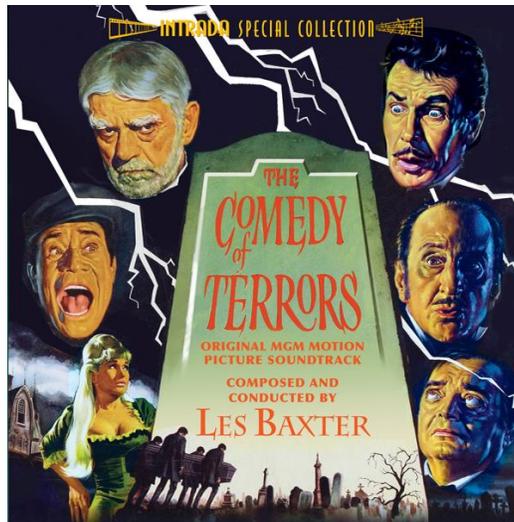




Announces:



THE COMEDY OF TERRORS

Composed and Conducted by **LES BAXTER**
Intrada Special Collection Volume ISC 218

With ample experience in scoring horror films for American International Pictures, composer Les Baxter relished tackling the genre this time with tongue in cheek. *The Comedy of Terrors* played everything for laughs, but sported a morbid tone as well. Killing folks to prop up a dying mortuary business no doubt qualifies as a macabre tale and legendary players Vincent Price, Peter Lorre and Boris Karloff were no strangers to the genre, either. Baxter needed to mingle his musical shakes and shudders with a wink. His music can easily be described as a broad pastiche of comic and spooky ideas, but there's more than meets the ear here. Adding to the skillful architecture of Baxter's score are two striking ingredients. First, he orchestrates the music for an unusually transparent ensemble of woodwinds, brass and percussion (with added piano and bass); in a few key scenes he also includes an organ. The absence of strings removes a layer of gloss, leaving everything fully exposed, and the resulting instrumental detail is astonishing.

To present this premiere release of Baxter's score, Intrada was incredibly fortunate to have access to the complete mono session elements stored in MGM's vaults. Much of the A.I.P. music library has long since been lost to the ages and locating the numerous coveted A.I.P./Les Baxter/horror film scoring session masters in their entirety is rare. With all the tapes in hand, we were able to present everything Baxter recorded for the movie from the opening A.I.P. emblem right down to a closing emblem not used in the finished film.

The Comedy of Terrors concerns a pair of cheapskate, second-rate undertakers: dominant Waldo Trumbull (Vincent Price), who married Amaryllis (Joyce Jameson) solely for her father's business, and whose affections are strictly reserved for alcohol and coins; and Felix Gillie (Peter Lorre), a former criminal who knuckles under Trumbull's authority but harbors an obsession with his voluptuous wife. Faced with eviction for a year of unpaid rent to his landlord Mr. Black (Basil Rathbone), Trumbull enlists Gillie to break into the homes of elderly neighbors and recruiting customers with lethal force. After a disappointing first attempt, they decide to knock off Black himself. But the Shakespearean landlord's mortal coil refuses to shuffle off—and despite going on a murderous rampage, the only one who ends up dying is Trumbull himself.

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