

GORKY PARK

DOING BUSINESS IN MOSCOW CAN BE MURDER

Based on the 1981 novel by Martin Cruz Smith, the 1983 film adaptation of *Gorky Park* was a suspenseful, exciting thriller with an expert cast, including William Hurt, Lee Marvin, Ian Bannen, Brian Dennehy, Joanna Pacula, and Richard Griffiths. The screenplay was by Dennis Potter (*Pennies from Heaven*, *The Singing Detective*, *Brimstone and Treacle*), and the director was Michael Apted (*Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Agatha*, *The World Is Not Enough*).

The plot centers around the discovery of three dead bodies in Russia's Gorky Park – all three have been shot in the chest and mouth, and all have had their faces cut off. Soviet policeman Arkady Renko begins an investigation which brings him into contact with an American policeman, an importer of sables and his lady friend, and the KGB. To give away more would spoil the fun, but suffice it to say that the investigation is anything but smooth or easy – people lie, people die, romances begin, loyalties shift, deals are offered, more people die, and, in the end, life goes on for those who are still alive.

Hurt gives a really interesting performance as Renko, Marvin gives his customary wonderful performance, and Bannen, Dennehy, and Pacula are superb in their supporting roles. The film did respectably at the box-

office, and received some excellent reviews. Janet Maslin in the *New York Times* called the film “a taut, clever thriller throughout, with Mr. Apted's direction establishing its intensity immediately and sustaining it well. Ralf G. Bode's cinematography and James Horner's score go a long way toward setting a hauntingly bleak mood, and the supporting players, particularly Brian Dennehy and Ian Bannen, are excellent.” The film's screenplay won an Edgar Allen Poe award, and Pacula was nominated for a Golden Globe.

It was not all that usual for a film score to be called out in the *New York Times* back then (or now), but James Horner's score is really integral to the film, helping establish its various moods and characters, and really notching up the tension and romance. It has some of Horner's best themes, including a stunning one for Irina, the character played by Joanna Pacula. By 1983, Horner had only been writing film scores for five years, but he'd already built up a substantial body of work and was considered to be one of the best of the up-and-comers of that generation, thanks to his terrific work on films in every kind of genre, including *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, *48 Hrs*, *Wolfen*, *Deadly Blessing*, *The Hand*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *Krull*, *The Dresser*, *Testament*, *Brainstorm*, among others.

He would, of course, go on to be one of the most successful film composers in history, turning out scores

for both blockbusters and more intimate films such as *Cocoon*, *Uncommon Valor*, *The Journey of Natty Gann*, *Commando*, *An American Tail*, *Willow*, *Field of Dreams*, *Honey*, *I Shrank The Kids*, *Glory*, *The Rocketeer*, *Aliens*, *Braveheart*, *Apollo 13*, *The Mask of Zorro*, as well as his scores for two of the most successful films ever made, James Cameron's *Titanic* and *Avatar* – and that doesn't even scratch the surface. Horner is both an Oscar and Grammy Award-winner.

Gorky Park was originally released on LP and CD by Varese Sarabande. For this release, we have completely remastered the sound and offer two presentations of the score – the first in film order, and the second in album order, two very different listening experiences. While there are a handful of additional cues in the film, most of them are very brief and are mostly reiterations of the cues that were assembled for the soundtrack album by Horner himself.

So, here is James Horner's great score for *Gorky Park*, one of his finest from an especially rich time in his scoring career. It's everything a thriller score should be – and more.

— Bruce Kimmel