



Announces:



THE MONKEY KING

Composed and Conducted by **CHRISTOPHER YOUNG**
Intrada Special Collection Volume ISC 338

For the 2014 Chinese production of *The Monkey King*, composer Christopher Young composed a breathtaking, epic score. Hired well in advance of the visual effects completion, Young wrote most of his music without the benefit of finished effects shots or a locked film. Armed with this creative freedom, Young crafted an expansive score of a type not commonly seen in present-day Hollywood. The music brims and bristles with lush melody, ornamenting the ethereal beauty and majesty of the various gods, fueling the stormy wrath of the Bull Demon King, and charting Sun Wukong's journey from a playful, wide-eyed innocent to a towering avatar of fury and divine retribution. "The thing that holds the score together, in a way that perhaps differentiates it from a lot of contemporary orchestral action scores, is the ever-presence of melody," comments Young. He infused the already sumptuous score with an array of Asian colors and textures, including ehru (a bowed Chinese fiddle), guzheng (a type of Chinese zither), shamisen (a three-string Japanese lute derived from the Chinese sanxian), pipa (a four-string pear-shaped Chinese lute) and assorted winds and percussion.

The sessions for *The Monkey King* took place at the Slovak Radio Concert Hall, with Nic Raine conducting the 80-piece Slovak National Symphony Orchestra and Young's frequent collaborator Allan Wilson conducting the 40-member Lucnica Chorus. To present *The Monkey King* on album, Young drew inspiration from English composer Gustav Holst and his famous orchestral suite *The Planets*, arranging his cues into ten selections titled after Chinese deities and other prominent characters from the film.

The legend of Sun Wukong, the Monkey King, and how he came to wreak havoc in Heaven and challenge the power of the gods, is one of the most enduring stories in all Chinese literature. Rooted in myth and folklore, the tale first appeared as an episode within the sprawling sixteenth-century novel *Journey to the West*. Published anonymously, though commonly attributed to Wu Cheng'en, the work is celebrated as one of the four great literary masterpieces of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Portions of Sun Wukong's story have been retold many times for film, television and the stage, but no adaptation to date has rivaled 2014's *The Monkey King* for sheer scale.

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