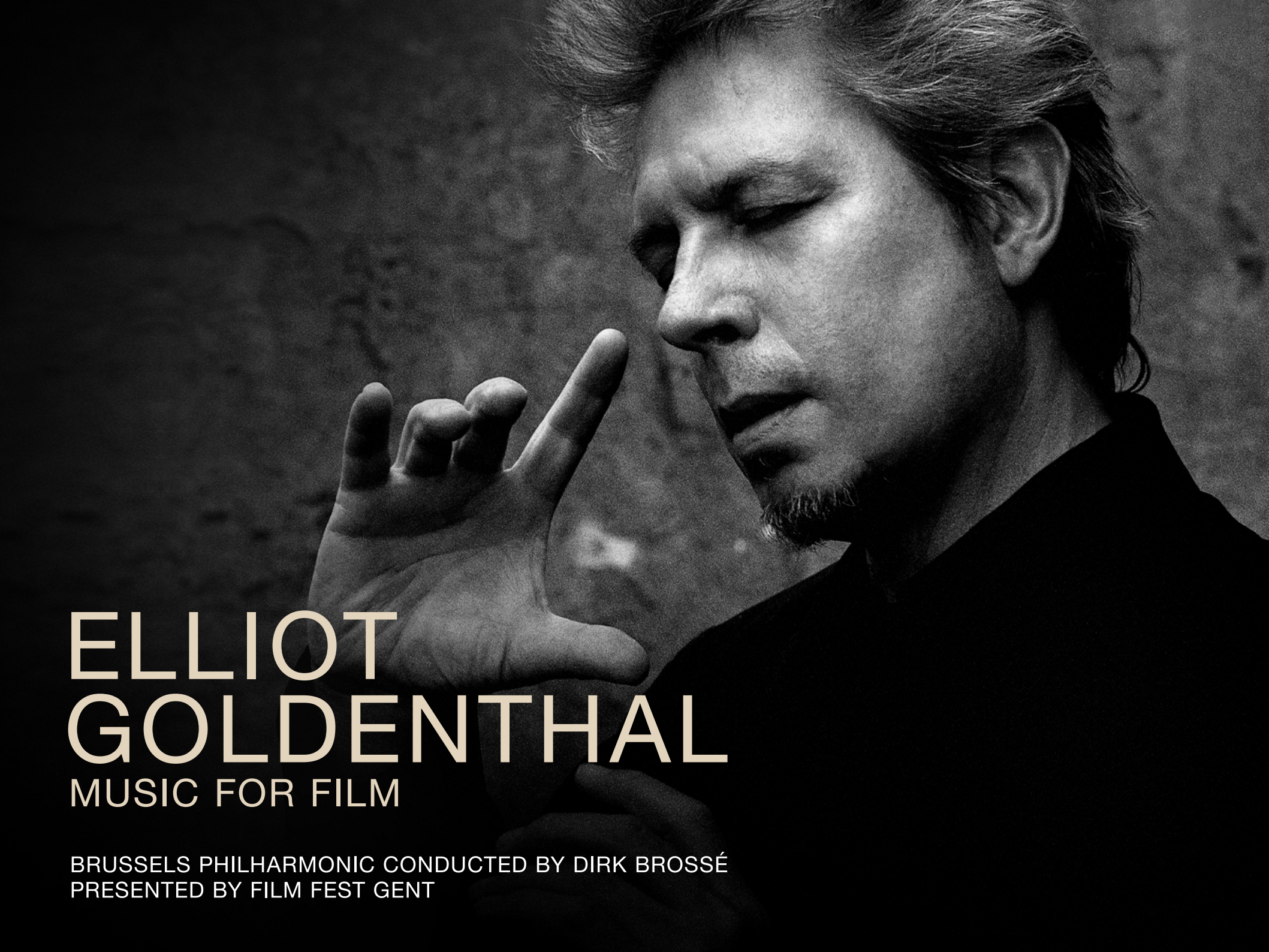


ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL

MUSIC FOR FILM

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC CONDUCTED BY DIRK BROSSÉ
PRESENTED BY FILM FEST GENT

ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL: MUSIC FOR FILM

Elliot Goldenthal is, without doubt, one of the most talented contemporary classical composers of our time. Known for his avant-garde and unconventional techniques, he is at home with a great range of styles, using and fusing orchestral, jazz, rock and electronic elements in his music. Besides working in film – and to a limited extent television – he has also written music for the concert hall, theatre, opera and ballet.

What is so remarkable about his film music is that he is one of the few composers who has consistently brought his distinctive and sophisticated musical vision to cinema: whatever the stylistic approach (which may vary wildly), the soundtrack will always contain a signature Elliot Goldenthal score. After bursting onto the big-budget film scene with his breakthrough score for *Alien³*, he has received numerous nominations and awards for his film work, including an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for Best Original Score for *Frida*.

Goldenthal received his first World Soundtrack Award nomination in 2002, when "The Dream Within" from *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* competed for "Best Original Song Written for a Film". At the next edition in 2003, "Burn It Blue" from *Frida* was nominated in the same category. He went on to win two World Soundtrack Awards for *Frida*, "Best Original Soundtrack of the Year" and "Soundtrack Composer of the Year", the latter of which was presented to him by director and five-time collaborator Neil Jordan.

Goldenthal's association with Film Fest Gent predates the World Soundtrack Awards: he visited the film festival for the first time in 1999, bringing with him a suite of music from *Interview with the Vampire, Michael Collins, Batman & Robin* and *Cobb* for the concert Film Music at the Opera. In 2010, a two-part "*Titus* Suite" (which consisted of the same selections as on this album) was performed at the World Soundtrack Awards, as he was one of the ten composers in the concert lineup to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the event. He returned to Ghent as one of the guests of honour for the 2011 edition, dedicated to the memory of Hollywood publicist Ronni Chasen, for whom Goldenthal conceived the suite "Recordare (Excerpts from *Titus* and *Alien³*) – *in memoriam Ronni Chasen*".

In 2013, he was among the forty composers who contributed one minute of music to the anniversary concert 40 Years Film Fest Gent. (The live recordings from that concert, including his piece "Memoriam", were put on the 2015 promotional CD *15 Years WSA – A Film Music Celebration*.) Furthermore, the 2018 concert 2001 and Beyond: A Symphonic Odyssey and the 2019 concert Hollywood Nightmares: Scary Symphonic Scores each contained a selection from his work as well, respectively the "Adagio" from *Alien³* and "Louis' Revenge" from *Interview with the Vampire* – both of those pieces, too, appear on this album.

Thus, it seems more than fitting that in 2024, the year of his 70th birthday and 25 years after his music was first heard live at Film Fest Gent, Elliot Goldenthal is presented with the World Soundtrack Lifetime Achievement Award. We are thrilled to be able to add extra luster to the

Neil Jordan & Elliot Goldenthal, WSA 2003 © Luk Monsaert

WSA 2010 © Luk Monsaert

celebration by presenting this *Music for Film* album with symphonic highlights from the honouree's career in film music, performed by the Brussels Philharmonic. It is not only the first studio rerecording of its kind but also, perhaps astonishingly, the first ever compilation of his film works.

This album also marks another high point in Goldenthal's long-standing collaboration with Film Fest Gent's music director Dirk Brossé, who, notably, conducted the original film scores for *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* and *The Good Thief* at the scoring sessions, and premiered Goldenthal's *Trumpet Concerto* in concert. In addition to the previously mentioned occasions in Ghent, he habitually conducts selections from Goldenthal's film work in concert, most recently "Adagio and Transfiguration" from *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* at the kick-off concert of the London Symphony Orchestra's series LSO on Film. The first part of that cue was used for the climax of the "Final Fantasia" suite, which was recorded in its entirety for this album.

Over the past decade, Goldenthal has arranged separate and extended concert suites of many of his most high-profile film scores. Besides "Final Fantasia", this album features the premiere studio recording of another complete suite, namely the "Grand Gothic Suite", assembled from the music of *Batman Forever* and *Batman & Robin* (the latter of which has actually never been released commercially). Undoubtedly his flagship work, the suite has been successfully performed live a number of times over the years, but, in the composer's words, this recording aims to be "hopefully the iconic performance" that will set the standard for future performances. Specifically for this suite, incidentally, the Brussels Philharmonic even hunted down authentic 1950s/60s hubcaps (at 17:25 and 18:20) for the percussion section. It is also the Goldenthal composition par excellence – energetic, engaging, eclectic, exceptional – and, according to Hans Zimmer (who attended one of the concert performances at Kraków Film Music Festival), "the most glorious statement of Batman" he had ever heard.

Most of the other material on this album consists of selections from the longer concert suites (which, therefore, may differ slightly from the original soundtrack versions), such as the music from *Alien*^{3}, *Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles* and *Titus*. The latter title is of special significance to Film Fest Gent, since *Titus* was the festival's opening film in 2000, attended by both Goldenthal and director Julie Taymor. At the annual film music seminar that year, they discussed their professional partnership, which has unquestionably become one of the most fascinating director-composer collaborations in history. Also taken from a concert suite, more precisely its final part ("Adagio Espressivo"), is "The Homecoming" from *Cobb*. This track has been previously released on our 2020 anniversary album *World Soundtrack Awards – Tribute to the Film Composer*.

This new *Music for Film* album is a special title in our series, not just because of Goldenthal's association with Film Fest Gent, but in particular because he is surely one of the handful of composers whose music and influence will live on long into the future. As his own musical lineage includes his mentors Aaron Copland and John Corigliano, his future longevity is rooted in his connection to the masters of the past – even symbolically: if you have had the good fortune to encounter the composer during one of the WSA meet & greet events, you will now be only a few handshakes away from, for instance, (via Copland and Mahler) Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Beethoven or Mozart. Regardless of such a historical variant of the six degrees of separation, it is to Elliot Goldenthal's own merit that he has managed to build bridges between the heritage of classical music and the arts of film and theatre music.

Thomas Van Parys

© Film Fest Gent

INTERVIEW WITH THE COMPOSER

In approaching the selection of music for this album, we have focused on my orchestral work, which reflects certain things I have had a chance to do in cinema. It does not provide a complete picture of what I have done in the realm of film music, which has to do with the original conception of orchestration as a whole, including orchestral music, electronics, vocals, and sometimes amplified rock elements. Those elements are not all represented here, but you are getting a purely orchestral treatment of this music.

It has been a wonderful opportunity for a composer to write music for film during a period in which the power of a large symphony orchestra was valued as a major production element in filmmaking. It was reminiscent of the way that same luxury was extended to late 19th-century and 20th-century symphonists. *Alien*^{3} was an especially satisfying score for me in terms of writing for a conventional orchestra with experimental notational techniques where applied to coexist with and sound indistinguishable from electronic textures. I became familiar with some of these techniques through the scores of Krzysztof Penderecki and my teacher John Corigliano.

I was also very fortunate to have worked with directors that created a format where a composer could write musical scenes that had extended durations. In such pieces, musical development and emotional development are possible. The music itself can evolve over that amount of time, at a similar rate to a concert music listening experience. In other words, in a musical cue for a film you do not usually have the opportunity to develop a musical thought that is long enough to be comparable to that of a concert listening experience. In the film, some of those extended pieces – albeit a luxury – are sometimes marred by sound effects or covered by dialogue, and subject to the editor's knife. So the opportunity to reconstruct the original musical intentions for those sections is a gift to the art of film music.

For example, take a piece heard on this album, "The Homecoming" from ***Cobb*** directed by Ron Shelton. It is a very interesting example of a director wanting an old baptist hymn, something that was nostalgic, homesick, that played on bittersweet reveries – the types of emotions that Mahler or late Strauss might elicit – sewn into one six-and-a-half-minute-long piece of music. Ron asked me to write an extended piece of music in which you have those elements co-existing with each other: the baptist hymn being an example of Americana, and a type of 19th-century adagio that one would recognize as having its birth in Bruckner or Mahler

Julie Taymor & Elliot Goldenthal on the set of *Frida*
Courtesy of Miramax Studios

– and it was all in a sports movie! But that is only a surface reading. When we see the character of Cobb during that scene, he is dying, and he knows he is dying. The music is about a dying man coming home, so the idea of weaving these disparate musical things in together is a pretty neat assignment for a composer.

Thus, when it came time to select the pieces for this new album, the first thought was about pieces whose duration allowed me to focus on this idea of musical development. In ***Alien³***, there is the "Adagio" at the end, for the scene in which Ripley sacrifices herself in a pool of lead, arms stretched out in the iconic Christian position of the crucifixion. It is the immaculate conception in reverse by having the alien choose Ripley as a vehicle for giving birth. The only way she could save humanity, including the thieves and criminals around her, is to sacrifice herself. In the story and in the music, she is the sacrificial Lamb of God. That is why the use of "Agnus Dei" was so critical in this context. That piece is included in the "Lento", which is the precursor to the "Adagio".

This is connected with ***Titus***. In the "Finale", which we chose to record, there is somewhat a Christian reference as well. In Shakespeare's play, there is no baby in a cage that young Lucius takes from the arena of murder and killing. During this adagio, the child walks carrying Aaron's baby into the light, the sunset. This refers to the notion of caritas, as opposed to a more severe tradition of Roman justice. Early in the film, the Goth queen Tamara's son is marked for sacrifice, and Tamara says "O cruel irreligious piety", in reference to Roman law, whereas at the end, the innocent child is taken out of the Coliseum of human cruelty. The ending music relayed the philosophical feeling of caritas, of charity, and of possibility. It is not in the play, but director Julie Taymor encouraged me to convey that moral point, which is extremely important. She did not just say "write a piece of music." It became a huge opportunity, because you see Aaron buried, being prepared to be eaten by birds of prey, with his child gone, but the boy picks up the child and takes him away, only a few moments before the end titles. The scene and its music – a fully realized composition that to that point had not been heard in the body of the film – represent a turning of the page of that cycle of violence.

For ***Batman Forever*** and ***Batman & Robin***, Joel Schumacher's vision was of a dazzling array of extremely contrasting characters. We start with Bruce Wayne, born out of the dark beginnings of his parents being murdered. The music is darkly chromatic, a series of minor chromatic chords followed by descending contrasting major chords, which is a kind of reduction of a whole movie of wild contrasts. That first theme, my Batman theme, is disguised in many forms, from high-speed perpetual mobility in the high strings to suggest power and flight, to its development as a dance – fox trots, rumbas, a sultry tango. It carries my Batman theme into areas of whimsy to unabashed heroism and even eroticism.

Joel Schumacher allowed me periods of extreme heroism, expressed by a symphony orchestra. With my own whimsy, I called the ending Batterdämmerung, a play on Wagner. It is boldly triumphant – a torrent of strings with the brass playing the B-part of the Batman motive. The "Grand Gothic Suite" is really a concert piece of theme and variations of my Batman theme in starkly contrasted episodes. Adapting that main theme as a sultry tango and to all its other forms relates to disposable American culture. The principle is that the Batman theme is a chiseled-out musical event at the outset, and then from that event, you can hang musical tapestries: erotic, heroic, seductive, destructive. Those pieces are all things unto themselves but connected through that main theme.

For the score for ***Interview with the Vampire***, the concept was to turn the Catholic "Libera Me" on its head. In the main titles, the first thing you hear

(in Latin) is “save me from everlasting life”, since I changed the words for the choir from *morte aeterna* to *vitae aeterna*. It is a salient point in the conception of the music, having Christian and anti-Christian elements running at the same time as vampires sucking the holy blood out of people. Vampires are also no fans of light, and are being saved from the eternal light – *lux aeterna*. Director Neil Jordan and I talked about these things because he was very much weaving Anne Rice’s themes from the novel towards his own Catholic iconographic bent. The musical theme of “Lux Aeterna” is presented here in “Louis’ Revenge”, in a kind of Beethovenian dance of death.

From ***Frida***, we selected the piece “Still Life”, which can be heard in the film during the hospital scene, when Frida Kahlo is looking at her and Diego Rivera’s baby in a hospital jar after her miscarriage. The music reflects a doleful fragility of the moment. It is not just some waltz, but an emotional wrenching and vulnerable moment in her life. I played the original piece on the soundtrack on our piano at home. Julie Taymor and I did not intend it to be that way, but that is what ended up happening.

“JD Dies” is from the Michael Mann film ***Public Enemies***. This piece was something Michael Mann liked from the outset, which was fortunate because we were running out of time at that point. It was one of the last things I wrote for the film. The strategy behind that piece was to have the flutes and clarinets play continuous eighth notes, which almost sound like a ticking clock. Whereas the unraveling of a person’s destiny, we ask “what is the last minute ticking down? What might it be? To die in your bed? In a hospital, or assassinated on a street corner?” In this case, for John Dillinger it was just on the street, after exiting the Biograph movie theater. You hear the ticking clock, the inevitability, the solemn curfew of a person’s life. There is also a tinge of the heroic in the brass because of the American lexicon of bank robbers possibly being heroic in popular mythology. But really it is about the solemnity of the myth of Dillinger. The idea of the piece is very clear when you hear it that way – the last minutes of a life against the heroic mythology.

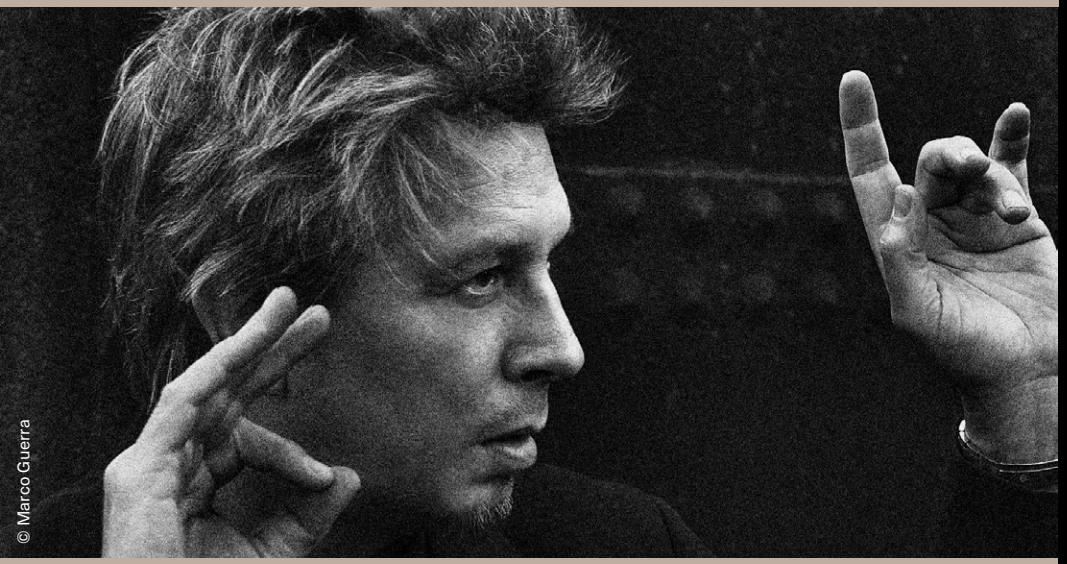
When we came to the scene from ***Heat*** that “Of Helplessness” underscores, I remember saying to Michael Mann at the time “don’t have drums and rhythmic pulsing music”, as we had had in other parts of the film. The music accompanies a despondent mother as she learns of the death of her daughter. Representing the mother’s pain, the longing in the orchestra is emotionally dignified and amplifies the mother’s grief without being maudlin. In this way, the music of “Of Helplessness” played against all the other music in the film.

So these are the things we thought about when discussing the selections for this album. We wanted to choose pieces that reflect something integral to the complete picture, universal emotions – things that humans share – or moments that contain important ideas, and which became wonderful opportunities to compose music for. It is with great joy and gratitude that I appreciate the mighty contributions that maestro Dirk Brossé, Robert Elhai, and the members of the Brussels Philharmonic have brought to this project.

Elliot Goldenthal

Dirk Brossé & Elliot Goldenthal © Film Fest Gent

ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL COMPOSER



© Marco Guerra

Elliot Goldenthal is a four-time Academy Award nominee as well as a three-time Golden Globe Award nominee for the films *Interview with the Vampire, Michael Collins* and *Frida*, which included an Oscar nomination for Best Song as well. Goldenthal ultimately won the Oscar for Frida as well as the World Soundtrack Award that year for Best Original Soundtrack of the Year and Soundtrack Composer of the Year.

Goldenthal's soundtrack to *The Butcher Boy* won the LA Film Critics Association Award for Best Music and his scores to *Heat, Michael Collins* and *The Butcher Boy* were nominated for the Chicago Film Critics Association Award for Best Original Score. Goldenthal is also a three-time Grammy nominee for his work on *Batman Forever, A Time to Kill* and *Across the Universe*. In 2015, Goldenthal became the first-ever recipient of the Wojciech Kilar Award for composers who have worked in film but "remained faithful to the traditional art of composition."

Goldenthal has composed music for more than a dozen theatrical productions including *Juan Darién: A Carnival Mass*, which received five Tony nominations including Best Musical, and for Original Musical Score for Goldenthal. His other theatrical credits include *The Transposed Heads, The Green Bird, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Grounded* and *M. Butterfly*, all directed by Julie Taymor, as well as *The King Stag*, directed by Andrei Șerban. Goldenthal is currently working with Taymor on a new musical, *The Grand Delusion*.

In the realm of concert music, Goldenthal's principle works include his opera *Grendel*, which premiered at Los Angeles Opera and the Lincoln Center Festival in 2006 and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2007. His oratorio, *Fire Water Paper*, premiered in 1995 and was later toured by conductor Seiji Ozawa and the Boston Symphony with performances at Boston Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall in New York, and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. The piece was recorded for Sony Classical with the Pacific Symphony under Carl St. Clair with cello solos performed by Yo-Yo Ma. His evening-length three-act ballet Othello was commissioned by American Ballet Theatre and San Francisco Ballet and remains in the permanent repertoire of both companies as well as the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago.

Most recently, Goldenthal's *Symphony No. 3* premiered in December of 2021, commissioned by the Beethoven Academy Orchestra. It was performed in May 2024 in a performance sponsored by the American Embassy in Poland as well as in November 2024 in Gdansk. His symphonic adagio, *October Light*, was composed for the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and premiered in December of 2019. Goldenthal's 2018 *Trumpet Concerto* was commissioned by the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and the Krakow Festival Burn. The concerto was premiered in 2017/18 at the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia and at NOSPR in Katowice, Poland with soloist Tine Thing Helseth and with conductor Dirk Brossé. In 2024 the concerto was recorded by soloist Lucas Lipari-Meyer of Ensemble Intercontemporain, with conductor Dennis Russell Davies directing the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New York. Goldenthal's first symphony, *Symphony in G# Minor*, had its world premiere in 2014 and its European premiere in 2015 in Linz, Austria, and it was performed at the Enescu Festival in 2016 again under the direction of Dennis Russell Davies.

www.elliotgoldenthal.com

DIRK BROSSÉ CONDUCTOR

Dirk Brossé is a multi-faceted composer and a respected conductor on the international music scene. He is music director of The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, music director of Film Fest Gent and honorary conductor of Sinfonietta Cracovia. Dirk Brossé has composed some 400 works, including concerti, oratorios, lieder, chamber music, symphonic works, musicals and film scores. His score for the BBC/HBO series *Parade's End* was nominated for an Emmy Award. His score for *Knielen op een bed violen* was nominated for the Golden Calf Award. Maestro Brossé has conducted all the leading Belgian orchestras. He has conducted over 120 orchestras all over the world such as the London Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Opera, l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Camerata St Petersburg, Hong Kong Philharmonic, l'Orchestre de l'Opéra de Lyon and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Shanghai.

Dirk Brossé has made over 100 CD recordings and has collaborated with world-class artists such as José Van Dam, Barbara Hendricks, Julia Migenes, Julian Lloyd Webber, Salvatore Accardo, Alison Balsom, Hans Zimmer, Emma Thompson, Randy Crawford, Lisa Gerrard and Marcel Khalifé.

Dirk Brossé has been awarded the title Cultural Ambassador of Flanders, the Flemish Parliament's Gold Medal for Merit, the Achille Van Acker Prize, the Joseph Plateau Honorary Award and the Global Thinkers Forum Award for Excellence in Cultural Creativity. In 2013 he was elevated to Belgium's hereditary nobility, with the personal title of Knight. He is a member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts and since 2018 a Fellow at the University of Brussels (VUB).

© Wouter Maeckelberghe

www.dirkbrosse.be

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

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The Brussels Philharmonic was founded in 1935 by the Belgian public broadcaster (NIR/INR). It performs both great classics as well as new compositions. The orchestra's international reputation comes from its specialization in recording soundtracks (including the Oscar-winning music for *The Artist*), the many successful recordings for labels such as Deutsche Grammophon and Palazzetto Bru Zane, the numerous awards including an ECHO Klassik and Diapason d'Or de l'année, and the ambitious projects on prestigious stages around the world (Carnegie Hall in New York, Philharmonie de Paris, Musikverein Wien, Grosses Festspielhaus Salzburg, Cadogan Hall in London). In Belgium, the orchestra is a regular partner of Film Fest Gent, and participates each year in concerts with iconic films. The Brussels Philharmonic is an institution of the Flemish Community.

www.brusselsphilharmonic.be

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC MUSICIANS

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Annelies Broeckhoven
Maria Boila
Stefan Claeys
Cristina Constantinescu
Isabelle Dunlop
Gabriele Filiberto Galleri
Sára Kovács
Elizaveta Rybentseva
Anton Skakun
Alissa Vaitsner
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Yuichiro Haruno
Sophie Hutnik
Aline Janeczek
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Sayoko Mundy
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Thi Ngoc Phung Ha
Amalija Kokeza
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Karin Broeckhove
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Luzia Correia Rendeiro Vieira
Bram Decroix
Thomas Fiorini
Daniele Giampaolo
Maarten Taelman

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Elise Tossens (2)
Eva Vennekens (2)

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Maarten Wijnen (1)
Lode Cartrysse (2)
Ilona Ingels

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Midori Mori (2)

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Jonas Coomans (2)
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Gert D'haese (2)

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Stijn Schoofs (2)
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Eline Groslot (2)

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Anastasia Goldberg (2)
Frederik Martens (2)

SAXOPHONE
Asagi Ito (2)
Hendrik Pellens (2)
Pieter Pellens (2)

(1) principal
(2) soloist

SOLOISTS

HENRY RAUDALES, VIOLIN
"Grand Gothic Suite" from *Batman Forever / Batman & Robin*

JOLIEN DE GENDT, SOPRANO
"Lento" from *Alien³*

ANTOINE COLIN, TRUMPET
"Grand Gothic Suite" from *Batman Forever / Batman & Robin*

ANASTASIA GOLDBERG, PIANO
"Grand Gothic Suite" from *Batman Forever / Batman & Robin*
"Still Life" from *Frida*

© Film Fest Gent

TRACKLIST & PUBLISHING CREDITS

→ BATMAN FOREVER / BATMAN & ROBIN
01 Grand Gothic Suite
Warner Olive Music LLC (ASCAP)
admin Universal/MCA Music Limited

→ COBB
02 The Homecoming *
Warner Olive Music LLC (ASCAP)
admin Universal/MCA Music Limited

→ INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE
03 Born to Darkness / Louis' Revenge
Warner Olive Music LLC (ASCAP)
admin Universal/MCA Music Limited

→ HEAT
04 Of Helplessness
New Regency Music (ASCAP)
admin EMI Music Publishing Ltd

→ FRIDA
05 Still Life
WC Music Corp (ASCAP)
admin Warner Chappell North America Limited

→ TITUS
06 Arrows of the Gods
07 Finale
(Copyright Control)

→ SPHERE
08 The Gift
Warner Olive Music LLC (ASCAP)
admin Universal/MCA Music Limited

→ ALIEN^3
09 Suite:
First Attack I / The Entrapment / Lento / Adagio
TCF Music Publishing Inc (ASCAP) admin EMI Music Publishing Ltd (Twentieth Century Fox)

→ PUBLIC ENEMIES
10 JD Dies
Universal Pictures Music (ASCAP)
admin Universal/MCA Music Limited

→ FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN
11 Final Fantasia
Square Pictures admin Sony/ATV Music Publishing (UK) Limited

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Music Composed by **Elliot Goldenthal**

Performed by **Brussels Philharmonic**
Conducted by **Dirk Brossé**

Orchestrations by **Robert Elhai** & **Elliot Goldenthal**

FILM FEST GENT

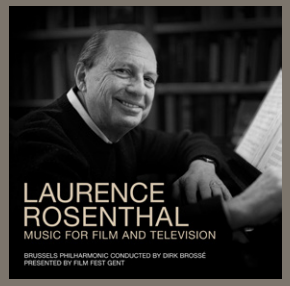
Since the mid-1980s Film Fest Gent has focused on the impact of music on film by celebrating composers for screen and their work. The festival organises film music concerts, composer talks, a composition contest and industry networking events, and over the years has become a popular meeting place for both emerging and established screen composers.

In 2001, Film Fest Gent launched the World Soundtrack Academy, a global community of screen composers and professionals active in the film music industry. The World Soundtrack Academy recognises outstanding achievements in the field with the World Soundtrack Awards, presented at the annual ceremony and concert in October.

Film Fest Gent also produces studio recordings of music by guest composers, performed by Brussels Philharmonic and conducted by Film Fest Gent music director Dirk Brossé. The unique compilations in the Film Fest Gent album series feature selections of the world's greatest scores, giving them an extended afterlife beyond the film and the festival's concerts.

www.filmfestival.be
www.worldsoundtrackawards.com

MUSIC FOR FILM



CREDITS

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Music Composed by Elliot Goldenthal

Performed by Brussels Philharmonic

Conducted by Dirk Brossé

Producer: Thomas Van Parys

Recording, Mixing & Mastering:
High-Score Recording & Mixing Services

Recorded at Flagey, Studio 4,
on August 23, 26-27, 2024

Orchestrations by
Robert Elhai & Elliot Goldenthal

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Richard Guérin

Assistant to Elliot Goldenthal:
Eli Carpenter

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Liner Notes: Elliot Goldenthal
& Thomas Van Parys

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