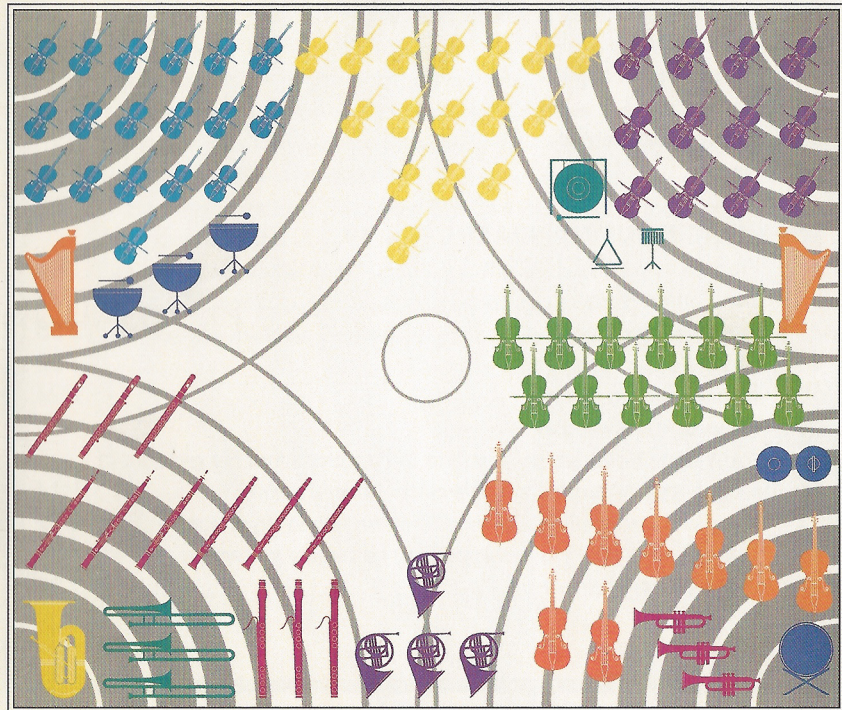


**Boulez conducts Bartók**  
**THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN** (Complete)  
Schola Cantorum: Hugh Ross, Director  
**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

facsimile of original LP cover art

87710

**BÉLA BARTÓK**  
**CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA**  
**THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN**  
**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**  
**PIERRE BOULEZ**



# BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945)

## CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA, Op. 116

1	I. Introduzione .....	10'00
2	II. Giuoco delle coppie .....	.6'39
3	III. Elegia .....	.7'25
4	IV. Intermezzo interrotto .....	.4'17
5	V. Finale .....	.8'38

## THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN, Op. 19

6	Prelude .....	.1'16
7	The Curtain Rises .....	.1'47
8	First seduction game .....	.3'38
9	Second seduction game .....	.3'02
10	Third seduction game .....	.2'24
11	General consternation – <i>The tramps make signs from their hiding place that the girl should start, lure the Mandarin a little closer, ensnare him.</i> .....	.1'14
12	<i>The girl is undecided. She shudders and draws back again.</i> .....	.4'32
13	<i>The girl sinks down to embrace him; he begins to tremble in feverish excitement.</i> .....	.2'28

14	<i>The tramps leap out, seize the Mandarin and tear him away from the girl. They strip him of his jewelry and his money.</i> .....	.2'06
15	<i>Suddenly the Mandarin's head appears between the pillows and he looks longingly at the girl. The four shudder and stand aghast.</i> .....	.3'00
16	<i>The terrified tramps discuss how they are to get rid of the Mandarin at last.</i> .....	.1'16
17	<i>The lamp falls to the floor – goes out. The body of the mandarin begins to glow with a greenish blue light. His eyes are fixed on the girl.</i> .....	.4'17

Schola Cantorum (Hugh Ross, Director)  
**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**  
**PIERRE BOULEZ, Conductor**

**Concerto for Orchestra:**

Original Producer: **Thomas Z. Shepard**

Recording Engineer: **Bud Graham**

Remix Engineer: **Raymond Moore**

Recorded on December 18, 1972 at Manhattan Center,  
New York City

Date of original release: January, 1973

**The Miraculous Mandarin:**

Original Producer: **Andrew Kazdin**

Original Engineers: **Bud Graham, Raymond L. Moore**

Original Quad remix: **Raymond L. Moore**

Recorded on May 11, 1971, at Philharmonic Hall  
(now Avery Fisher Hall), New York City

Date of original release: July 19, 1972

This disc is designed for use in  
**SUPER AUDIO CD** players only.

[www.sonymusic.com/sacd](http://www.sonymusic.com/sacd)

Consists of previously released material.

Produced for SACD by **Louise de la Fuente**

Sound Mix Engineer: **Richard King**

DSD Authoring Engineer: **Woody Pornpitaksuk**

Total Time: 68'20

This SACD utilizes Sony's **DIRECT STREAM DIGITAL™**  
(DSD) System and SBM Direct.



Package Design: **Lisa Sparagano**

Original Cover Design: **Ed Lee**

Cover Art: **Kwan/Sehring**

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**In October 1940, Béla Bartók**

and his wife, Ditta, were forced to leave their native Hungary to escape the Nazi onslaught, and settled in the United States. The 59-year-old composer was suffering from leukemia, a disease that was to prove fatal in five years. Unhappy and apprehensive, while en route he wrote that "this voyage is ... like plunging into the unknown from what is known but

unbearable ... God only knows how and for how long I'll be able to work over there."

Considering his frail condition, Bartók managed to do a surprising amount of composing in the last years of his life. In addition, he catalogued a great deal of Columbia University's large Yugoslav folk song collection, for which purpose a small

research grant was arranged. (Henry Cowell once pointed out the exact spot in the library where Bartók had worked. "I used to see him quietly sitting there, quite unnoticed by the students who went in and out," Cowell recalled.)

Columbia University was not the only place where Bartók went relatively unnoticed. During his final few years, American concert halls seldom resounded to his music. "My career as a composer," he wrote in December 1942, "is as much as finished. The *quasi* boycott of my works by the leading orchestras continues; no performances of either old works or new ones." Meanwhile, because of the war, royalties were not forthcoming from European performances, and few engagements as pianist were available to Bartók in the United States – and his recurring illness made it difficult for him to fulfill them. So, despite the grant from Columbia University, the Bartóks were forced to live in a condition bordering on poverty.

By early 1943, things had gotten so bad that two old friends of Bartók, Joseph Szigeti and Fritz Reiner, convinced Serge Koussevitzky to commission an orchestral work for one thousand dollars in memory of his wife, Natalie. Bartók, as fastidious as ever, would initially accept only half of that amount because he feared that his precarious health might prevent him from fulfilling Koussevitzky's request.

The Concerto for Orchestra was composed at a private sanatorium at Lake Saranac, New York, from August 15 to October 8, 1943 ("I worked on it ... practically night and day," wrote Bartók to Szigeti). The following brief description was written by Bartók himself:

"The general mood of the work represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious deathsong of the third, to the life-assertion of the last one.

"The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat the single instruments or instrument groups in a 'concertant' or soloistic manner. The 'virtuoso' treatment appears, for instance, in the fugato sections of the development of the first movement (brass instruments), or in the 'perpetuum mobile'-like passage of the principal theme in the last movement (strings), and, especially, in the second movement, in which pairs of instruments consecutively appear with brilliant passages."

The Concerto for Orchestra is Bartók's largest purely orchestral composition. It was also to be his last. Koussevitzky conducted the world premiere with the Boston Symphony on December 1, 1944, at Boston's Symphony Hall. It not only received ovations but also an assurance from Koussevitzky that Bartók had written "the best work of the last twenty-five years." It has since become a staple of the repertory.

*Phillip Ramey  
edited and reprinted from the original LP*

Bartók most often created in terms of musical conflict – conflict in the relationships of notes, rhythms, textures – and the resolution of such conflict. In his last work for the theatre, *The Miraculous Mandarin*, written in 1919, Bartók attempted to translate this drama of conflict-and-resolution into physical terms through the medium of ballet-pantomime. Bartók's music ("his most brilliant work for orchestra," in the opinion of Pierre Boulez) is fitted to the story by Menyhért Lengyel of a Mandarin destroyed and released by the most basic of human desires. A girl, by showing pity to him, affirms his existence as a needful human being. Only then can death come for the Mandarin.

The first performance of this odd work, in Cologne, on December 30, 1926, caused a scandal. And because of the "questionable" subject matter, the work was not played in Bartók's native Hungary until after his death in 1945. Since then, it has been performed – with many a variation of its basic premise – by

dance companies throughout Europe and in the United States.

In the ballet, rushing, swirling sounds of the street introduce three vagabonds who have coerced a young woman to entice men into her room so that they can rob them. (A central musical figure of the girl, sounded three times in the work by the clarinet.) First, the girl attracts the attention of an elderly gentleman, but the three accomplices throw him out because he has no money. The seductive call sounds again, this time reaching a shy youth. The girl is attracted to the young man, and dances with him. But when he, too, is found to have little money, he is thrown out.

The third call brings the macabre Mandarin. His eyes betray his desires. The girl begins to dance for him – a slowly

building waltz – arousing him still further. At the climax of the dance, she falls at his knees. Passionately, he embraces her. The horrified girl rushes from him as an agitated, onrushing trombone flurry signals the frantic, ostinato chase. As the Mandarin reaches the girl, the three tramps jump from their hiding place and try to smother him, stab him, and hang him from a chandelier, but he does not die. His will and his desires only seem to become stronger. Finally, he is cut down, and the girl, weeping, takes him into her arms. Only then do the Mandarin's wounds begin to bleed, and he can die at last.

*Robert Hurwitz  
edited and reprinted from the original LP*

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"... the disk could be a prize-winner.  
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*The New York Times (1973)*

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6-17 THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN, Op. 19

Schola Cantorum (Hugh Ross, *Director*)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

PIERRE BOULEZ, *Conductor*

Consists of previously released material.

Original Producers: **Thomas Z. Shepard** (Cto. for Orchestra)

**Andrew Kazdin** (Miraculous Mandarin)

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