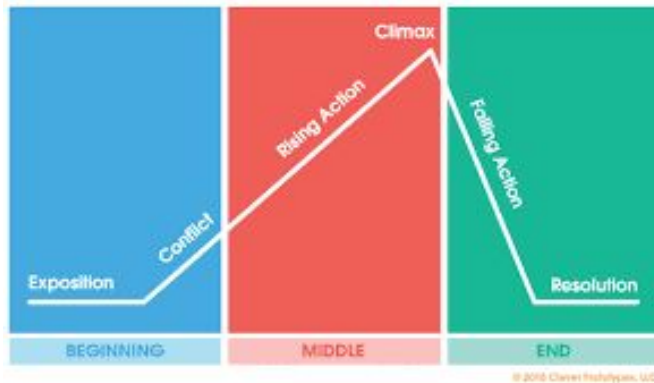


**Inception soundtrack:** From YouTube and Apple Music.



\*Because Inception is a movie, it follows a plot diagram. The score follows the flow and action of the screenplay which in turn forces it to also follow the plot diagram.

### **Critical analytics in chronological order of Appearance in the screenplay:**

1. A large part of this short opening piece to the great picture is ominous and sweeping. *Half a Remembered Dream* sounds were intended and composed to almost pick up the listener off their feet with the deep feeling of mystery. The feeling of mystery and the larger unknown of the movie is shown through strings as if you were bouncing forever in deep dark space. Feelings created like these are truly sensational and the emotion the audience is left with is complete satisfaction. The accompanying sounds of fluent white noise and continuous strings in a low and frightening fashion from ear to ear gives the listener that magnificent sense of being lost. From a musical point of view, we can see that this feeling of being lost is made through the composer's use of surround sounds that engulf the audience, hence, that mysterious sensation. The unidentifiable sounds build and build and finally they all come to a stop. Silence overcomes noise, and we are left with nothing but more mystery and a created sense of suspense and excitement for the beginning of the story. It has opened up our minds to be ready for what is to come.

2. This new second piece is much more electric and stuffed with action. No more do we get a sense of nothing but we get a sense that something is going to happen. The Melodic sounds of mystery and guitar almost give the reader a sense that they are watching a James Bond film. Accompanying the screenplay, the music completely changes all aspects, compared to when it is played alone and all that shows through are how the true feelings of pressure and suspense are created. It simply makes your heart pound. This is done similarly in *Half a Remembered Dream* through the continued sweeps of ominous noise. Now, in this piece, a suspenseful thundering bass is added as we build and build. The song eventually comes to another silent resolution leaving the listener in more feelings of what's going to happen. A conflict. This is very fitting for this sort of movie as the idea of it all is pure captivation and the piece manages to captivate you without going over the edge.

3. *Dream is Collapsing* begins with a guitar and a simple rhythm that immediately gives the listener or viewer of the movie a feeling of action and that something big will and is happening in their present. The piece resembles something of a higher place and you can tell through the tempo and eardrum crumpling strikes on the bass drum that the piece was built for an intense chase scene. It is really the first time we dive into what this film is going to be all about and we are taken aback by its glory. The song begins off stronger than anything shown yet with an intense melodic guitar and as we venture further into it Zimmer only tops it. The intensity of the build-up tells us as an audience that we need to be ready for a greater wave of action following its sound and more importantly that something in the unknown is coming. And although the majority of the song's runtime is dedicated to a build-up to a final conclusion, it tells a story within itself as one takes over another and that takes over that. The high intensity from the very beginning makes one scratch his head on how to top it, but as the composer litters the song with more and more sounds it all builds to yet another climax within. The strike of which Zimmer hits us is like a hammer and the feat accomplished is nothing short of impressive. Similar to that of *Imperial March* in the *Star Wars* universe. The thunder of the final moments in the song translate to the heart and the audience is left in an awe of fear, wonder and disbelief. The simplicity and breakthrough of the simple beat is perfectly fitting for what is trying to be accomplished in the minds of the audience.

4. *Radical Notion* is not a fast piece. As intended, the slowness of the music gives the feeling to someone watching the film, that the situation the characters are in is of importance and there has been a great breakthrough. Something big is lurking in the shadows and we can not see it yet. The piece is not to adrenalize its listener but to make sure their attention is kept and paying attention to every aspect of the movie while it is playing. A great example of this is how the larger first two-thirds of the song are momentous and grand. They do not feel as if they were building and building towards something greater, but as if we are already at the place to be and we must maintain the course keeping the listener hooked. Only at the last few moments of the song do we see it taking another direction. The composer begins to speed up at a quick rate bringing your ears to a peak. Loud horns shake the eardrum and finally bring the weight of the song forward. Once again we are left with a soundless nothing when the composition comes to a halt and a dissipating silence, leaving us in another feeling of confusion, yet lust for more.

5. Seven minutes and forty-four seconds is an astoundingly long time for a single piece of music to be part of a movie. From the very length of the song, it is very reasonable to inference that the song will begin at someplace weak, as it does, and very slowly but steadily captivate whoever may be listening by just barely keeping them on the edge of their tiptoes. A great way Zimmer keeps us on the edge is through his mystically travelling piano through this new and different journey of the story of *Inception*, all while keeping the similarities of action with the cut-ins and outs of the guitar. The primary device used for the identifiable melodies that give the soundtrack its description and main theme. A large portion of the piece is devoted to simple surrounding sounds. They are sinister, and yet they create a sense of ease and wonder as they travel through our hearts as orchestrated noise. The feelings all come together and eventually even seem to combine. It begins to build. The sinister of the feelings overcome all else and

when it decides to part ways it opens the gate to a simpler feeling, primarily resolution although we still have a piece of threat left inside us.

6. *528491* is a strange title and the feeling and thoughts coming to mind immediately after pressing play are heart pounding and immediately building. Low strings begin the composition and as we quickly build the strings we come to a higher and higher space, and not only do the notes go higher but the connection between the form and sound of the continuous pattern of climbing notes peaks the greater feeling of suspense in the listener all trying to be achieved by these sounds. The way Zimmer brings the audience to a peak and out of their seats in the theatre is astounding here, and to maintain that powerful hard to achieve feeling he sets down the most simple, yet thunderous line of notes that just so happen to appeal to any listener, especially after being pulled up a large slope and finally getting to sled down in brilliant fashion.

7. Right of the gates the presence Hans Zimmer gives us in *Mombasa* is far different from anything we have experienced yet. A very fast tempo begins the song letting the listener know that something high paced, quick, and attention-seeking is going to happen. The very quick plucks of sound wave over each other in an orderly fashion increasing in intensity and steadily being added onto by various melodies. First, the melody transforms into somewhat of a positive one but after a short amount of time, the main themes being carried through inception begin to glimmer through showing its true colours. This piece of music is far different from the many others in *Inception*. Its quick tempo and diverse more light-hearted harmonies and melodies give it an ambiance that time is ticking and something needs to get done. These factors also make it one of the more unique pieces of music.

8. *One Simple Idea* out of the box seems to be quite simple. Sounds simply pass by our ears and not much seems to be happening. A simple line of sounds and notes repeats through the whole song, low and orderly. From time to time the "Inception vibe" is queued to come in and accompanies the somewhat blank track. You could quite simply say that it is just a filler and it is taking up blank space or maybe even just there to make the next track have a stronger effect. Whatever the case may be, the audience is not left with a question of where the track was leading somewhere but if it was moving at all. It did not seem to follow the basic plot diagram but more of a straight line possibly slanting slightly upwards towards the end.

9. The intensity, depth, and meaning that this song will have is shown right as we press play with a cloud of sound, a cloud of *Inception*. Quickly building up and up the clarity that this song is for *Inception* is extraordinary. Nothing but heartbeats are created in the audience when the key themes and melodies in *Inception* are brought in strong as ever. Building and building the sounds eventually come to a resolution and the listener is left with almost sadness as all seems to crumble down to a slow soft noise. The emotion the combination of such a strong opening brings leading into such a contradiction is heavy. The conflict attempting to be achieved here by Zimmer in his sounds allows for the listener to be intrigued and awake and a lust for more. Out of the quiet noise following the excitement comes a small rise of hard pounding mystery but it all comes and dissipates to a small glimmer again. It all gives the audience a sense of movement

and as if they are on a journey. The main Inception theme from *Time* slowly creeps in and it is there to strike something in the audience. The beauty of the sound following so much catastrophe simply ignites a primal emotion in the audience and before they know it they are right back into the action after being taken out of their heads and bodies. Another guitar pluck in Inception fashion is introduced and reminds you that not all is jolly and good like the resolution of time portrays. More contradictions are added in one after the other catching the audience off guard and almost setting off a spark and lighting the match on fire. Sinister notes under-lye the whole ordeal and truly bring a feeling that we are or have even reached the tip of the Inception plot diagram and though we may know everything, not all is resolved like we expect to hear when the screenplay comes to an end.

10. *Waiting for a Train* was discarded by Warner Bros and now nonexistent.

11. A very high mysterious noise follows the changing of the key Inception chords progression. Soon by its side is another sound to follow it. Familiarity is taken away from the audience and all is lost. A sad progression of sound follows and could quite possibly be feeling the tale of a now-deceased loved one. Out of the blue, the audience is hit by a small change taking a portion of that sadness emotion away, but not destroying it. The melody morphs into yet another sinister, though unique, Inception melody line accompanied by hard-hitting bass drums and all. The sounds seem to move us but not take us any higher as we are almost down the slope of the pyramid. Hans Zimmer realizes this and leaves us at a place where we are still capable of viewing the resolution in an open-minded manner.

12. *Time*, the most beautiful and momentous piece of them all. It has been heavily foreshadowed throughout the entire text appearing with hints of itself in almost every track. With the plot diagram, we have now come to a resolution in our story and the song carries that on its back. The feelings it gives off perfectly matches that of its description. It truly shows the highest place in the film, although at the very end. An overwhelming feeling of insignificance and mesmerization occur as a result of Hans Zimmer's work. The dramatic effect carried throughout this song is really a reflection of the whole screenplay and the music accompanying it. It is a final resolution to the spectacular film with all its story components and beauty. The very last notes of the song carry a light sound with the most hard-hitting last thought of everything. As if your life is flashing before your eyes. All the audience is left with is what appears to be nothing on the surface but a reflection on emotion and the greater everything down deeper as they are impacted by the bigger picture and greatest themes of Inception.

An overview of the whole soundtrack, from my perspective...

Throughout this journey of sound, Hans Zimmer was able to continuously capture my mind. The way he changed things up just enough in each track and each section of each track was orchestrated perfectly. *Inception* is such a different movie from any other as the story is so raw and deep. John Williams deemed one of the greatest composers of all time is rivalled by Zimmer's work in my opinion. Williams wrote the music for *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter* and other famous titles, but Zimmer has created this spectacular masterpiece that could not be looked down on and is possibly one of the most connected pieces to its screenplay making it one of the greats. The soundtrack's uniqueness is one of my favourite parts and the way Zimmer manages to follow the plot diagram with that truly brought the emotion of the story to my soul without the screenplay of the movie. Mr. Zimmer manages to, through his music, create within me an even deeper respect for music and how music can tell a story like no other.