

NAXOS

BLISS: Checkmate • Mêle Fantastique

8.557641

Sir Arthur Bliss, Master of the Queen's Music from 1953, was one of the leading British composers of his generation. The sparkling *Mêle Fantastique* (1921), which the composer considered to be his first ballet score, shows the influence of Stravinsky and Dyagilev's *Ballets Russes*. *Checkmate* (1937), a collaboration with the great choreographer, Ninette de Valois, is a masterpiece of English ballet, full of striking ideas and colourful effects. This disc offers a rare opportunity to hear the complete ballet, which remains in the repertoire to this day.

Arthur  
**BLISS**  
(1891-1975)

- |           |   |              |
|-----------|---|--------------|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Mêle Fantastique</b>   | <b>12:00</b> |
|           | <b>Checkmate: Ballet in One Scene with a Prologue</b>                       | <b>53:03</b> |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Prologue – The Players: Moderato maestoso</b>                            | <b>5:46</b>  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Dance of the Red Pawns: Allegro spirito scherzando</b>                   | <b>2:25</b>  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Dance of the Four Knights: Allegro moderato sempre robustamente</b>      | <b>3:49</b>  |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Entry of the Black Queen: L'istesso tempo</b>                            | <b>5:31</b>  |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>The Red Knight's Mazurka: Moderato gioiosamente</b>                      | <b>3:38</b>  |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Ceremony of the Red Bishops: Largamente (misticamente)</b>               | <b>2:12</b>  |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Entry of the Red Castles: Allegro molto deciso</b>                       | <b>2:24</b>  |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Entry of the Red King and Queen: Grave</b>                               | <b>1:46</b>  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>The Attack: Allegro impetuoso e brillante</b>                            | <b>7:03</b>  |
| <b>11</b> | <b>The Duel: Maestoso moderato e molto appassionato</b>                     | <b>8:26</b>  |
| <b>12</b> | <b>The Black Queen Dances: Allegretto dispettoso</b>                        | <b>3:42</b>  |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Finale – Checkmate: Andante poco sostenuto – Allegro vivace e feroce</b> | <b>6:20</b>  |

**Royal Scottish National Orchestra • David Lloyd-Jones**

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Playing Time  
65:03



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