

Beyond the Pink Opaque: An Analysis on Gendered Scoring and Intersectional Identity  
in *I Saw the TV Glow*

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**Definitions from Kassabian’s *Hearing Film*:**

**Desire versus Agency** – a traditionally feminine\* conflict in which a character with limited agency acts on their personal desire, defying the audience’s perception of the character’s passive nature.

**Masculine scoring\*** – scoring identified by rougher timbres, fuller orchestrations, rhythmic and triumphant themes, and brass-heavy instrumentations.

**Feminine scoring\*** – scoring identified by softer timbres, simpler orchestration, melodic themes, and primarily woodwind/string instrumentation.

**Definitions from Hagen’s *Scoring for Film*:**

**Diegetic music** – music that can be heard by the characters within the context of the film.

**Dramatic scoring/pure scoring** – non-diegetic music within a film.

**Source music** – diegetic music whose method of production is understood to be heard by the characters within the film.

**Source scoring** – diegetic music that is reactionary to the film and tailored to the intended emotional effect of a scene

\* Gender in music and film has historically been considered within the male/female binary. *I Saw the TV Glow*, directed by queer filmmaker Jane Schoenbrun, demonstrates gender as a nebulous or indefinite aspect of one’s identity. In this analytical look at the music within *I Saw the TV Glow*, the music is labeled as feminine or masculine based on the accessible terms and research currently recognized within the field. The use of the terms “masculine” and “feminine” is based on current and popular archetypes within film, and are used for consistency rather than definite assumptions of a character’s identity. For this study, traditional roles have been analyzed through a simplified lens based on the accessible terms. It is my hope that through further research, more nuanced conversations can be had about music and gender in film, engaging in the larger conversation about challenging the gender binary.

Table 1: Comparative analysis of music in *I Saw the TV Glow* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

	Music in <i>I Saw the TV Glow</i>			Music in <i>Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom</i>	
	"Claw Machine"	"Anthems For a Seventeen Year-Old Girl"	"Psychic Wound"	Willie Scott's Theme	Indiana Jones' Theme
<b>Tempo</b>	60 bpm	85 bpm	82 bpm	90 bpm	126 bpm
<b>Tonality</b>	B Major	D Major	D Phrygian Dominant	A Major	C Major
<b>Style</b>	Indie alternative	Indie alternative	Rock/Metal	Romantic	March
<b>Phrasing</b>	Melodic, long phrases	Repetitive melody with short phrasing	Short, accented phrases	Flowing, melodic phrases	Repetitive, syncopated, strong and memorable phrasing
<b>Instrumentation</b>	Electric piano (ostinato), bass guitar, synth strings, snare, harp, trumpet	Acoustic guitar, melodic synth strings, sound fx (robotic glitching), electric guitar, drum kit	Distorted electric guitar, active drum kit	Woodwind, strings, horns	Brass, percussion, woodwinds, strings
<b>Vocal Range/Timbre</b>	Airy - higher in range	Robotic, highly edited, disconnected from the body - higher in range	Screaming, rough, gravely - lower in range	n/a	n/a
<b>Lyrical Content</b>	Yearning, nostalgic	Nostalgic, yearning for a simpler time	Dark, moody, angry	n/a	n/a
<b>Associated Character's Sex</b>	Male (Owen)	Male (Owen)	Female (Maddy)	Female (Willie Scott)	Male (Indiana Jones)
<b>Associated Character's Role</b>	Feminine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine

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