

Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy (design & music: Olivieri)

Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy, is a satiric adaptation of the 1987 thriller starring Glenn Close and Michael Douglas. The film, which has become an icon of America in the 1980s, is deconstructed on the stage with a full Greek chorus, characters named after the actors who portrayed them in the film, a grown man playing a young girl, and a nightmarish ballet featuring a boiled bunny. The play seeks to skewer the two-dimensionality of how women are portrayed in art (as either heartless ambitious vampires or brainless vapid homemakers) by focusing on the Grecian scale of the themes. To support these ideas, I created underscoring and music for the world premiere of this play, which was performed on a unit set in 70 minutes.

This piece is a distillation of the major pieces of the Sound Design and Score for Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy. It starts with underscoring for the chorus. The throbbing tones that begin at 0:18 were all individually cued off of actors' lines in production. At 1:05, the music shifts to a lecherous cliché jazz tune, which underscores the cocktail party where Michael Douglas and Glenn Close met. I developed the jazz vocabulary as a thematic structure for Michael Douglas, who was played as perpetually on the make. At 1:50, the music shifts abruptly (most of the transitions in production were abrupt) back into underscoring for the chorus. The next transition is at 2:10, when the music makes an abrupt shift into a 1980s-feeling synthesizer pop-music piece, which, when combined with frenetic running about on the stage, helped to create a busy street corner. The lascivious jazz music reappears at 2:47, but shortly after it starts, very heavy booms augment it, which foreshadows Glenn Close's lethal obsession (by design, everything in this production was heavy-handed). The infamous freight-elevator-sex scene was portrayed downstage center, and was underscored with a light-jazz elevator-music version of George Michael's "I Want Your Sex" (3:59). At 4:27, the jazz music returns once more, but this time it has a sense of urgency as Michael Douglas searches through Glenn Close's apartment for evidence of her insanity; the two sax riffs were individually cued off of the actor's performance. This piece fades into another section of underscoring for one of Glenn Close's mad scenes. After Michael Douglas discovers that Glenn Close has kidnapped his daughter, he becomes a man of action, ripping off his shirt and running in hot pursuit of Glenn Close; the music at 6:15 underscores that running. At 6:58, the music abruptly cuts out to allow the chorus to give some last-minute advice to Michael Douglas, but the pause is brief, and soon the synth-pop music returns, thicker and quicker. At 7:45, the final piece of underscoring comes in, as we see Glenn Close blown to bits against the bathroom wall; this music underscores the chorus as they deliver their epilogue.

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