

MAKING AN ENTRANCE

Michael Douglas is one of Hollywood's greatest stars. As an actor his performances in movies including *Fatal Attraction*, *Basic Instinct* and *Wall Street* (for which he won an Academy Award in 1987) have made him not just a celebrity, but a pop-cultural icon. As a producer, he's been responsible for a series of phenomenally successful films, including the 1975 Academy Award-winning classic *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's nest* and 1984's adventure smash *Romancing the Stone*.

Over the course of his almost 50-year career in movies, Douglas has proven himself to be a man of many, many faces, taking unexpected and distinctive roles that have showcased him as a performer full of surprises. This chameleon-like adaptability continues to shine in recent work – most notably his gleefully flamboyant portrayal of Liberace in Stephen Soderbergh's TV movie *Behind the Candelabra*, which won him a Best Actor Emmy in 2013.

"You research a character in different ways," he says. "Liberace was a Las Vegas performer and there was a lot of film of him. So you could watch a tremendous amount. He was a real person, so you had to capture the inflections of how he spoke, his movements, all of that. And that's just old-fashioned homework – hours and hours of repetition and working on the piano. Then there are characters that are not such masks, that are closer to you. Then it's a thought process. And you learn that if you are just thinking about something, anything, then the camera will catch it."

In his 200 Steps interview, Douglas expounds upon acting with inimical style, discussing lies, movies, comedy and the art of doing nothing. He explores his craft through the medium of the entrance, emerging as a series of different characters from a surreal, floating doorway through which he encounters five imaginary scenarios. He enters, ready to deliver a speech; ominous chiaroscuro sets the mood for revenge; a flickering light does little to reveal who is waiting in the dark; a dentist appointment injects an element of everyday normalcy; suddenly, a bag of dubious nature steals the scene. The short film is yet another testament to Douglas's flawless, chameleonic flair that helped make him the acclaimed and respected actor he is today.