

LET THE BALLOON GO * DIMBOOLA * POWER WITHOUT GLORY * RUSH * BREAK OF DAY

*The film
music of*

GEORGE DREYFUS

move



Melbourne Symphony Orchestra



Queensland Symphony Orchestra

conducted by the composer

THE FILM MUSIC OF GEORGE DREYFUS

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
Queensland Symphony Orchestra
conducted by the composer

*Fourteen of George Dreyfus' bestloved
film themes on one CD conducted by the
composer*

Move Records is proud to make available this reissue of fourteen of George Dreyfus's best loved film music scores. In the hey day of the Australian film and television industry of the 1960s and 70s Dreyfus composed this music which has touched the heart strings of a wide cross-section of Australian music lovers.

Dreyfus is a successful composer. Over the past years he has produced the musical scores for countless films—features, documentaries and television dramas. This activity provides a subsistence which has allowed him to turn his talents to the creation of two symphonies, and several operas.

The music of this album is the



work of a man who knows his craft well. From the stirring theme from the ABC television series *Rush*, which achieved hit-parade status, to the sensitive accompaniment for Pat Lovells' feature film *Break of Day*, George has come up with the right music. You will probably immediately recognise the music from the other successful TV series *Power Without Glory*, also produced by the ABC, and be delighted by the score for the children's film *Let The Balloon Go* and the evocative documentary *A Steam Train Passes*.

All of the music presented here has

been specially recorded, with George conducting. It gives us great pleasure to present it for your enjoyment. As you listen, picture in your mind an energetic, alert man, full of animation, opinions, ideas and music, with a bassoon clutched in his hands and a mischievous smile.



1 RUSH (1974)

Rush was a television series that dealt with life on the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s. Script writer Cliff Green suggested to Dreyfus that he use the traditional gold mining song “The Old Palmer Song” as the basis for his theme. This song is one of the few Australian songs which has a compass outside the octave, but is characteristic in its even note values. By elongating and condensing these note values and making full use of the extended range of the melody, Dreyfus came up with a piece of music which in its excitement characterised the drama of those days and in itself has become a much loved Australian classic evergreen. John Waters headed the cast of the first series, made in black and white by the ABC Melbourne Studios, a cast that included many local identities. The second series, made in colour by the ABC Sydney studios tended to have a more international flavour.



2 BREAK OF DAY (1976)

Starring Sara Kestelman and Andrew McFarlane this feature film is a love story, set in a small Australian country town in 1920 and played out in idyllic early morning meetings in the misty, sunshot landscape. The music is arranged in the form of a suite in theme and variation form, with the theme being only touched on at the beginning and having to wait till the end for its full blown splendour.

3 LET THE BALLOON GO (1976)

This charming children’s feature film, starring Bruce Spence, was set in a small Australian country town. It counterpoints the struggle for independence of a small boy, handicapped with a leg deformity, against the large balloon that has arrived in town and finally becomes airborne, to the delight of all the town-folk. The opening music reflects the joy and innocence of childhood in



the country and the conclusion the splendour of the magnificent balloon in flight.



4 LAWSON'S MATES (1979)

In this television series, three or four short stories by Australia’s great national author, Henry Lawson, were compressed into single episodes. To encompass the varying moods, Dreyfus

wrote a theme, full of warmth and friendly compassion. It is in the style of an Australian folk-song without being derived or based on one, this being what the Israeli composer Alexander Boscovich once aptly called “imaginary folk-lore”. Actors Max Gillies and Graeme Blundell, now both household names, acted in the series.



5 POWER WITHOUT GLORY – main theme (1976)

The twenty-six episode television series from the original novel by Frank Hardy, now considered to be a great Australian classic, tells of a young factory hand, John West, played by Martin Vaughan, who rose from a poverty-stricken upbringing in an inner Melbourne suburb to become Australia’s biggest gambler and powerful political manipulator. It is set against the background of an Australia struggling out of the 1890s

depression through sixty years of Australian history. West’s world was one of gambling, sport, the underworld and Tammany Hall politics. The theme music reflects the obsessive turbulence of the time.

6 NELLIE’S THEME from ‘Power Without Glory’ (1976)

Nellie West was thirty-seven years of age, had brought four children into the world, yet she looked younger than her years, and emotionally she was still a girl. She had retired into a secret world within herself, a world in which the romantic dreams of her youth still awaited fulfilment. John West had killed every tender, loyal feeling she had tried to cultivate for him. She knew just enough of his affairs to conjure up pictures of corruption, ruthlessness and terror. Nellie had a brief relationship with a bricklayer, but paid dearly for it when John isolated her from the world outside.

7 MARION (1973)

Actress Helen Morse played the teacher at a one teacher school in Gippsland, a beautiful part of Victoria. Her story, *Marion*, set during the World War II forms the basis for this short television series, the first of Dreyfus’s successful collaborations with producer Oscar Whitbread. Helen’s facial expression



has a bitter-sweet quality about it, one never knew if she was laughing or crying and this is aptly reflected in Dreyfus’s tender old-time waltz melody.



8 A STEAM TRAIN PASSES (1974)

This quasi-documentary film has delighted steam-engine buffs the world over since its first release. It portrays a day in the life of engine 3801, the pride of the New South Wales Government Railways in the forties. The whole film is without any commentary or dialogue,

placing therefore special responsibility on the composer. In the opening sequence we can hear the “beautiful beast” getting up steam, then we travel with it through the gentle Australian countryside, follow it through a dream sequence and finally see it disappear into distant nothingness.



9 SONS OF THE ANZACS – ‘Peace’ theme (1969)

James McCarthy at Film Australia asked Dreyfus to write a great amount of music for *Sons of the Anzacs*, a feature length documentary film depicting the involvement of the Australian fighting forces in the second World War. After all the to-ings and fro-ings of war, the defeat and victories, the advances and retreats, the “clean” war in North Africa and the “dirty” war in the Pacific, there came peace, a graceful melody played by the strings against a tear-drop accompaniment from the woodwinds.



10 MARY GILMORE GOES TO PARAGUAY – suite from ‘And their ghosts may be heard’ (1975)

Caroline Jones, Australian broadcaster and film maker, asked Dreyfus to compose the music for her documentary film named *And their ghosts may be heard* about the descendants of those Australian working class idealists who left their homeland after the failed shearers strike of 1894 to settle in their new Utopia up the River Paraguay. That highminded experiment also failed. Ms Jone’s dream was that if Dreyfus could work musical magic with “The Old Palmer Song” (which lead to the Theme from Rush) he could do likewise with the settler’s stirring anthem, Mason-Beatty’s “The Men of the New Australia”, because it too has the unusual melodic span exceeding an octave. Dreyfus treated the anthem in various ways for the film, none of which hit the charts as its illustrious predecessor has done. He subsequently

arranged the music into a suite, giving it a more place and person specific title. The music moves from the hopeful optimism of the initial settlers to the calm resignation of the descendants nearly a century later.



11 WE BELONG (1979)

We Belong was composed for the Special Broadcasting Service, the radio and television network which broadcasts programs in many languages throughout Australia. The music reflects the spirit of optimism with which many Australians, including the composer, view the new multiculturalism of Australian society.



12 RUSH (1974)

As a result of the unprecedented and sustained popularity of his theme from *Rush* since 1974, Dreyfus has made a number of arrangements of this music. These include versions for flute and orchestra for James Galway, for the twelve cellos of the Berlin Philharmonic, for Wind Sextet, Brass Quintet, bassoon and piano or guitar (for the composer to play himself) and for clarinet, violin and piano (to go with Bartok's "Contrasts"). Others have arranged the music for Concert Band and Brass Band. The present version was arranged by the composer for the strings of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.



13 DIMBOOLA – Water music and Waltz (1978)

Jack Hibberd's classic theatre-restaurant piece was turned into a feature film with a number of additions. One was the creation of Shovel, the town of Dimboola's band master, a musician of considerable conceit if not originality. Dreyfus selected a brief and incomplete sketch of Mozart, ascribed it to Shovel and then completed it in a most un-Mozartian fashion, the original film script calling for the local fire engine to drive through the band while it was on parade. Although this significant moment in Australian film history never quite materialised, the mood of the music in the suite that Dreyfus arranged from the film is evocative of the varied moments in the life of a Victorian country town.

An Australian Broadcasting Corporation recording
Producers: Robert Karbow, David Harvey, Lydia Warren
Sound engineers: Robert Hobson, Gerry McKechnie
Cut editor: Judy Kennedy
A&R co-ordination: Michael Bowden, Peter Pocock
 Originally released on two vinyl LPs by World Record Club
Prepared for CD release: Martin Wright, Move Records, 1990

www.move.com.au

