

PRIX ITALIA 1959

**THE TALE OF
THE SHADOW**

A LEGEND SET
TO MUSIC

BY
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**LA LEGENDE
DE L'OMBRE**

UNE LEGENDE
EN MUSIQUE

PAR
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COMPOSER'S NOTE

With this composition I wish to discuss three contemporary concepts of new techniques in musical composition.

1. Electronic Music (Pure electronic sound-production)
2. Musique Concrète
3. Radiophonic sound-treatment

In addition, a coordination between elements of Eastern and Western musical language has been tried out without masking their respective grammatical organisation through an artificial amalgamation.

The synopsis of the libretto shows clearly the reasons for the application of these media: the two shadows symbolize the Orient and the Occident. The musical representative of the West is a 12 tone-series, functionally applied; the instruments are mainly electronic ones. The motives for the East use modes and microtones; the instruments are mainly conventional.

1. For the production of the electronic sounds, a machine has been built, which produces a fundamental tone with a free choice of 12 overtones through photoelectric

transition. All of these tones are controllable in their dynamic relationships. 24 tone-structures have been built up, divided into two 12 tone-rows. One row performs structures of strong tensions between the overtones, the other weak tensions. Each tone of the 12 tone-series takes its structure from one of the structure-rows. What we call "colour" in music has been defined thus as "tone-structure".

2. The action of the libretto consists of some sound-symbols which demand a musical interpretation. For example: the voice from the well, the sound-wall guarding the magic stone, and the wind which mixes water and sand. The customary media for the translation of such realistic sounds into music has, up to now, been realized by means of tremoli of the violins, harp-glissandi, flutter-tongue etc. "Musique Concrète" led to electronically created noises with a wealth of new possibilities. I tried to avoid the danger of results which came about purely by chance. Therefore all sound-symbols in this work have been built up by absolute controllable structures of musical composition. The "voice from the well" is the woven texture from three drum-motives. The time-successions are so rapid, that the echo-effect results in the desired sound. The

"sound-wall" is based on a motive from the introduction, combined with variations of speed, pitch and dynamics. Even without stereophonic applications, a polydimensional sound-effect has been attained. Finally, the "wind" is a musical variation of the sound-wall, corresponding to its symbolic function in the action. Through filtering, prominent pitch-formations have been levelled

3. The human voice and the background-music in relation to the human voice have been the special targets of radiophonic techniques.

The text of the complete introduction, till the appearance of the doctor in the patients' room, has been reduced to two or three sentences. These have been recorded the usual way with the usual microphone-technique. Afterwards these few recorded words have been developed into an independent part of the composition, using modern tape-recording technique to the full.

The onomatopoetic characteristic of different words especially, have been musically developed through special adaption to microphone-technique (for example the Hebrew equivalents for the words "grains" or "sand".)

Background music to spoken words should not be sensual sound-painting. Mainly single tones from one of the 12 tone structure-scales have been used, their tension - characteristics corresponding to the text and their dynamic relations carefully estimated.

The flute-recorder-melody, based on idioms of Eastern music, is not a folkloristic quotation neither has it been harmonized with Western chord-progression. According to the different results of musical communication in Eastern music, depending on variations of pitch and speed, these media have been used in the same way. In some places musical idioms from East and West appear in combination and cooperation without amalgamation because of dominant factors of one of these expressions.

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