



Announces:



THE DAY OF THE LOCUST

Composed and Conducted by **JOHN BARRY**
Intrada Special Collection Volume ISC 122

For the 1974 film *The Day of the Locust* – a gritty, Depression-era tale about unseemly characters struggling to make it in Hollywood – director John Schlesinger recruited his *Midnight Cowboy* composer John Barry to tackle the challenging subject. Barry responded with one of his strongest and most unusual scores. Just as Jerry Goldsmith had on *Chinatown*, Barry had to find a musical language somewhere between his contemporary style and the period feel of the film, while working around a number of vintage songs that set the tone and provided unsettling commentary of their own.

John Barry's score mixes subdued romantic writing with period approaches. "The Storyteller/Garden of the Locust" is the composer's sympathetic love theme, first heard as a melody for harp, flute, piano and an expressive solo violin. Heard in several guises, it's the anchor of the score. Barry produces his own piece of silent film scoring in "The Flying Carpet," a rambunctious piece of Hollywood showmanship. His kitschy, deliberately grating music "Soft Shoe Salesman" accompanies Burgess Meredith's pathetic daily grind as he attempts to use his aging vaudeville chops to sell tonics to the unsympathetic denizens of the Hollywood Hills: strings, muted trombones, block and brushed percussion play time to Burgess's strained soft shoe routines. The score's climactic cue, "The Day of the Locust," marks one of John Barry's few musical explorations of outright horror. With its trembling strings, groaning, unearthly low brass, rasping percussion and hair-raising flute utterances, this is music perfectly in tune with Schlesinger's horrifying surrealist imagery.

The film features a strong cast, mostly living in a rundown apartment complex. Todd Hackett (William Atherton) is an aspiring production illustrator with artistic ambitions who quickly falls hard for Faye Greener (Karen Black), a cruel and ambitious actress wannabe living with her aging ex-vaudeville performer father (Burgess Meredith). Other tenants include Abe Kusich (Billy Barty), an angry "little person" itching to be taken seriously as a man, and the hateful would-be child star Adore Loomis (Jackie Earle Haley), who has been warped by his monstrous stage mother into something horrifically between Mickey Rooney and Shirley Temple. As the story progresses Faye falls in with Homer Simpson (Donald Sutherland), a meek and foolish accountant whose simmering frustrations boil over in the film's surrealist, apocalyptic climax.

Intrada's premiere CD release of John Barry's score features the original LP program, remastered from the original LP master tapes in pristine condition and is limited to 2000 units.

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