



Announces:



POSSE/THE LAST TYCOON

Composed and Conducted by **MAURICE JARRE**
Intrada Special Collection Volume ISC 213

In the 1975 Paramount western *Posse*, Kirk Douglas plays Marshal Howard Nightingale, a railroad-funded lawman with political ambitions. Nightingale has his own mobile command station situated on train tracks and a handpicked team of men, all hunting notorious train robber Jack Strawhorn (Bruce Dern). Nightingale eventually captures Strawhorn after the outlaw reluctantly kills the sheriff of a small town, but in the ensuing celebration, Nightingale's men abuse and assault members of the community. Nightingale undermines and betrays his posse and shows himself to be little more than a vainglorious, self-seeking politician. Strawhorn, on the other hand, is something of a straightforward, honest man—for a train robber.

Maurice Jarre's score is one of his most interesting of the period, using an echoplexed trumpet and flute effect similar to the one Jerry Goldsmith employed in *Patton*. But where Goldsmith used the effect as an echo of past glories, Jarre's music captures Marshal Howard Nightingale's pomposity, his delusions of grandeur, and the way he cloaks himself in patriotism. In contrast, Jarre's picaresque music for Nightingale's nemesis is based on the same material as Nightingale's, but where Nightingale's music bursts with patriotism and self-confidence, Strawhorn's is almost comically morose, with flute counterpoint providing sympathetic shading to the character—it's an incisive portrait of a dogged, reluctant hero. Jarre thus links Nightingale and Strawhorn as two sides of the same coin. Nightingale's music is clearly more aggressive as its echoing trumpets and grunting low brass increasingly surround Strawhorn's material. Jarre managed to punctuate the movie's lengthy hunt and chase sequences, giving the score an exciting, percussive feeling, while underscoring the differences between the two opposing characters.

Based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, *The Last Tycoon* tells the story of Monroe Stahr, a driven Hollywood studio head working during the Great Depression. Stahr easily oversees the finances, production difficulties, and artistic temperaments at the studio, but gets in over his head when he falls for Kathleen Moore, a young woman he casually meets on the studio lot. Stahr is instantly drawn to Kathleen, who reminds him of his dead wife, has no connection to "the business" and isn't impressed by Stahr's wealth and power. As Stahr becomes more obsessed with Kathleen, she withdraws from him, and the film executive's careful control of his world at the studio begins to unravel.

Maurice Jarre took a sparse approach to *The Last Tycoon*, with less than 25 minutes of original music playing during the movie's two-hour plus running time. With Robert DeNiro's character seeming deliberately remote and enigmatic, Jarre avoided underscoring the character's day-to-day work at the studio and instead focused on Stahr's interior life. The lonely main theme speaks to Stahr's desire for something outside his work life and to his growing romantic obsession with Kathleen. Jarre's music has a subtle period feel, with solos for clarinet and saxophone. Apart from the main and end titles, Jarre only underscores scenes where Stahr is interacting with or, presumably, thinking about Kathleen, making their relationship the one window into Stahr's personality and psyche. Since it frames the film, Jarre's elegant theme also provides a reflection of Hollywood glamor and romance.

The 2" 16-track masters for both works were restored and newly mixed into two-channel stereo by the expert team of Lukas Kendall, Neil S. Bulk, and Michael McDonald of Private Island Trax. The resulting sound, particularly the brass in *Posse*, is dynamic and crisp.

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