THE FILM MUSIC OF
HOWARD SHORE
PERFORMED BY
THE CITY OF PRAGUE
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

1 The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey - Over Hill / Dreaming of Bag End

2 The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring - The Fellowship

3 The Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers - Forth Eorlingas / Isengard Unleashed

4 The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King - Finale

5 Hugo - The Thief

6 The Twilight Saga: Eclipse - Jacob Black / As Easy As Breathing

7 Eastern Promises - Eastern Promises

8 The Departed - Cops or Criminals

9 Gangs Of New York - Brooklyn Heights

10 Ed Wood - Main Theme

11 The Silence of the Lambs - End Credits

12 Dead Ringers - Closing Credits

Performed by The City Of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra

A SHORE THING

I can't think that anybody tuning into *Saturday Night Live* on 22 November 1975 would ever have imagined that the guy playing a saxophone dressed as a nurse would go on to conduct his own music in some of the world's greatest concert halls, let alone win an Academy Award (or indeed three). 'Howard Shore and his All Nurse Band' was just one of the names the legendary show's house band would go by in that first groundbreaking season, its leader serving five years as Musical Director before a life on the big screen took hold.

It was a fellow Canadian with whom Shore would cut his teeth, though director David Cronenberg had already set out his stall with a run of grizzly 'body horror' flicks, such as *Shivers* (1975) and *Rabid* (1977). 1979's *The Brood* would prove to be Cronenberg's most successful yet and Shore's original score, a robust effort for strings reminiscent of Herrmann's *Psycho*, proved the young composer knew a thing or two about film music. The Shore/Cronenberg collaboration went from strength to strength, with the composer writing for all but one of the director's films, and it remains one of the great artistic film partnerships. The likes of *Dead Ringers* (1988) and *Eastern Promises* (2007) only serve to illustrate how much Shore grew as a composer during those intervening years, the latter being one of his greatest achievements so far and going on to inspire a concert work in its own right.

Those formative years with Cronenberg provided a strong foundation and in the mid-eighties Shore would work with another director for the first time, Martin Scorsese. *After Hours* (1985) would be the first of several collaborations, though the relationship was certainly a slow-burner as it would be some seventeen years before the esteemed director called on the composer again. *Gangs of New York* (2002) was to have an original score by Elmer Bernstein, but the director eventually saw a different musical vision for his sprawling epic and used existing songs and instrumental material instead. Shore's unpremiered concert work 'Brooklyn Heights' was selected, its three movements running throughout the film's soundtrack, offering brooding cacophony and human pathos in equal measure. Following the death of Elmer Bernstein in 2004, Howard Shore became Scorsese's regular composer, going on to score *The Aviator* (2004), swiftly followed by Boston gangland thriller *The Departed* (2006). The latter saw the composer turn his back on the orchestra proper, instead opting for a contemporary guitar score; indeed the original soundtrack featured solos by some of the world's most accomplished guitarists, including Marc Ribot and Gary Saltzman. *Hugo* (2011) on the other hand would be an unusual turn for the director, his first family film, but one which found the composer on solid orchestral ground and turning in a sparklingly colourful score.

Bright and breezy family fare is not the kind of thing anyone would have associated Howard Shore with in those earlier years, but the composer was able to flex his composing muscles across a variety of genres. The likes of *Big* (1988) and *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1994) are, for many, surprising entries in a filmography littered with murky horrors and psychological thrillers, but they once again prove the talent and versatility of the composer. The early nineties proved fertile for Shore, who turned in more great work for Cronenberg, but also for other notable directors, including David Fincher. He himself interrupted one of the other great composer/director relationships in 1994, stepping into Danny Elfman's shoes for Tim Burton's deliriously kooky black and white biopic *Ed Wood*. The hiring of Shore in place of Elfman seemed odd at first sight, but when you consider the composer's early life with the loons at *Saturday Night Live*, his contribution to *Ed Wood* makes a little more sense. Delivering a wonderful pastiche of fifties film music, Shore's score is off-kilter and littered with latin rhythm, not to mention a starring role for the Theremin. Shore's journey into film music is actually quite similar to that of Danny Elfman, when you

consider he too was in a popular band during the seventies; Shore played alto-sax in the jazz-fusion band 'Lighthouse' before his tenure on the small screen.

Jonathan Demme was another acclaimed director with whom the composer would work in this period, twice in fact; first creating music for one of the era's most lauded thrillers, *Silence of the Lambs* (1991), then *Philadelphia* (1994). Shore's BAFTA nominated orchestral contribution to the former bubbles and seethes under the surface, with much of the film's breathing space given over to those towering Oscar-winning performances by Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster.

Given the Oscar-buzz that was around so many of the films he was scoring, it's a surprise that Howard Shore wasn't nominated for an Academy Award himself until after the millennium. The years that followed the turn of the century were truly career-defining as the composer took on a project that would take up years of his life. When it was announced that director Peter Jackson was to make a trilogy of films based on the books of JRR Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings', talk of who might compose the music was rife and the scale of the project would mean a huge investment of time by whoever took it on. Given Jackson's own penchant for 'body horror' with the likes of *Bad Taste* and *Braindead*, he was more than familiar with the work of Cronenberg and therefore Howard Shore; with that in mind it is perhaps less of a surprise that the composer came to mind for his trio of epics.

Immersing himself in Tolkien's world (and words) Howard Shore allowed himself the time to fully engage with the material and found himself creating music that would go on to define him completely. He himself saw this work as a creative milestone, the result of some twenty years 'training' and boy did it pay off, for *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* firmly etched the composer's name onto the minds of film and music lovers around the world. Shore's first Oscar nomination (for the *Fellowship* score) led to his first win and, amazingly, while he hadn't been nominated until 2002, by the end of the 2004 ceremony he had a total of three Oscars to his name. Totaling some ten hours, Shore's original music for the trilogy provided material for 'The Lord of the Rings Symphony', which has become one of the most performed contemporary classical works in history.

Where do you go from that? Well, like any artist Howard Shore just kept on working, writing a handful of notable scores (including *Doubt*) and further personal work for the concert hall, including a piano concerto and a cello concerto. 2010 saw Shore back in blockbuster mode, as he took the composing reins from Carter Burwell and Alexandre Desplat to write the score for the third film of *The Twilight Saga*. *Eclipse* saw the composer on fine form, turning in a deft and listenable score featuring a standout piano solo theme for the troubled young Werewolf, Jacob Black.

It was only a matter of time before Middle Earth would come to call again and both Shore and Jackson returned to Tolkien with *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* in 2012, the first in a trilogy of films based on the author's earlier novel. There's nothing unexpected about the music, though, as the composer sticks close to the musical world he originally crafted. Listening to *The Hobbit* is like returning to an old friend; wistful, whimsical and utterly delightful. For Shore it marks the beginning of another very big adventure in music; one which has indeed taken him there and back again.

Not bad for a man who once played the sax in a dress...

Michael Beek
Writer, Film Music Journalist, Producer

All tracks performed by The City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra
Tracks 3 & 4 feature Crouch End Festival Chorus conducted by David Temple
Solo violin on Eastern Promises - Lucie Svehlova
Theremin on Ed Wood - Celia Sheen

CONDUCTORS:
Tracks 1,5,6 Evan Jolly
Tracks 2,3,4 Nic Raine
Tracks 7,9,10,11,12 James Fitzpatrick

PUBLISHERS:
Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 - Universal/MCA Music
Tracks 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 - Sony/ATV Music
Tracks 6, 10 - Warner/Chappell Music

Produced by Rick Clark & James Fitzpatrick
Executive Producer: Reynold D'Silva
Release Co-Ordination: David Stoner & Peter Compton
Artwork and Design: Stuart Ford

Album Mixed, Edited & Mastered by Rick Clark

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