 'outcast'. Once so popular, it fell out of favour with the public in the 1960s where rock n' roll and guitar music took its place. Interestingly, we can compare these historical facts to Remy's character. Remy is indeed part of a lower class and lower species in accordance to society. He is also made to feel an outcast by his family for not wanting the same life as the rest of his kind. Gusteau's motto, 'Anyone can cook', indicates that he is a man of the people and a spokesperson for those of the lower classes who have ambitions and dreams. He is Remy's mentor, always encouraging him to aim for his goals

³ *The Fabulous Destiny of the Accordion in French Cinema*, Author: Phil Powry, pg 137, Ashgate Publishing, 2006

despite of his species and the prejudice he faces from society. This is why Giacchino has accompanied Gusteau's introduction with music that is reminiscent of gypsy folk music - because it is music of the people.

Le Festin, the title track of *Ratatouille's* OST, is written and sung by the French popular artist, Camille. Michael Giacchino specifically chose Camille as the leading artist of this soundtrack because of her unique sound: 'There was nobody else I wanted to sing the song than her. I started listening to her music and I was like, that's it! That's who I want! ...The song was reflective of the story in the film of somebody who wants something, and how they're going to get it.'⁴

*The dreams of lovers are like good wine
They bring joy or also sorrow
Weakened by hunger I am unhappy
Flying on the street all that I can
Because nothing is for free in life*

*Hope is a plate far too quickly consumed
I am used to skipping the meal
A solitary thief is sad to eat
In a game so bitter I can't succeed
Because nothing is for free in...*

*Life... Never will they tell me
That the course of the stars: it's not for me
Let me amaze you and and take my flight
We can finally be happy*

*The celebration will finally begin
Get out the bottles; end the strife
I lay the table of my new life
I am glad about the idea of this new fate
A life of hiding and then finally free
The feast is on my way*

*A life of hiding and then finally free
The feast is on my way*

⁴ *Ratatouille - Behind the Music with Michael Giacchino*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2WQdR7Ti-o>, Interview with Michael Giacchino

'Le Festin' translates as 'The Feast', and after close analysis of the lyrics, it becomes apparent that the title of this song has two different meanings. On a shallow level, we can assume that the song is primarily about food. However, when we delve a little deeper, we understand that the lyrics explore the idea of ambition and dreams. The song succinctly represents Remy's character, and his determination to achieve his goal of becoming a cook, and consequently his overall happiness. The first stanza of lyrics highlight the need to have money in order to survive: 'Weakened by hunger I am unhappy, Flying on the street all that I can, Because nothing is for free in life'. These words underline the life of Remy when we first meet him in the film. His father, and the leader of the rat colony tells him, that he must blend in with the others and do what is necessary in order to be fed. In other words, Remy must steal in order to survive. The second stanza is about how challenging it is to keep your hopes up when the odds aren't in your favour. 'Hope is a plate far too quickly consumed, I am used to skipping the meal, A solitary thief is sad to eat, In a game so bitter I can't succeed.' Cleverly tying the lyrics together with the subject of food, Camille explains with these words that it is sometimes easier to not hope so you are not disappointed when your efforts don't result in what you hoped for. The third stanza is a revolt against the notion of fear, and portrays the stamina and determination that lies within Remy's character. It marks a turning point in attitude of Remy's character, and of the story itself. *Le Festin* is played during the turning point of the film, where Linguini finds out that he is the rightful owner of Gusteau's. There is a montage to describe the many happy events at this point in the story: Linguini and Colette fall in love, Chef Skinner leaves the restaurant, Remy can cook in peace and feed his family and

Linguini buys a home, being financially secure for the first time. The last two lines of the stanza, *A life of hiding and then finally free, The feast is on my way*, summarizes the whole story, marking how far both Remy and Linguini have come in their journey to happiness and success.

Django Reinhardt & Linguini's Theme

Linguini ties into this idea very succinctly, as his character also represents the working classes and being an outcast. The significant differences being, that unlike Remy, he is a human and has no desire to be a chef. Immediately after the 'Wall Rat' cue, we are presented with the music for 'Cast of Cooks'. This is where we meet Linguini for the first time. In contrast to the orchestral cue of 'Wall Rat', the audience is now met with a jazz-influenced piece of music. This suits the hustle and bustle of the kitchen, however, more importantly, it signifies that we are in a real-life, hard-working environment. Jazz music is often used to represent the working classes as the subject matters within often touch upon real-life and everyday struggle. Historically however, jazz was played in public in order to help the people put aside their problems and try to enjoy life. This mirrors Linguini's character incredibly well. Although he is poor, without friends, without a mother and a job, he still remains positive despite all of the hardship in his life. 'Remy Drives a Linguini' is an incredibly fun cue that can be compared directly to Gypsy Jazz music of the 1930s. The guitar work is reminiscent to that of Django Reinhardt – the founder of the Jazz Manouche genre. 'Manouche' is a term for a Gypsy; the name comes from the small town of the same name in the south of France. Being a Gypsy himself, Reinhardt was familiar with the struggles of being poor in France. Michael Dregni, a specialist in the life of

Django's and his works, comments on what it was like for the Gypsy society in France during his youth: 'Gypsies are outsiders. It was difficult tracking down some of the Gypsy guitarists for interviews – you don't find them listed in the phonebook. From the accounts I have heard, Django had a difficult time even getting a gig because cabaret owners were afraid he would steal the silverware. Being a Gypsy put him in the third layer down in French society, beneath the French and the African-Americans come to play jazz. Gypsies were really down in the basement.'⁵ Seeing the similarities between Reinhardt's life and Linguini's life is unavoidable. They both come from poor backgrounds and have been ostracised by others because of where they come from. Chef Skinner immediately looks down upon Linguini and refuses to give him a job because he isn't a cook. Even though Linguini luckily slips through the net and manages to work at the kitchen, Skinner still describes him as 'just a garbage boy'. Django was also refused gigs because people were fearful that he was a criminal due to his Gypsy heritage. Both characters are not strangers to prejudice, yet they both, however, seem to get on with their lives regardless. Django became an incredibly famous guitarist despite all the obstacles that were thrown in his way. The story is the same for Linguini. It is important to acknowledge the similarities between the two characters, as I'm certain that Giacchino has chosen to use manouche guitar music in order to channel the spirit of Django; not only emulating a typically French style, but also a historical sound that conveys a sense of struggle and overcoming it. We can even go further to say that Remy also shares social traits with Django. Remy must overcome many social boundaries in order to carry out his ambitions. Firstly, he must gain the strength to rise above his family's negativity towards his ambition of being a chef, and

⁵ *Chasing Django, 'The legacy of one man who had become an emblem of the people'*, Anonymous, <http://www.thebluegrassspecial.com/archive/2010/march10/django-reinhardt-michael-dregni.php>, Publisher: David McGee

secondly, overcome the obstacle of getting humans to primarily not be afraid of him, and furthermore believe in his ability to cook! The physical problem of Remy not being large enough to work in a kitchen is a huge obstacle in the way of him achieving his dream. If one weren't ambitious enough, then it would seem like an impossible feat. When Django was nineteen, he was involved in a house fire where he suffered from severe burns down his left hand side. The result left his third and fourth fingers paralyzed. Instead of giving up the guitar, he practiced for eighteen months solid in order to relearn the guitar on just two fingers – his index and little finger. His determination and perseverance resulted in an incredibly positive outcome: 'Amazingly, several of the Gypsy guitarists that came along after Django played with just two fingers in an effort to get the tone he had – guitarists like Jacques Montagne. Even today players like John Jorgenson or Sam Miltich in Minnesota will every now and then play a song with two fingers for fun.'⁶ Here is a comparison of one of Django's guitar melodies with the guitar line that is featured during the *Remy Drives A Linguine* cue.

Another great example of Django Reinhardt's influence within the score is in the cue, *Special Order*. The fast guitar strumming and hand percussion that begins the cue is reminiscent of samba. The strong beat in 4 strongly emulates the feeling of a dance. During this scene, Remy is controlling Linguini's every move, directing him around the kitchen. Just like a samba, Remy leads Linguini in a choreographed dance around the kitchen, completely in control. Although the beat of this cue is Spanish, all of the instrumentation we hear is has more of a French influence. The melody is played on an

⁶ *Chasing Django, 'The legacy of one man who had become an emblem of the people'*, Anonymous, <http://www.thebluegrassspecial.com/archive/2010/march10/django-reinhardt-michael-dregni.php>, Publisher: David McGee

accordion, similarly to earlier cues in the film. Once we have reached this cue when watching the movie, Remy is starting to gain more control over Linguini's body, and because of this Remy is succeeding in realising his dream of being a chef. The more that this happens, the more we hear classical instrumentation. This is exactly what happens when we reach the end of the cue. Remy is fighting Colette over which recipe should be used for the special order, and once it becomes apparent that Remy is going to win the battle, the classical music becomes prevalent, overbearing the popular and folky, French influenced music. When Linguini says frustrated, 'I should listen to you', and slaps his hat in order to jolt Remy, Giacchino slowly filters in horns that blend very subtly with the already existing instrumentation of the cue. The presence of the horns reflect the presence of Remy, and how he is not going to give up an opportunity that could get him closer to his dream. Once we hear Colette exclaim at Linguini, 'Don't. You. Dare.', a short passage of tremolo string ensemble is played. This creates an instant moment of suspense, however, it is logical to also think that Giacchino uses the strings as a symbol for Remy's authority over the situation. I conclude this idea by stating that the end of the cue comprises of a single note played on both string and woodwind sections. This is synced exactly when Remy folds his arms and grins in a smug and self-satisfied way. The orchestra has won, and so has Remy.

Remy's Theme

Remy has two main themes associated to his character. The first theme can be described as 'rodent-like', using very quick and sporadic rhythms that can be linked to Remy's scampering physicality. Giacchino has chosen to represent this theme by using folk style and instrumentation. The second theme resembles Remy's hopes and dreams, and is often portrayed by the orchestra. The best example of both of these themes can be found in the 'Wall Rat' cue. The melody of this theme directly addresses Remy's physical state, and is expertly synced to the picture. The music of this cue, however, begins by addressing Remy's mental state. Feeling utterly hopeless, Remy's mood is portrayed by slow, legato and minor chords played by a small string ensemble with a solo cello. The cello solo is incredibly morose, highlighting Remy's feeling of hopelessness. There is a sudden change in colour and mood when Gusteau appears from the cookbook and says to Remy: 'If you are hungry, go up and look around, Remy'. This is because we hear a mystical glissando of glockenspiel with harp in combination with a thickening texture within the string ensemble. The time signature also changes for an ambiguous 4/4 to an obvious 3/4. The change in time signature enhances the French folk atmosphere, and makes the ambience of the scene instantly more light-hearted. Here, it is important to notice that the very mention of hunger or food, Remy's state of mind changes. He starts to become more hopeful; as does the sound of the score. The music tells the audience that there has been a drastic change in Remy's state of mind, and therefore consequently informs us that we are going to immediately experience a development in the story. Next, we hear an accordion playing a repeated 8th note (E4), which is then quickly followed by

the flute melody. The accordion promptly lets us know that, not only are we experiencing French culture, but we are experiencing *peasant* French culture. The accordion sound informs the viewer that Remy's life is by no means sophisticated; and this is obviously reflected in the picture, where we can see Remy scampering between the floorboards of a building. The flute, however, is the perfect choice of instrument to represent Remy's character. It is quick, versatile and nimble, just like a Rat. However, it is also pure and bright sounding, flawlessly resembling Remy's innocence, inquisitiveness and passion for life. To emphasize the rat-like way that Remy is moving through the building, pizzicato strings are introduced to the flute and accordion at the beginning of this cue. Although, the use of strings highlight Remy's rodent species, it also brings a sense of orchestral sophistication to the music, successfully reminding the audience that Remy is not just any ordinary rat, but a refined character. The idea of peasantry against sophistication and orchestral against folk is constantly present whenever we hear Remy's theme. The music highlights the constant duality of Remy's character, and therefore his struggle to fit in wherever he finds himself within the story. In the first half of the cue there is a brief interlude to the protagonist's theme, where Remy finds a small chunk of bread, and attempts to eat it. Gusteau appears yet again, and urges Remy not to eat it, as it would be stealing. This teaches the children of the audience a basic moral principle, when actually this touches a subject matter far more severe. Remy is starving, and has no means of obtaining food other than stealing. The more mature members of the audience understand the true difficulties of this in regards to real life. On a shallow level, children will understand that this is wrong, however the adults will perceive this as an emotional struggle. The music manages to enhance this notion by introducing a small section that

contrasts massively to that which comes before and after it. The music is extremely thin in texture, using only a solo bassoon accompanied by a solo clarinet counter melody. The melody resembles sad French folk music, dragging the audience away from the previous theme that brought a sense of hope and wonderment. However, reminiscent of a minute before, we hear the glissando of glockenspiel and harp. This is because Gusteau mentions food to Remy once again. Giacchino uses the word 'food' as a catalyst to develop the music from one emotion to the next. This works wonderfully, as it creates a sense of unity between the score and Remy's inner thoughts. After the glissando, strings are reintroduced into the score, making the texture thicker yet again, and more sophisticated in its style. Giacchino uses this technique to gracefully lead back into Remy's theme. It is becoming apparent at this point within the score that food is an essential in triggering Remy's emotions. Whenever it is mentioned, we begin to experience the determination of Remy's character, which is what makes the story so relatable and effective to its audience. Bird and Giacchino have worked together in order to highlight this, and therefore translate this idea over to a completely oblivious audience.

Once we return to listen to the theme once again, Remy is launched into action. The audience's attention appears to have been subtly switched from the emotional content of the character, to what is physically happening on the screen. The 'Wall Rat' cue achieves this in a seamless, yet entertaining way. Giacchino has dissected this scene with such an acute sense of detail that he has managed to utilise all of the dramatic events (including the very minor ones) to their fullest potential. Reminiscent of Carl Stalling's work with Warner Brothers, each hit point is accented, except the result is not that of farce, but of

sophistication, maintaining the unfailingly consistent quality of Disney Pixar's animations. Carl Stalling's composition method for animation was similar to that of Giacchino's when scoring high action scenes: 'When scoring a chase sequence (for example, the Coyote chasing the Road Runner), Stalling normally chose a piece that reinforced the pre-conceived rhythm of the scene. If the chase moved quickly, the music would keep pace, calculated so that the regular beats of the underscore emphasized the visual and aural synchronicities.'⁷ When Remy runs back over the floorboards to investigate the gunshot coming from the turbulent couple's apartment, the music drastically reduces in texture and instrumentation, leaving acoustic guitar with the melody. This musical segway steers our attention away from Remy's journey, and towards the couple. A repeating pattern is starting to emerge where the reduction in orchestral instrumentation often results in the audience's focus being drawn away from Remy's inner thoughts. Once the audience returns to Remy and the orchestra, there is a delightful moment where Remy rolls his eyes in reaction to the couple's ordeal below. Giacchino accentuates this in the music by making the Violin 1 melody swell in exact unison with the movement of Remy's eyes, as they roll around his sockets.



It is a very subtle technique, however, the result is remarkably effective. We are brought inside Remy's head where we are able to explore his thoughts. As Remy continues to run

⁷ *Tunes for Toons – Music and the Hollywood Cartoon*, Daniel Goldmark, pg. 52, University of California Press, 2005

around inside the floorboards, the flute melody has been written in order to imitate the way in which he moves. A great example of this is when Remy skirts past the mousetrap. When Remy does this, he slows down his pace and contorts his body in order to get past. Giacchino mirrors this in his score by using an uncharacteristically long dotted half note in the flute melody. Amidst the quicker 16th notes, this draws our attention to what is happening on the screen, and at the same time enhances the image of Remy slowing down in order to get past. The articulation in the flute also transforms from quick staccato notes, into a flutter tongue. The sound of this particular technique helps to augment what we're seeing, and that Remy is slowing down. The unusual timbre of flutter tongue technique draws attention to the change in pace, and also signifies a certain element of danger. It is important to note, that at this point the instrumentation is very minimal. There is only electric bass, pizzicato strings and flute. I believe that Giacchino restricts the instrumentation here, so there is more of an impact when the environment changes from inside the house and under the floorboards, to being outside the house. When the scene moves from inside to outside, the score becomes thicker in its texture and instrumentation. A string ensemble and an acoustic guitar are introduced to the score, immediately changing the sound. The articulation of the score also changes. Giacchino moves from pizzicato to legato strings and removes the flute melody from the cue. This accompanies the change in atmosphere exceedingly well. The overall effect of this makes the audience feel the contrast between the run-down environment of the floorboards and the beautiful outdoors of Paris. Typical of music for traditional animation, the direction of pitch is linked with what we are seeing on the screen. When Remy enters the outdoors and starts to ascend the building, the melody in the upper strings also start to ascend.



Not only does this much-used technique manage to satisfyingly match what hearing with what we are seeing, but also builds tension the more and more we hear the melody ascend. It is worth noting that all of these stylistic changes within the articulation, melody and instrumentation are a way of the composer indicating that there has been a switch between environments. It is these two different environments (the floorboards and the streets of Paris) that symbolize Remy's two different states of mind; hopelessness and defeat in contrast with ambition, determination and happiness. When Remy reaches the roof of the building, the cue reaches its musical climax. This is where the music is at its most orchestral and sophisticated in its instrumentation. A full woodwind section is introduced to accompany the legato string melody.

A musical score for a woodwind section in 3/4 time, featuring Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in Bb, and Bassoon. The score is written in a key signature of three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) and a 3/4 time signature. The Flute part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The Oboe part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The Clarinet in Bb part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The Bassoon part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The score concludes with a double bar line. Dynamic markings include *p* for the Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet in Bb parts, and *pp* for the Clarinet in Bb and Bassoon parts.

This thickens the texture, giving a sense of richness and warmth. We no longer hear the acoustic or bass guitar, so inevitably, the folk influenced sound disappears and makes the score's instrumentation solely orchestral. Again, Giacchino has successfully made a distinct separation between Remy's two worlds through the use of his music. The musical climax is synced to the magnificent view over Paris, cleverly symbolizing that the city is where Remy will find his happiness and achieve his hopes and dreams.

From The Gutter To The Dream

To fully realise Brad Bird's principal moral intention in *Ratatouille*, we must focus on the climax of the film. Throughout the film, all the characters battle against the food critic, Anton Ego. He resembles the fear and obstacles one comes across when we try to achieve seemingly impossible dreams. When it is finally time to present the famous French dish, Ratatouille to Ego, the audience is fully aware that this is going to be a pivotal moment of the film. Either Remy and Linguini, and the restaurant will succeed or fail – this is crunch time. We can clearly hear at this point in the story, that the music is solely orchestral in its instrumentation and structure. Continuing the idea of Remy's 'dream theme', we can now hear that he has never been closer to his goal. The strings vigorously and quickly swell over a majestic horn melody and thick woodwind harmonies. The texture is full and reminiscent of such orchestration that we may find in Elgar's 'Enigma'. There is not any French influence to be heard at this moment of the film. Once the dish has been placed in front of Ego, the music delicately refrains, leaving a sustained, single note in the flute. I can't help but feel that Giacchino does this deliberately in order to signal Remy's presence within the dish. The note resonates delicately into silence as if the music were emulating Remy's hopeful character. When Ego goes to taste the food, however, there is no music to be heard. Brad Bird has left this event in the story to speak for itself - in silence. This is distinctive of the classic Pixar moment. Towards the end of the story, the audience is so emotionally invested with the characters that silence can be even more moving than a dramatic score. This magnificent score compliments the picture so successfully, that when it is removed it creates an incredible amount of tension and

suspense when the audience is plunged into silence. *Ratatouille's* score is almost constant throughout the film; therefore, it is difficult for the watcher to not take it for granted.

Importantly, immediately after this moment we are taken back to Ego's childhood where his mother is feeding him ratatouille. We are immediately presented with French folk music to accompany this in-depth insight into Ego's past. Back before Ego was a critic, he was much like Remy before he became a cook – full of hope and excitement for the future. Pixar manages to tug at our heartstrings when we realise this is the case, having only seen Ego as the villain up until this critical moment of the story. This Pixar moment concisely depicts the key message of the film with extraordinary success. 'It is a perceptive, wise, and clever look at the struggles of the creative process, a full-length explanation of how difficult it is to make art and get that art to be accepted by the few or the many.'⁸ In a very intelligent fashion, Giacchino manages to enhance the journey that Remy experiences through the use of character associated themes and musical genre. It is a certainty that Giacchino is a master of conveying emotion and character development. The mastery in, which this is executed in *Ratatouille*, provides a concrete explanation as to why both Brad Bird and Michael Giacchino have worked on many Pixar films together before and since.

⁸ *The Pixar Perspective on the Pixar Moment and 'Ratatouille'*, <http://pixartimes.com/2013/04/02/the-pixar-perspective-on-the-pixar-moment-and-ratatouille/>, Written by Josh Spiegel

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