



# *Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster\**

## *The Comprehensive Cut V2.0*

Fan Edit by Adam Noyes

\*Title will be referred to as "Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster" due to the official name of the US Release of the film.

- **Mission:** To make a comprehensive version of *Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster* featuring the great qualities of all three versions of the film: The Original Japanese Version *Three Giant Monsters: The Greatest Battle on Earth* (1964), The Continental Cut *Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster* (1965), and Ishiro Honda's personal cut featured at the Champion Film Festival-1969 in Japan known as *Godzilla, Mothra, King Ghidorah: The Greatest Battle on Earth* (1969) {I will be referring this version as *Monster of Monsters* for the sake of clarity differing this version from the Original Version}.\*
  - All three versions have their pros and cons.
  - The Japanese Version (1964) has more character, Ifukube's music as a whole, and the original sound of the actors (93 minutes)
  - The US Cut (1965) is structured far better than the original cut, fixing continuity mistakes, and also uses music in some areas where Ifukube had none, adding more drama to the scenes. (85 minutes)
  - *Monster of Monsters* (1969) maintains the character from the original cut, but keeps up the intensity of the Continental version, though lacks music in some key scenes, and is far too short (at 73 minutes long).
- **Disclaimer:** This is NOT to say this cut will be superior to the others. If anything, this is simply an exercise in dissecting a film I highly enjoy, and studying the power of structure, discovering for myself what works, what doesn't work, what can be kept, and what can't be kept.
  - NO PROFIT will be made from this. NO MONEY is involved, and this is being made out of pure curiosity and to EDUCATE myself and others the importance of film structure and editing. The film WILL NOT be sold anywhere or to anyone.
  - NOTE: This is not the completed version. More cuts and changes are going to be made soon: intercutting the Malmess' shootout with Shindo with the final monster battle being one, and using the far superior TOHO Blu Ray transfer as the main video source is another.
- **Video Quality Changes:** As of now, video copy is exactly the same as the video format ripped from the Classic Media DVD.
  - Future Versions plan on using an HD rip of the Showa Video Blu Ray where further restorations and colorizations can be added to best preserve the highest quality possible that this film deserves. A great source will also be Red Menace's fan reconstruction of The Continental Cut.
    - These will be:
      - Adding contrast with the blacks and whites
      - Adding some basic levels of green and yellows to the film to pull out the colors of exteriors.
      - Adding a 35mm film grain overlay. The Blu-ray video is too clean and it looks clinical.

- **Audio:** Audio to be used primarily from Classic Media's release of the Japanese and Continental cuts.
  - This is due to default. The audio from the TOHO Blu-ray, though not perfect, is far superior to the mono tracks provided in the Classic Media disks. Their release is also only for the Japanese cut, leaving me no choice but to use audio for music cues from the Classic Media DVD. The closest audio source matching this for the Japanese Cut also comes from the Classic Media DVD. So, in the end, the audio will be the somewhat scratchy mono sound instead of the much sleeker TOHO edition. But this is done not to be as much of a distraction when switching between the two tracks. Thus the audio will be rendered in its original monophonic sound.
  - Some scenes using features from the Continental Cut will be used from the Siren DVD (provided by SuperHunterM).
- **Final Words:** *This Comprehensive Cut* (89 minutes) is a fascinating look at structure, sound mixing, and pacing. I am extremely happy at this project, and hope others, in the least, will see it as an interesting alternative to the two readily available versions of Honda's film.

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## What's Changed?

### Overview:

- Each version of *Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster* (GTTHM) has its pros and cons, as stated above. My curiosity got the better of me, and I wanted to see if there is any way to combine each aspect from each version into one, comprehensive cut, while also fixing some genuine mistakes within the film (like Rodan visually roaring, but Godzilla's screech is what comes out of his mouth). Every bit of audio added into the project was downgraded to match the original monophonic sound to hopefully hide the changes, and to make them appear as if in the original edits back in 1964 and 1965.



## Video:

- Most of the changes are made in line with the US Continental Release of GTTHM in 1965. In my humble opinion, this cut is simply structured in a much better way than the original Japanese Version. It's tighter, fixes some continuity errors, but most importantly, makes the movie more intense by bringing the monster action together. A great example is having Ghidrah be born right after Godzilla makes landfall. This re-structure of the film has been applied to "The Comprehensive Cut." Most of these occur during the first two acts of the film.

- **THESE ARE:**

- Ghidrah's meteor crashed right after the first scene. This moves it from just after Shindo's first sequence in the original cut.
- Shindo's first introduction scene is retained. It is a good character moment for him, and adds a bit of comedy to the movie as a whole, preserving the feeling of Shinichi Sekizawa's amazing script.
- Professor Miurai dropping off Naoko is retained. This gives levity to Shindo poking fun at his sister at home. It also makes him a much more rounded character. He's funny at home, but serious when it comes to work. He also loves picking on Naoko and she him.
  - This change was also retained in Ishiro Honda's personal cut of the film (*Monster of Monsters*). I have to agree with him.
  - The bit of both Shindo and Naoko bickering with each other after the Fairies sing to Mothra is also retained. It's funny, and I felt fit the light heartedness of these series of sequences.
- Naoko landing the job of finding the Princess is retained here. It is a good character moment for Naoko, showing her as a strong and respected woman in her profession.
  - It's not so much a scene about her, but a scene about how others look at her, and I felt it to be an important bit for Naoko's character (similar to what I did with Shindo).
- I retained a beautiful wide shot of Rodan rising from the crater removed from the Continental Cut. It was just simply too amazing to leave out.
- In every version of the film, there are two shots where Rodan is clearly the one roaring, but it is Godzilla's roar coming out of his mouth. It is a simple sound design goof.
  - This is when Rodan flies out of Mount Aso, and during his second battle with Godzilla.
    - Both of these have been fixed in "The Comprehensive Cut" with Rodan's roar directly ripped from the original sound tracks available from the Japanese LP.

- I shortened the Assassins' dialogue sequence when they arrived in Japan and got in the car. All the information we needed to know was said in a few lines. Everything else was extraneous. Malmess is also much more ominous the less we know of him.
  - This was also done to correct what would have become a continuity mistake in "The Comprehensive Cut." In the Japanese scene, they discuss Rodan's appearance. While the Continental Cut has the Assassins talk about where the Princess is. The Continental Cut moved this sequence to earlier in the film, as I have done in The Comprehensive Cut, to add to the dramaticism of the film's structure.
  - The *Monster of Monsters* cut also does this.
- Added here was also the music used in the Continental Cut. It is ominous, and fits the sequence better than the Japanese Version. Granted, in the Japanese Version, this silence works. However, with "The Comprehensive Cut's" restructure, that stock music adds a level of eeriness to the sequence needed.
- Professor Miurai listening to the radio after Rodan's appearance was also omitted. This was done in both the Continental Cut & *Monster of Monsters*. Both versions, with "The Comprehensive Cut", just jump to Miurai exiting the tent to examine Ghidrah's meteor due to basic restructuring.
  - This fixed a potential continuity mistake.
- When Godzilla is introduced, a shot of Rodan from his landing is spliced over to this sequence. It gives Godzilla more of a personality, and a reason for both he & Rodan to fight. These shots of Rodan flying and Godzilla looking up at him are also removed from the original landing sequence so no repeating shots are used.
  - This was also done in the Continental Cut.
- The scene of Shindo driving everyone to the clinic is retained. This gives Shindo, again, a more rounded character.
  - It establishes who this Doctor is, and why Shindo looks upon him with such respect. It is also a beautiful scene, and having something beautiful to cut to after something so ugly as Ghidrah arriving is a great juxtaposition.
- Ghidrah's attack in Matsumoto City is moved from directly after his birth, to right after the Princess warns the main characters that he has arrived.
  - It is confusing as to how she knows he has arrived, but did not know if Godzilla & Rodan would be the ones to cause the other calamities. It also ramps up the action to have just a simple break, and then the cacophony of sounds. Having Godzilla's landing, Ghidrah's birth, and the attack all happen right in a row is simply too much.
  - I have also increased the volume of the violent string section of Ifukube's score. It fades out too much in every version of the film I've seen. This adds to the chaos and panic of the scene by having the violent and quick music blend with the sirens and screams of everyone evacuating.



- I have spliced together the first two Godzilla & Rodan fight scenes and removed the interlude battle in the Diet Building. It streamlines the action, and presents a more intense edit, going straight from Mothra leaving for Japan, to smash cut to Rodan & Godzilla combatting.
  - This was originally done in the Continental Cut, but then copied for Ishiro Honda's personal version (*Monster of Monsters*) of GTTHM.
- I have shortened the Princess' speech about everyone not believing in her. Though a great performance by Akiko Wakabayashi, the tension works better for her to end with, "(Ghidrah) is already here."
- Music by Trevor Duncan was uncovered. This music was used in the sequence when Malmess and Shindo have their final shootout. I have overlapped this music over where it was in the Continental Cut. It is far more dramatic than without the music.
  - I also added in the audio cues of Godzilla & Rodan based off of the Continental Cut. In the Original Japanese Version, it is only the ambient sounds of the cavern. This makes no sense since the four giant monsters are battling right above them.
- Two sequences I have added in music based off of what the Continental Cut used, but the original tracks have not been found.
  - These are when Malmess says he has placed a bomb aboard the plane carrying the Princess & when Malmess stands and is ready to kill the Princess and Shindo shortly after she regains her memory.
  - The Continental Cut added in music that builds up the tension overlaid with Ifukube's original music. Though not quite the same in The Comprehensive Cut, I tried my best to match it.

## Changes I Wish to Make:

- I wish to be able to cut out the shot of Rodan roaring in the cavern. It looks silly and vastly contrasts with the music used in both the Original Japanese Version & The Continental Cut
  - I have not been able to do this for I do not have a 5.1 mix of the soundtrack. I only have the "stereo" mix presented by the Classic Media DVD.
    - I would then re-mix Ifukube's track to better match the sequence as a whole.
- The transition to Shindo speaking with the Chief and Malmess being informed that the Princess is still alive needs to be edited better
  - Due to lack of options (this only being V2) the music from the Japanese cut jumps here. This will be fixed in future versions.
- I also wish to intercut the final shootout between Malmess & Shindo with the monster fight. I would basically copy the edits from the Continental Cut using the footage from the Japanese Rip.
  - To keep the music the same, I would just use the audio mix from The Continental Cut, replacing The Original Versions' sound.
- I made the mistake of letting a scene run too long for one frame, resulting in a shot from another scene slipping through. This will be fixed.

- The final battle between Ghidrah, Godzilla, Rodan, and Mothra has more sound effects (mostly roars) in the Continental Cut. The result is a more cacophonous soundtrack, adding the the scale of the battle. This will be done in future versions of The Comprehensive Cut.
  - Using the audio from the Continental Cut of the Siren DVD

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## Music:

- The Japanese Version of GTTHM has the benefit of Akira Ifukube's fantastic music score. This has been re-inserted, for the most part, back into the film. This includes sequences like Godzilla landing in Japan, the arrival of the scientists to Kobe Dam, and restoring the Peanuts Song without the interpreter speaking over it. Some additional music (used directly from the OST) have been added in addition to what was originally there

- **THESE ARE:**

- Rodan's appearance from Mount Aso.
- Godzilla's Landing in Japan
  - This too is shifted (for reasons stated below) until later in the sequence in order to better match the action presented on screen.
- Increasing the volume of the music during Ghidrah's birth
  - The Continental Cut added in music here to bring up the threat level of Ghidrah himself. The Japanese Version had the music fade to almost silence as Ghidrah roars. I simply kept the music at roughly the same level as before this fade, keeping what the Continental Cut wanted, but also retaining Ifukube's amazing track for the scene.
- Adding music to underscore the brief sequence after Ghidrah's attack on the Diet Building
  - Having it continue to play as the Prime Minister begs to Fairies for Mothra's help, then having it fade out to their call is extremely dramatic. It shortened the moment of silence in the Japanese Version & Continental Cut, but still keeps a tense moment of silence.
- A previous track (which was taken out of the scene it was originally used in) has now been placed at the front end of the first attack. This then fades at the right moment into the more intense US stock track (as discussed below) to fade into the Diet Building sequence.
- Increasing the music volume during the Assassins attack on the clinic



- However, several sequences lacked an intensity that the US score (which was all stock music mainly by Anthony Bridges & Trevor Duncan) thankfully provided. These have been kept to a minimum in “The Comprehensive Cut”, but are still there.
  - **THESE ARE:**
    - The Scientists discovering Ghidrah’s Meteor
    - Godzilla’s first appearance (leading into his original theme for the film by Ifukube)
    - The assassins landing in Japan.
    - The Assassins meeting the Princess in the hallway of the Hotel.
      - The Japanese Version is a bit awkward with there being no music at all. I can see where the editor (Ryohei Fujii) was going with this, but it unfortunately did not work. The US score heightens the tension in this moment without having it take over the scene. It is the only music present, like a skip of the heart beat.
    - Using the American drums for a few seconds during Godzilla’s landing.
      - This was done as a break for Godzilla’s theme, but mainly a way to have the music directly edit with the action on screen (discussed in the next section). Having the US music fade to Ifukube’s Rodan theme, *then* go to Godzilla’s theme, adds a bit of urgency and intensity to the sequence as a whole.
    - Fading to the Diet Building from Godzilla & Rodan fighting added an intensity to the sequence better than just smash cutting to it from the Mishimoto Attack by Ghidrah. There is no silence like in the Japanese Version. This edit allows the audience to not have a break, just like the characters on screen.
      - Removing the final section of Ifukube’s music over the battle scene with Godzilla & Rodan also gives the audience a small break from the repetitive nature of the original piece.
    - Mothra’s call to Japan being completely replaced by the US edit with music
      - Fixes the redundancy of the Japanese cut (also carried over in the *Monster of Monsters*’ cut)
    - The Assassin’s final plot to kill the Princess & his death
    - I used the US audio when Ghidrah flies away after being defeated. I found this to be more dramatic than simply having Ifukube’s music fade out.

## Further Changes I Wish to Make:

- The biggest change I wish to make is replacing Ifukube's mountain climbing music with the creepy and atmospheric stock music used in The Continental Cut.
  - I will retain Ifukube's track for when Miurai and party arrives in the trucks. I just think The Continental Cut has a creepier atmosphere, building up tension and adding the mystery of Ghidorah's meteorite.



## What I Discovered:

- What I discovered was that most of the sequences where stock music was applied to in the Continental Cut was because of minor edits within the individual sequences. The editor of the cut had no music to fit to the sequence. They simply could not rehire Akira Ifukube to rescore the sequences. The result was them just adding and mixing their own music available in their library. This is why the music directly edits together better in the Continental Cut of the film. Ifukube scored music not to match sequences, but to underscore them. This is exactly what he did to great effect in GTTHM. Having the music timed directly to the shot edits, in most cases within the Continental Cut, added an intensity to the action on screen.
  - This made editing certain scenes difficult. The best example I can give is Godzilla making landfall. Over 30 individual edits were made to the sequence blending the Continental Cut and the Japanese Version together, and made me appreciate the Continental Version more.

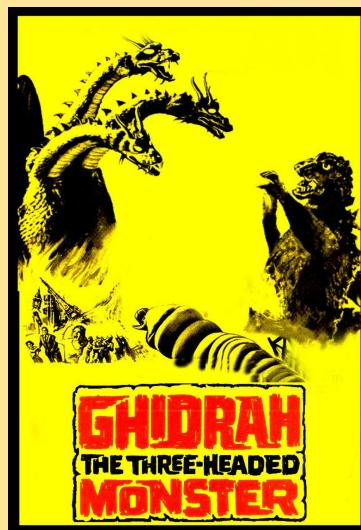
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## Editing

- The first step I took in editing “The Comprehensive Cut” was simply watching the two films scene by scene. I took note of the times the scene played and where it was in context of the film.
  - I even placed both the Japanese Version right next to the Continental Cut side by side. I took detailed notes on every little detail in both editions, and paid attention to what I liked, and disliked.
    - I then began to write an order sheet, numbering each scene from both versions, and placing them where I wanted, or felt was necessary to play the film out.
- My primary editing software is Sony Vegas 15 (recently released). I made two timelines, one consisting of both the Japanese and Continental Cuts. All I did then was simply take the Japanese Version, and arrange it in the order I wanted.
  - Next, I began removing scenes, or shots. At this point, I did not worry about audio. I just cut what I wanted.
- Mixing the audio was a daunting task. Cuts made it difficult to align music and to find a way of having scenes cut to each other without it being too jarring.
  - I discovered by looking at the audio waves with the video timeline that the Japanese did not overlay the soundtrack (the original sound mix) with the scenes that followed. In other words, when a scene cut to another, the audio simply just cut in accordance to the scene. It seemed pretty simple to grasp, but it wasn't.
    - A key tip in editing I have discovered is in the minor details. Having the sound from the previous scene overlap into the next by just a few frames (sometimes even just one) helps the transition from one sequence to the next. I did this to almost every scene in “The Comprehensive Cut” when required. Scenes with fades, or other transitions I left alone to respect the choices of the original film editor Ryohei Fujii.
    - One of my favorite transitions was copied from the Japanese Version, just for a different scene. It cuts from a close up of Miurai looking at a spectrometer to a train passing by to reveal Shindo on the other side returning home. I overlaid the audio of the train over the shot of Miurai, then added a fade-in effect, and timed it to a beat of 4/4 like in the Original Cut.
      - The Original Cut does this too, but during the scene where a scientist assures the press that Mount Aso will not explode. I had to shift this transition to later in order to benefit the new structure of GTTHM.

- Certain scenes were harder than others. While most were simple adjustments mainly in audio, sequences heavily edited that I liked based upon the Continental Cut made syncing both Akira Ifukube's Original Score and also not making it sound awkward was a tremendous challenge.
  - Rodan's first appearance gave me a major issue because of the removal of Rodan roaring inside the crater. It created a major jump in Ifukube's music that I needed to fix. Luckily, I had a huge stockpile of classic TOHO sound effects. In the end, I basically did a complete redesign of the soundtrack from the ground up, making it as close to the original edit as possible. This gave me some freedom though, letting me place the original track from Ifukube where I wanted it, allowing it to sync with the sequence better.

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## Final Run Times:

***Three Giant Monsters: The Greatest Battle on Earth*** (Original Japanese Version, 1964) 93 minutes  
***Ghidrah: The Three Headed Monster*** (Continental Cut, 1965) 85 Minutes  
***Monster of Monsters*** (Ishiro Honda's Cut, 1969) 73 Minutes  
**"The Comprehensive Cut"** (Adam Noyes' Fan Edit, 2018) 89 minutes.

## Special Thanks To

- August Ragone & David Kalaat for providing information of each version of GTTHM
- Red Menace for providing me with HD copies of both the Original Version and his own personal restored version of the Continental Cut
- Gorizard for providing me with Classic Media rips for both the Original Version and Continental Cuts
- SuperNebulaM for providing me with music cues from the Continental Cuts