



FILM MUSIC CLASSICS



Macbeth Golgotha Don Quichotte

Film Music by
JACQUES IBERT

Slovak Radio
Symphony Orchestra
Adriano

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

Film Music

Macbeth Suite, 1948

Golgotha Suite, 1935

Don Quichotte 1933

Like his friend and contemporary Arthur Honegger, Jacques Ibert enjoyed in his lifetime a considerable reputation. There is, however, something relatively disproportionate when we examine the discography and bibliography of the two composers. Generally Ibert's music sounds less "modern" than Honegger's and his brilliant use of orchestral colour makes him rather a companion of Ravel than of Roussel, although this judgement may apply only to the works of Ibert in contemporary repertoire, the *Divertissement*, *Escales* and the *Flute Concerto*. The rediscovery of the score for *Macbeth* shows a facet of Ibert that allies him almost with the avant-garde, contradicting the standard opinion of his style, expressed by some writers, as never developing throughout his career.

Before he devoted himself definitively to music, Ibert wanted to become an actor and might have become a very talented one, if we may judge from earlier photographs of the composer. It is clear that a certain dramatic gift found expression in his music, as evinced particularly by the music he wrote for the theatre. In addition to orchestral and chamber music, he wrote six operas (two serious and four comic), seven ballets, a dramatic cantata, incidental music for six stage works and four radio scores. His name appears in the credits of some thirty films and some documentaries, but, as in the case of Honegger, these

contributions are not all full-length scores. *Circus* is a good example of Ibert's abilities as a composer for both film and ballet, a score commissioned for Gene Kelly in MGM's 1956 production of *Invitation to the Dance*. This music was his only film score on record since the early issue of the *Quatre chansons de Don Quichotte*. For two years Ibert had earned a living for himself by playing the piano for silent films and by writing, under the pseudonym of William Berty, popular songs and dance music. Among the French directors who commissioned film scores from him were Maurice Tourneur, Raymond Bernard, Jacques de Baroncelli, Marcel L'Herbier, and Pierre Chénal, for whom Honegger also worked. Curiously, although Ibert and Honegger collaborated on two operas, *L'Aiglon* and *Les petites Cardinal*, they never worked together on a film score, while Honegger collaborated with other composers. In common with other European film composers of the time, both men insisted on undertaking their own orchestrations.

Don Quichotte

G. M. Pabst, one of the greatest directors of silent films and early talkies, created *Don Quichotte* for Feodor Chaliapin, the famous Russian bass, who had also created the title rôle in Massenet's opera on the same subject in 1910. Pabst's 1933 film was to become one

of the classics of the cinema through the director's highly original and poetic vision, which did much more than simply transfer to film the great novel of Miguel Cervantes. The same work was to play an important part in Ibert's later career: in 1935 he composed the choreographic poem *Le chevalier errant*, for soloists, chorus and orchestra, and a lovely *Sarabande pour Dulcinée* for orchestra, with some incidental music in 1942 for a Swiss commemorative broadcast on Cervantes.

After considering composers like Manuel de Falla, Darius Milhaud and Marcel Delannoy, Pabst asked Maurice Ravel to write songs for Chaliapin, but Ravel could not meet the deadline set. Ibert's orchestral versions used in the sound-track of the film were recorded on 78 rpm discs in 1933 by Chaliapin, with the composer conducting, providing a moving historical document. With a slight modification that omitted the extended instrumental introduction to the *Chanson du duc*, these songs were published shortly afterwards. The present 1990 recording seems to be the first stereophonic version of this orchestral version, although the piano version has been recorded on various occasions by distinguished singers. It is not clear why the texts set by Ravel are different from those set by Ibert.

The *Quatre chansons* call for an ensemble of only five instruments in the first song and full orchestra in the rest, except for occasional variation in the use of wind and percussion instruments. The overall orchestration provides solo parts for saxophone, bass-clarinet, tuba, guitar and/or cembalo, timpani, harp and vibraphone, with single wind and a string section reduced in numbers. The vocal line, set in a discreet and sophisticated Spanish mood, makes this cycle a masterpiece in the repertoire of French song. These inspired verses by Alexandre Amoux and Pierre de

Ronsard are in perfect accordance with Pabst's poetic conception and have additional independent poetic value.

Chanson du départ (Ronsard)

This new castle, all made of marble and porphyry and built by love's own power and heaven's own beauty, is a bastion against evil. Highest virtue, as admired by the eye and by the spirit, can retire there, making all hearts his servants. Its door can only be approached by those adventurous knights, which are saviours of great kings, victorious, valiant and loving.

Chanson à Dulcinée (Arnoux)

To me, one year lasts only one day, if I do not see my Dulcinea. I discover her face painted by love in every fountain, in every cloud, in every sunrise and every flower, and this soothes my languishing. Always near and always distant, you are the star of my long errands. Your breath, Dulcinea, is carried over to me by the wind, mingled with the perfume of jasmine.

Chanson du Duc (Arnoux)

Let me sing here of the Lady of my dreams, who exalts me over this century of mud. Her diamond's heart is free of lies and the rose darkens at seeing her own cheeks. In her homage I have risked great adventures, liberated captive princesses, vanquished magicians and fought against perjury. My Lady, I will also fight against all those who do not advocate your incomparable splendour and virtue.

Chanson de la mort (Arnoux)

Do not cry, my dear and good Sancho. Your master is not dead and not far away from you. He lives on a happy and pure island, where there are no lies, on that same island which had been promised to you and which you too will discover one day. All the books have been

burnt and become a pile of ashes. If they have killed me, it needs but one to make me alive, a phantom in life and reality in death: this is the strange destiny of poor Don Quixote.

Chanson de Sancho

The piano score of a song written for Dorville, the actor who played Sancho Panza in the film, was re-discovered while preparing this recording. It was decided to include it, in an orchestration not in accordance with the original soundtrack, where a small music-hall wind ensemble was used (as much as could be figured out from the blurred historical sound), but rather fitting the ensemble of the *Quatre chansons*. Its obviously popular character, set in the form of a Pasodoble, and comic text could make it an eventual encore for concert performances. This transposed version was specially prepared for this recording, although an orchestral version in the original key is also available.

Paul Morand's and Alexandre Arnoux's words in the printed version differ slightly from the texts finally sung in the film, but the first were used here, and translated they mean:

In this inn, away from Señora Panza, Chivalry is a fine life! Let's liberate Princesses and Highnesses, let's spear sheep and treacherous prisoners! Goodbye to fear, let's put down our spears and arouse: thank God, the police will not come here! Long live my island! Why should I care? All these fat sausages and the wine of Manzanilla are for Sancho Panza!

Golgotha

Ibert collaborated in a very artistic and original French picture dealing with Christ's last days, not comparable to those famous, but questionable Hollywood productions on the same subject, as far as its cinematic

qualities and its superb and demanding musical score are concerned. It was produced in 1935, another busy year in Ibert's life, which saw the production of four film scores, besides his extended travelling and activities as a "concert" composer and conductor. Director Julien Duvivier, for whom Ibert actually wrote both his first and last film scores in 1931 and 1954 (not counting his short "silent", contribution for René Clair's *Un chapeau de paille d'Italie* of 1927), included screen personalities such as Harry Baur, Jean Gabin, Edwige Feuillère and Juliette Verneuil. Robert Le Vigan was to give a remarkable interpretation of Christ.

Ibert's score is very demanding and dramatic. It plays an important part in a picture containing long sequences almost without dialogue. A few choral sections, including a finale based on a chorus by Handel, also occur and Ibert found it appropriate to use the *Dies irae* in the two last movements, as Berlioz had done in his *Symphonie fantastique*. The orchestra includes saxophone, bass-clarinet and a large percussion section as well as the usual strings and wind, and two ondes martenot. The version recorded here is a suite assembled by Ibert himself, using various unaltered cues, but played by a larger ensemble. The original wind section which consisted of solo instruments, in accordance with the standard concession film composers had to make towards the primitive sound possibilities of the thirties, was therefore doubled when necessary, and the part of the second martenot re-arranged into sections for bass-clarinet, tuba and vibraphone. The original *ad libitum* wind effects played by the ondes martenot in the last movement were reduced to a few specific interventions. The present writer also found it appropriate to subdivide the score into more single episodes, where this was not always clearly indicated in the manuscript. An eight-minute

cut, containing some of the most exciting music, and the crossing-out of the final quotation of the opening fanfare, following the lovely funeral procession *à la* Satie, were restored, in order to give the suite a cyclic unity. Although this score was never performed in concert, we are sure that the composer would have approved these small editorial suggestions, including subsequent titles for each movement. The original soundtrack was recorded by the Orchestre Walther Straram, conducted by Maurice Jaubert.

Macbeth

Orson Welles always made an excellent choice of the right composer for his films. Some ten years after his famous collaboration with Bernard Herrmann in *Citizen Kane*, Jacques Ibert was asked to write the music for *Macbeth*. In the opinion of the present writer, this score is one of the most valuable and original ever written for the cinema. That it has hitherto never been performed in concert is unpardonable. Only one of the available books on film music allows *Macbeth* a short, but worthy tribute (Mark Evans, *Soundtrack, the Music of the Movies*); in Europe, though Orson Welles' ingenious cinematic interpretation of Shakespeare's tragedy is considered a masterwork, its score is totally ignored.

A letter by Ibert to Leeds Music on 20 November 1950, lists those cues which could eventually be included, (without further changes), in a suite, with their corresponding titles; but apparently, nothing further was undertaken by either party. A photocopy of the original manuscript was supplied for this recording and the orchestral material had to be newly prepared.

Macbeth was composed in 1948 in Rome (where Ibert was living then with his family, as director of the

French Academy at the Villa Medici and as a naval attaché of the French embassy), and recorded by the local symphony orchestra, conducted by Efrem Kurtz. For many reasons, this work is outstanding, but a detailed analysis would be beyond our present scope. A most interesting aspect is the inclusion of a breathing choir (almost inaudible on the historical soundtrack), in the witches' scenes, set against eerie parts for piano, harp, celesta and percussion with string harmonics. One is tempted to ask oneself why Ibert did not write heavier music for such sequences, but we are faced with a sophisticated contrapuntal setting of a terrifying image. In other places, where the music sounds extremely dramatic, cheap emphatic clichés are avoided, although Ibert's manuscript is full of precise cue indications. A drinking sequence in the throne-room preceding Banquo's murder, is conceived in a grotesque bass-tuba solo, echoed by the gurgles of the bassoons, and double-bassoon and by rhythmic figures for the strings. The triumphant, but rather savage-sounding March, heard in the main title, reappears in different moods during the action, and in the army scene it is contrasted, in the original soundtrack only, with an out-of-tune ensemble of bagpipes. This march theme can be identified with the conspiracy against Macbeth's reign of crime and darkness.

The orchestration of *Macbeth* also requires piano, celesta, vibraphone, harp and a large percussion battery, including Millboard-bells, tabor and Chinese gongs. All wind instruments which are usually doubled in a symphony orchestra, figure already in this form in the original soundtrack, besides a slightly smaller string section, which was obviously enlarged for the present recording.

Adriano

Adriano

The conductor-composer Adriano was born in Switzerland and lives in Zürich. As a musician he is mostly self-taught. In the late 1970s he established himself as a specialist on Ottorino Respighi and he has conducted many recordings of obscure or neglected symphonic repertoire. On Marco Polo/Naxos he has also initiated and recorded a series of fifteen CDs mainly of European film music composers, and has created and directed a series of classical music videos. All of Adriano's 36 recording projects for various labels (including in most cases year-long research and elaborate score preparation or editing) have found wide recognition and his commitment is known to be fanatical and uncompromising. In his opinion, music history should be revised to show that it is not just the story of the so-called great composers, and that it should not be neatly classified into traditions and categories. Much more good music has been written than certain musicologists and critics would care to admit. Adriano has composed songs, orchestral, chamber and incidental pieces. His most recent works are a *Concertino for Celesta and Strings*, *Concertino for Piano, Strings and Percussion* and an *Abysmal Saraband* for organ, timpani and strings. His instrumental adaptations include song-cycles or songs by Johannes Brahms, Modest Mussorgsky, Hugo Wolf, Ottorino Respighi, Othmar Schoeck, Jacques Ibert and Johann Strauss II.

Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra

The Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1929 as the first professional musical ensemble fulfilling the needs of radio broadcasting in Slovakia. From the start there was a particular emphasis on contemporary Slovak music, resulting in a close connection with leading Slovak composers, including Alexander Moyzes, Eugen Suchoň, Ján Cikker and others. The original ensemble was gradually enlarged and from 1942, thanks to Alexander Moyzes, the then Director of Music in Slovak Radio, regular symphony concerts were given, broadcast live by Slovak Radio. From 1943 to 1946 the Yugoslavian Kresimir Baranovic was the chief conductor of the orchestra. His successors were L'udovit Rajter, Ladislav Slovák, Otakar Trhлік, Bystrík Režucha and Ondrej Lenárd, whose successful performances and recordings from 1977 to 1990 helped the orchestra to establish itself as an internationally known concert ensemble. His successor Róbert Stankovsky continued this work, until his unexpected death at the age of 36. His place was taken in 2001 by Charles Olivieri-Munroe. There are regular concert performances at the Slovak Radio concert hall in Bratislava, while through its broadcasts and recordings the orchestra has also become a part of concert life abroad, with successful tours to Austria, Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Bulgaria, Spain, Japan and Malta.

Henry Kiichli

The American-born bass Henry Kiichli is equally at home in Opera, in Oratorio and in the concert-hall. He has undertaken a wide variety of rôles, including leading parts in *Macbeth*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Manon*, *Otello*, *La Cenerentola*, *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Fidelio*. As an oratorio soloist, he appeared in *The Creation*, *Messiah*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, the Requiems of Mozart and Brahms, among other works and has an extensive repertoire of art songs. At present, Mr. Kiichli is engaged at the Staatstheater in Oldenburg, Germany, and he can be heard in two operas by Siegfried Wagner recorded by Marco Polo

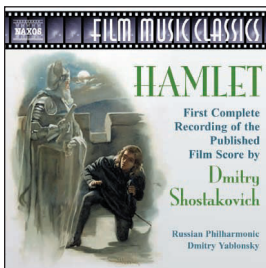
Jacques Tchamkerten

The young Swiss pianist and organist, Jacques Tchamkerten specialises in the technique of rare electronic keyboard instruments of the early 1930s, ancestors of today's synthesizers. French composers such as Milhaud, Honegger, Koehlin, Messiaen and Jolivet have written works for ondes martenot, an instrument on which Mme Jeanne Loriod, his former teacher, is the acknowledged expert. He lectures frequently on his instrument and besides engagements as a solo or chamber performer, is much in demand as a player in works such as Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher*, where the Ondes also figure in the orchestral texture.

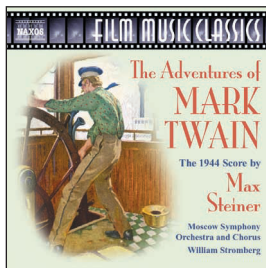


From left to right:
Adriano with Jacques
Tchamkerten and producer
Martin Sauer
(photo by Fero Horvat,
Bratislava)

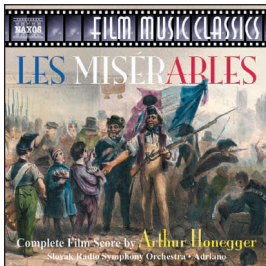
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JACQUES IBERT (1890-1962)

Macbeth • Golgotha • Don Quichotte

Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava) • Adriano

Macbeth (Suite, 1948) 30:23		Don Quichotte (1933) 11:51	
1	Overture 3:19	12	Chanson de Sancho 1:26 (orch. Adriano)
2	Murder of King Duncan 3:12	Quatre Chansons de Don Quichotte	
3	Macbeth after the murder 3:22	13	Chanson du départ 2:49
4	The ghost of Banquo 6:46	14	Chanson à Dulcinée 2:50
5	Death of Lady Macbeth 5:30	15	Chanson du duc 1:23
6	Triumph of Macduff's armies 8:02	16	Chanson de la mort 3:08 Henry Kiichli, Bass
Golgotha (Suite, 1935) 34:54			
7	La fêtes de Pâques 12:58		
8	Les vendeurs au Temple 2:59		
9	Le Calvaire 7:56		
10	La crucifixion 3:52		
11	L'agonie – La mise au tombeau 6:53 Jacques Tchamkerten, ondes martenot		

Recorded at the Concert Hall of the Slovak Radio in Bratislava, 5–6 July 1989 (Golgotha), 15 January 1990 (Don Quichotte) and 17–18 January 1990 (Macbeth) • Producer, Martin Sauer • Music Notes: Adriano Publishers: Theodore Presser Co., Bryn Mawr (Macbeth), Editions Musicales Alphonse Leduc, Paris (Golgotha, Don Quichotte) • Design: Ron Hoares • Cover image from Mary Evans Picture Library

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