The Dichotomy of Eternal Strife: When the Furies Met the Eumenides

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Muncie, Indiana

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May, 2002 and December, 2001
Artist Statement
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The Dichotomy of Eternal Strife: When the Furies Met the Eumenides

When we started this project we had no idea that it would be so apropos to the events that have currently been reshaping the lives of every American. This thesis began one dark and stormy night over Chinese food and Starbucks ice cream. Originally we wanted to develop a thesis that would incorporate our diverse interests and use a method of presentation that differed from the usual honors paper. The struggle between good and evil had always interested us, as it is a major theme in Greco-Roman myth and the literature of the Humanities Sequence. This motif proved to be of such magnitude that we were able to utilize the multifarious dimensions of our academic lives. The idea of a play and accompanying dance quickly evolved into a multimedia presentation of the battle between good and evil.

Our exploration of human nature immediately raised the question of whether the human race, both as individuals and within society, is internally driven by good or by evil forces. Rather than attempting to answer the essentially unanswerable, the goal of the thesis became the evocation of this question in our audience. We decided that a play would be the most direct and entertaining method of accomplishing our objective.

In order to utilize the themes of good and evil in mythology, the play was set on Mt. Olympus and some of the more prominent figures in mythology became our characters. Because we did not want to propose an answer to the question at hand, we decided that the players should simply discuss the opposing aspects of humanity. Based on their roles in mythology, we chose deities, who would give a balanced presentation of both sides of the issue. Thus Medusa, Ares and Hades took the stance that humans were innately evil and Aphrodite, Apollo and Artemis gave evidence of the good that exists
within humanity. Hera maintained her historical role as the Devil’s Advocate. Zeus, also maintaining his historical role, remained neutral and presided over the discussion. Having posed the question of whether or not humanity should be destroyed, Zeus listened to arguments for both sides. As the discussion unfolded we were able to present the fact that good and evil exist in varying degrees within humanity. Inevitably the theory that humanity will eventually destroy itself was raised. This led us to World War III, which Ares started as a way to end the debate that had no foreseeable conclusion. The war served the purpose of providing an ending that would not answer the question.

The second part of our presentation involved a more abstract way of illustrating the two sides of our proverbial coin. Live dance sequences, interspersed between the arguments of the film, provided us with concrete imagery allowing for the personification of Good, Evil, and the ongoing and violent struggle between them. Similar movement in the dances allowed us to show that the edges of good and evil cannot always be clearly defined. The combination of dance with the technical aspects of music, lighting, costuming and staging brought out the personalities of the forces of Good and Evil themselves, thus setting up the clash of the Battle. The Battle provided a way to show that Death is universal, with neither good nor evil being able to escape it. As the only force that is both pure and eternal, Death itself is neither good nor evil, but is black, white, and all shades of gray. In order that the question remained unanswered, we decided to not show either Good or Evil winning the battle. Instead, Death reigns supreme over the carcass-strewn field as the remnants of Good and Evil continue the struggle.
The experience of this project has brought us enlightenment in several respects. This project made us explore our definitions of good and evil, as well as our thoughts about the ways in which humanity must strive for balance between good and evil. One of the complexities raised in this project has been the difficulty of finding a cut and dry definition of good and evil. Everyone has his/her own interpretation and definition of these two driving forces, and they are very often depicted as true black and true white. The concept that few people have either the mental or emotional capacity to accept is that there are many shades of gray between black and white, and that everyone must decide for him/herself where the line between good and evil exists within the gray area. The conclusion we have come to echoes the teachings of Lao Tzi, and Daoist principles. Good and Evil are caught together in a symbiotic relationship, neither being able to exist individually. Light cannot exist without shadow, for it would be impossible to define light without its converse also being present. The daily struggle, as we see it, is one that occurs not only within societies, but also within ourselves. The project as a whole has come to represent this struggle within each person as well as the struggle throughout humanity.
Exemplum

Throughout the play we made reference to Dante’s trilogy, specifically The Inferno. Early in the project we realized that we believe, as did Dante, that the varying shades of good and evil are both present and necessary within society. The references that we made within the play allowed us to illustrate the varying shades of good and evil. When condemning humanity, Hades expressed the fact that the varying degrees of evil were punished in Hell based on how grave the sin committed was. Hera pointed out the fact that not every sin committed is perceived as being a sin by the person(s) involved, such as overthrowing a tyrant. With this conversation, we established the fact that a grey area overlaps the boundaries of good and evil. Dante also recognized the existing grey area in Purgatorio and, through Paridisio, showed the rewards humans reaped by leading good lives.

In addition to the film, we represented these three aspects, as delineated by Dante, through the dance sequences. The evil dance is not only a personification of evil, but also a representation of demonic forces. Similarly, the good dance is also a representation of righteous forces. The grey shrouded dancers stand for the victims of war, and are also a physical representation of the indefinable area between good and evil.

As shown through the works referenced page, we were influenced by a wide variety of literature, myth, and cinematically represented archetypes. This is just a small example of how we were able to incorporate our humanities background into the thesis.
Books
Homer: The Odyssey, Homeric Hymns
Aeschylus: Agamemnon
Sophocles: Oedipus
Euripides: The Bacchae
Bible: Genesis
Plato
Catullus: Poetry
Vergil: Aeneid
Petronius: Satyricon
Beowulf
Song of Roland
Dante: The Inferno
Shakespeare: Julius Caesar, Much Ado About Nothing
Voltaire: Candide
Carol: Alice in Wonderland
Dostoevski: The Grand Inquisitor on the Nature of Man
Dickens: A Tale of Two Cities
Freud: Civilization and its Discontents
Nietzsche: The Genealogy of Morals
Atwood: The Handmaid’s Tale
Sarte: No Exit, The Flies
Camus: The Stranger
Salinger: The Catcher in the Rye
McCafferey: Dragonsdawn

Myths
Medusa and Pegasus
Aphrodite and the sea foam
Ares and Aphrodite
Human Creation
Flood Myths
Medusa and Perseus
Atreus and Theyestes
Gaea and Typhoeus
Amazons
Zeus’ Infidelities
Arthurian Legends
Artemis and Acteon

Film
The Wizard of Oz
Star Wars
Aliens
Apollo 13
Cast List:

Zeus: Bill Magrath
Hera: Joanne Edmunds
Ares: Chris Pustelnik
Medusa: Victoria Upton
Apollo: Dan Snyder
Aphrodite: Becky Martin
Hades: Tim Pyle
Artemis: Deceil Moore
God: Kelly Miller
Hermes: Ian Orr
The Script

Enter Apollo and Aphrodite together. They sit down at the table and look around.

Artemis enters close on their heels and nods to her brother, but ignores Aphrodite. The gods have no clue as to what Zeus wants and they discuss possible reasons for the meeting.

Enter Hades. He sits down apart from the others and doesn't say anything.

Ares enters, followed by Hera, they sit and nod hello to the other gods. When Zeus enters the other gods stop talking and look at him. He stands at the head of the table and looks officious.

Zeus: Hermes, are we ready for this?

Hermes: Hold on a second, I can't seem to turn this thing on. The button isn't on the keyboard.

Zeus (looking officious): Friends, gods, brothers and sisters, children . . .

Medusa enters and glares at the other gods, daring them to comment.

Medusa: Hi, how ya doin'? Traffic was a bear, and Pegasus ran off after a Unicorn.

Zeus (rolls his eyes): One more time, Friends, gods, brothers and sisters, children, - Gorgon. I have called a meeting because I have become very concerned with the state of the human condition. It has worsened these last few millennia, and I think it maybe time for another flood so that we can start over again.
**Hera:** But darling, if you killed them all, whom would you have to toy with? You know how causing the humans pain relaxes you.

*Zeus glares balefully at his wife.*

**Apollo:** Father, I would have to disagree with you on this. You can't kill all the people! They're not as innately evil as you think they are.

**Zeus:** How many times have I told you not to call me that during business hours.

**Artemis:** My brother is correct. We don't have to kill all the people. It's the men that are the problem.

**Hera:** Would you like that, Hades? All those petty humans knocking on your gates?

**Hades:** Oh, that's just wonderful. Send me more work while you all go to Tahiti for a vacation. Charon is getting tired, Cerberus is over worked, my office is filled with so much backed up paper work that I can't see the door anymore, and I'm running out of wax for my signet ring.

**Aphrodite** *(whining)*: But, Zeus, why do you want to kill all the humans?

**Ares:** Yeah Big Guy, if you kill all the humans, I'm out of a job.

**Hera:** Oh, now Ares. If the humans were all dead, you'd have more time to spend with the lovely lady of the foam while her husband is in the workshop.

**Aphrodite:** Who's the lady of the foam? Ares! Are you seeing somebody else?

**Zeus** *(tosses a lightening bolt)*: Enough! The humans have lost sight of what is important, and are no longer faithful to us. Before I precipitate a particular course of action, I want us to come to a mutual agreement concerning the fate of these clay creatures.
Medusa: Why send a flood, oh most powerful one? I can turn them all into statuary for your gardens.

Hera: We all know how Zeus loves to sow his gardens.

Zeus opens his mouth to chastise his wife, but Hades cuts him off.

Hades: If you look at most of the case files I see, it's obvious that people are innately evil. I get souls all the time who have killed their parents, lovers, dashed the cup, caused wars, been assassins, drug dealers, and brought economic ruin to countries that would have been better off on their own. And don't even get me started on the Tramalchio's of the world.

Medusa: All those humans are suffering down there on earth, so we might as well put them out of their misery.

Hera: But, my dear, if they're all dead, you would lose all your playthings.

Medusa: I'm not your dear, and there are other things much more challenging than humans. (Glares meaningfully at the goddess)

Hades: Back to the subject at hand, there are plenty of examples that prove humans are not a fit race to continue living. Just look at Atreus. He chopped up and fed Theyestes' own sons to him.

Aphrodite looks a little green around the edges.

Hera: And let's not forget Oedipus. He was so twisted Freud felt obliged to create a whole theory about him. (Looks meaningfully at Zeus while speaking.)

Zeus clears throat

Medusa: And don't forget Freud's other theory about Electra.

Zeus (shifts uncomfortably): Ok, enough with the Freud. Do you have anything else?
Hades: Well then there was all that blood shed from the Bakamatsu in Japan in the 1800's.

Hera: But those groups thought they we're doing the right thing for their country. Is that really evil?

Hades: Hey, all I know is that suddenly the underworld was flooded with souls and I was backed up for months. As soon as I got everyone assigned to the appropriate circle, the Americans had to go and have that Civil War. I don't know, Zeus I think that the humans are just gonna kill themselves off. If you have a little patience you could save yourself the trouble of a flood.

Ares: Ya' know Big Guy, I haven't caused a good war in a while, I'd be happy to help you out with that.

Fingers hilt of sword eagerly

Zeus: World War III would most likely involve atomic power, and I'm don't want Gaea to feel that she is giving birth to another Typhoeus.

Artemis: Yeah, and we don't want all the women running around in red dresses.

Zeus: I can't deal with another Hitler --

Hades: What are thinking? Stalin is still trying to take over Ring 9.

Medusa: It's the humans' own curiosity of firearms and technology that has brought them to this end. Their need for their things to be bigger, stronger, and faster than the next guy's is the real problem.

Artemis: (sarcastically) Boys with toys.

Zeus (cell phone rings): Excuse me a minute. (Half turns and picks up his cell phone.)

Zeus, talk to me.
**God**: Zeus, God here. I have an idea. Let's tell the Dahli Lama to build an ark that is X cubits big to put all the animals in, and...

**Zeus**: I don't have time for this right now, I'm in the middle of a very important meeting.

(Pause) And what the hell is a cubit?

**Hera**: I wish that **God** person would quit calling you. How did she get your cell number, anyway?

**Medusa**: Don't worry 'bout it, hon. How could you ever doubt your loving husband, anyway?

**Aphrodite**: I can't believe how much the humans have been neglecting Mother Earth.

**Medusa**: I know! Let's turn Bacchus loose and get a return to nature going!

<Enter Dance Sequence One>

**Zeus**: *(rolling eyes)* Ok, I've heard enough bad stuff for one day. Is there anything good about these humans?

**Artemis**: Well, the women are inherently good, it's the men you've got to worry about. Women are naturally peaceful. If left on their own, they will begin to worship us again.

**Ares**: Time Out! If you get rid of all the men, then I'd be out of a job because women *(chuckle)* can't fight.

**Artemis, Hera, Medusa**: What? / I beg your pardon? / Excuse me?

**Artemis**: You've got that all wrong. Remember the Amazons? Behind every good man is a better woman ready to pass him.

**Hera**: Just take a look at the **mighty king** over there.
Zeus: You DON'T want to go there.

Medusa: Women can fight just as well as men, don't you remember the storming of the Bastille?

Ares: Ok. Point taken, but still...

Apollo: But back to my sister's original comment... It is not only the men who are causing a moral decline; the women have an equal part in it. For instance: Clytemnestra, Lucretia Borgia, and Mary Tudor. But really, Zeus, humans aren't all that bad, in fact I kind of like them. Many people still visit my Oracle at Delphi and the Pantheon, which is dedicated to all of us. This proves that humans are still interested in us. It wouldn't take too much for us to make a comeback.

Aphrodite: I agree with Apollo, humans aren't all bad. Beowulf sacrificed himself for his people, there was Joan of Arc, and Clara Barton started the Red Cross, and just look at how many people that organization has helped. And don't forget my son who founded the Roman race.

(Everyone rolls their eyes)

Apollo: You've neglected to mention the most giving human of all, Mother Theresa. Even though she was a Catholic, she still did a lot of good for many suffering people.

Ares: Aphrodite, are you wearing perfume? You smell like pine trees.

Aphrodite: What is your problem, we're trying to discuss the human race, try to focus! Humans don't realize the error of their ways. They didn't forget us, we let them forget.

Apollo: That's right, we took that vacation and then Pontius Pilate got control. By the time we got back it was too late, so we just stopped appearing to them. We left the
humans dangling out there on their own. They were confused, and they didn’t know where to turn, so they looked for another authority figure.

**Zeus:** True, but I'm not convinced that they shouldn't be wiped out.

**Medusa:** I still think you should let me turn them into statues, then we could have a giant game of chess.

**Hera:** My Pope Leo X to your Henry VIII.

**Apollo:** Chess would be fun, but back to the matter at hand... Humans really aren't all that bad. Most of them support organizations such as UNICEF, the Salvation Army, and the Christian Children's Fund.

**Hades:** Hello!? When was the last time you took a good look at Wall Street? I've got a bunch of brokers down in Ring 4, all they do is bicker and trade brimstone.

**Apollo:** Before my uncle so rudely interrupted me, I was trying to tell you about those who are devoted to unselfish pursuits, like charity work. There are more than you would think down there. And just look at all the parental units trying to raise kids; ya' know they don't come with an instruction manual.

**Hera:** Well you got that right young man, do you remember the time when you took your chariot and started chasing the furies...

**Apollo:** Ok moving on...

**Artemis:** Like I said, just get rid of the men and the world would be a better place.

**Aphrodite:** But, I like the men.

**Ares:** snickers

**Medusa:** Let's just end this discussion right now. I vote that we get rid of the humans and keep all the animals. After all, humans are the only species that kill their own kind.
Hera: But Medusa, you can't manipulate animals, like you can with the humans, they just do their own thing. Humans are much more fun to toy with. Isn't that right Zeus?

Zeus: Well... that's true. The good thing about humans is you never know what they're going to do next. They each react to a situation differently.

Hades: Anyone ever hear of Darwin?

Aphrodite: Yeah, if we destroyed the humans, the other primates would just evolve to replace them.

Hades: Zeus, dear brother, tell us all why exactly did you create humans in the first place?

Zeus: I believe my original thought was that humans would worship us and take care of our garden, the Earth.

Medusa: Well, I think they dropped the ball on the 'taking care of Mother Earth' thing.

Apollo: That's because we abandoned them. They didn't start neglecting the Earth until we took that blasted vacation. They forgot what their purpose was because we weren't there to remind them. That's why we should give them a second chance.

Artemis: I say we start showing them that we are still here, and that we care about them. Turn them from the wrong path, it will.

Hera: But humans are such frail, emotional creatures. I'm not sure we could show them our presence again without throwing the whole world into chaos.

Ares: Well, she hit that nail on the head. Those humans are just too over emotional. At the slightest provocation they start cutting each others' throats. Maybe it's time to call in Roland and that horn of his.
Aphrodite: They're emotionally confused because they're all searching for their one true love. Just look at Odysseus and what he went through to get back to his wife. He should have stayed with Circe.

Ares: All that sappy love poetry of Cattulus. "Give me a thousand kisses...." And all that crap.

Aphrodite: I think that love is a good enough reason to keep the human race going.

Hades: I have an idea. We can scrap this messed up version of humanity and start over fresh, and make sure things work this time. Or even return to the time when men and women were connected at the spine!

Medusa: And how, prey tell, would you make sure things worked well this time?

Artemis: Gods, lords, and minor deities! I couldn't stand being connected to a man for my whole life! That would be a fate worse than death! No offense Hades.

Apollo: There's so need to scrap this version of humanity. They just need to find their heart. Many are already making great strides towards this.

Hera: But if they only had a brain.

Aphrodite: I hear that random acts of kindness are making a come back.

Hermes: Slow it down a little, guys. I have to type all this you know and I think they're making these keyboards smaller too.

Hera: Well, when you have incompetence at they keyboard it's difficult, isn't it.

Artemis: I've been thinking. The best thing about humans is their individualistic nature. Their diverse interests are what you enjoy toying with the most, anyway.

Zeus: Come to think of it, those human creatures do amuse me, in spite of the fact that they have been neglecting us.
Apollo: See, there really is no need to destroy them because we can manipulate them into becoming better creatures.

Zeus: Hmm... I like the sound of that.

Apollo: I thought you would, Dad, they really aren't hopeless.

Aphrodite: Right! Human diversity is a mosaic, to beautiful to destroy.

<Enter Dance Sequence Two>

Come back to Olympus and find all the gods erupted in arguments. Ad lib.

Zeus (stops fight): Let's recap. The main arguments are that humans are innately evil and should be wiped out. On the other side that humans are evil because we abandoned them and we need to show them their true path. But that still doesn't answer the question of whether or not we should just wipe them out, or try to salvage the situation.

Hera: Well, Zeus, if you look at the evidence it seems like we could give them a few years to straighten things out with our help. If that doesn't work, we may have no choice but to send a flood, just to save the Earth. But I don't think it would hurt to give them a second chance. Your son pointed out that we did abandon them, so it would only be fair to try to help the poor creatures.

Aries slips out of the room for a moment.

Artemis: I still don't see why can't just kill off the men.

Apollo: Isn't there anything you like about men.

Artemis: Yes, they don't live as long.
Medusa: I say we kill them off and leave Earth to the less mercenary animals.

Hera: Tyger Tyger, burning bright.... *(taunting Medusa)*

*Aries comes back in grinning like the Cheshire Cat.*

Medusa: My, Ares. What a big Albatross you have.

*Ares tries to look guilty, but is too pleased with himself.*

Zeus: By all the apples on Avalon, Ares, what have you done?! Those little rodents are fighting again *(looking at the view screen on the table in front of him).*

Artemis: And whose fault is that, oh God of War? They couldn't start a fight that big without your help.

Ares: I gave them a little shove in the right direction. Sometimes a little war is all they need to realize what is important in life.

Artemis: Ares, you moron!

Hera: Well, that proves it. War is mindless.

Hades: Oh great! Another war! Charon and Cerberus are going to start bombarding my e-mail with vacation requests. And where am I going to get another secretary?!

Ares: Hey, quit your whining! War is a fact of life. Think of it as Drano for Humans.

Artemis: You...you...you sheet bound, blood thirsty, sword crazy, scum sucking, sewer dwelling, rat bastard, sorry excuse for a man!

Ares: Zeus, can we end this now! I would rather wade into Hell and face the hostis Cataline without my sword, than hold another three words with that harpie!! *(Points at Artemis)*

Artemis: Enough of this! Ares, you are an overgrown phony windbag. *(Zaps Ares into a stag.)*
Zeus: Now was that really necessary?

Artemis (sniffs): I think it was.

Medusa (looking at view screen): Olympus, we have a problem. (Everyone looks at her)

There're some trigger happy Reds down there, and it don't look good.

Hera: Aww, Mary Mother of God... Ares! (Looks at Ares. Pauses.) Never mind.

Hades: Well, we might not need that flood after all. I think I need to get back to my office before all Hell breaks loose. (leaves)

Aphrodite: Zeus, we have to do something to stop them. Gaea's gonna be miffed.

Apollo (sighs heavily): Well, it's off to the lab to help the humans find a cure for radiation poisoning. (leaves)

Zeus (looks at Aphrodite): When I took over the Universe, the agreement was to just sit back and watch what happens, with minor meddling. This wouldn't count as minor. All we can do now is clean up this mess. Meeting adjourned (everyone leaves. Zeus sits with his head in his hands)

From Off Stage:

Ares: Artemis? Hey, Artie, can we talk about this? I don't think the reversal spell worked. Why do I have long floppy ears? (pause) I don't the way your wolves are looking at me....

Artemis: Look girls. Dinner. (evil chuckle)

Zeus packs up and slowly walks out.
In order to give the reader an idea of the various aspects that we were responsible for and the amount of time that went into this project, we decided to include our schedule for the two weeks leading up to the show.

**Saturday, October 20th**
Finish Making Wings
Make Invitations
Write Artist Statement

**Sunday, October 21st**
Rehearsal 7:30-9:30

**Tuesday, October 23rd**
Meet with Bill
Correct Artist Statement
Find a Costume for Dave
Get Travel Passes for Dancers
Purchase Extra Video Tapes
Call Becky about Borrowing Plastic Swords
Make Posters

**Wednesday, October 24th**
E-mail Bill
Hang Posters
Deliver Remaining Invitations
Purchase Spirit Gum and Swords
Repair Black Wings
Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

**Thursday, October 25th**
Find Lost Rope
Edit Script
Purchase Black Binders
Dye Shrouds
Put Posters in Bill’s Box

**Friday, October 26th**
Work on Program
Buy Breakfast for Dancers
Make Last Minute Costume Checks
Load My Car*

*Load Car With:
Bagels
Cream Cheese
Coffee and Sugar/Creamer
Fruit
Juice
Coffee Pot
Toaster
Peanut butter
Black Skirts
Dresses
Leotards
Rope
Shrouds
Wings
Masks
Music and CD player
Pants
Spirit Gum and Elastic
Safety Pins
Video Camera
Tripod
Tapes
Weaponry
Cape

Saturday, October 27th
Dress Rehearsal 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Sunday, October 28th
Rehearsal 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Monday, October 29th
Talk to Sara about Walkie Talkies
Pass Out Travel Passes
Find White Tights
Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 30th
Dress Rehearsal 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
Start Construction of Stage Wings

Wednesday, October 31st
Fix Program
Write Exemplum
Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 1st
Buy Cookies/Punch for Reception
Borrow Cookie Trays from SAI
Wash Costumes
Fix Emily’s Shoes
Finish Stage Wings
Type This List
Construct Table of Contents

Friday, November 2nd
Tie Up Loose Ends
Load Car with Same Items

Saturday, November 2nd
Get to Pruis Hall by 12:30
Show starts at 2:30
Shower and Change
Celebrate
You are cordially invited to the presentation of Victoria Upton and Karen Zimmerman-Pitchford's Senior Honors Thesis.

What:

"The Dichotomy of Eternal Strife: When the Furies Met the Eumenides"

Where:
Pruis Hall

When:
Saturday, November 3rd, 2:30 P.M.

A discussion and reception will follow the show.
The Dichotomy of Eternal Strife: When the Furies Met the Eumenides

A Senior Honors Thesis
By: Victoria Upton and Karen Zimmerman-Pitchford

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana
November 3rd, 2001
Film

Cast
Zeus: Bill Magrath
Hera: Joanne Edmunds
Ares: Chris Pustelnik
Medusa: Victoria Upton
Apollo: Dan Snyder
Aphrodite: Becky Martin
Hades: Tim Pyle
Artemis: Deceil Moore
God: Kelly Miller
Hermes: Ian Orr

Production Assistant
Crystal Corcoran

Film Crew
Greg White
Rex Orr

Film Editing
John Dalton

Stage Manager
Megan Goodier

Audio Visual / Set
Tom Struckman

Dance

Evil
Lauren Donaldson
Deanna Greenwood
Joy Rhoades
Emily Wilson
Karen Zimmerman-Pitchforc

Good
Kimberly Blake
Billy Blanken
Valerie Moore
Amy Nees
Emily Wilson

Death
David Miller

Lighting
Brandon Snyder

Music Editing
Paul Murphy

Music Credits
Gladiator by Hans Zimmer,
Lisa Gerrard
The Mission by Ennio
Morricone
Romeo and Juliet by Craig
Armstrong
Artist Statement

When we started this project we had no idea that it would be so apropos to the events that have currently been reshaping the lives of every American. This thesis began one dark and stormy night over Chinese food and Starbucks ice cream. Originally we wanted to develop a thesis that would incorporate our diverse interests and use a method of presentation that differed from the usual honors paper. The struggle between good and evil had always interested us, as it is a major theme in Greco-Roman myth and the literature of the Humanities Sequence. This motif proved to be of such magnitude that we were able to utilize the multifarious dimensions of our academic lives. The idea of a play and accompanying dance quickly evolved into a multimedia presentation of the battle between good and evil.

Our exploration of human nature immediately raised the question of whether the human race, both as individuals and within society, is internally driven by good or by evil forces. Rather than attempting to answer the essentially unanswerable, the goal of the thesis became the evocation of this question in our audience. We decided that a play would be the most direct and entertaining method of accomplishing our objective.

In order to utilize the themes of good and evil in mythology, the play was set on Mt. Olympus and some of the more prominent figures in mythology became our characters. Because we did not want to propose an answer to the question at hand, we decided that the players should simply discuss the opposing aspects of humanity. Based on their roles in mythology, we chose deities, who would give a balanced presentation of both sides of the issue. Thus Medusa, Ares and Hades took the stance that humans were innately evil and Aphrodite, Apollo and Artemis gave evidence
of the good that exists within humanity. Hera maintained her historical role as the Devil's Advocate. Zeus, also maintaining his historical role, remained neutral and presided over the discussion. Having posed the question of whether or not humanity should be destroyed, Zeus listened to arguments for both sides. As the discussion unfolded we were able to present the fact that good and evil exist in varying degrees within humanity. Inevitably the theory that humanity will eventually destroy itself was raised. This led us to World War III, which Ares started as a way to end the debate that had no foreseeable conclusion. The war served the purpose of providing an ending that would not answer the question.

The second part of our presentation involved a more abstract way of illustrating the two sides of our proverbial coin. Live dance sequences, interspersed between the arguments of the film, provided us with concrete imagery allowing for the personification of Good, Evil, and the ongoing and violent struggle between them. Similar movement in the dances allowed us to show that the edges of good and evil cannot always be clearly defined. The combination of dance with the technical aspects of music, lighting, costuming and staging brought out the personalities of the forces of Good and Evil themselves, thus setting up the clash of the Battle. The Battle provided a way to show that Death is universal, with neither good nor evil being able to escape it. As the only force that is both pure and eternal, Death itself is neither good nor evil, but is black, white, and all shades of gray. In order that the question remained unanswered, we decided to not show either Good or Evil winning the battle. Instead, Death reigns supreme over the carcass-strewn field as the remnants of Good and Evil continue the struggle.

The experience of this project has brought us enlightenment in several respects. This project made us
explore our definitions of good and evil, as well as our thoughts about the ways in which humanity must strive for a balance between good and evil. One of the complexities raised in this project has been the difficulty of finding a cut and dry definition of good and evil.

Everyone has his/her own interpretation and definition of these two driving forces, however, they are very often depicted as true black and true white. The concept that few people have neither the mental nor emotional capacity to accept is that there are many shades of gray between black and white, and that everyone must decide for him/herself where the line between good and evil exists within the gray area. The conclusion that we have come to echoes the teachings of Lao Tzi, and Daoist principles. Good and Evil are caught together in a symbiotic relationship, neither is able to exist individually. Light cannot exist without shadow, for it would be impossible to define light without its converse also being present. The daily struggle, as we see it, is one that occurs not only within societies, but also within ourselves. The project as a whole has come to represent this struggle within each person as well as the struggle throughout humanity.

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Voltaire: Candide
Carol: Alice in Wonderland
Dostoevski: The Grand Inquisitor on the Nature of Man
Dickens: A Tale of Two Cities
Freud: Civilization and its Discontents
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Atwood: The Handmaiden's Tale
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Salinger: The Catcher in the Rye
McCafferey: Dragonsdaw

Myths
Medusa and Pegasus
Aphrodite and Sea foam
Ares and Aphrodite
Human Creation
Flood Myths
Medusa and Perseus
Atreus and Theyestes
Gaea and Typhoeus
Amazons
Zeus' Infidelities
Arthurian Legends
Artemis and Acteon

Film
The Wizard of Oz
Star Wars
Aliens
Apollo 13