



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Pare Lorentz's *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936) and *The River* (1937) are landmark American documentary films.* Aesthetically, they break new ground in seamlessly marrying pictorial imagery, symphonic music, and poetic free verse, all realized with supreme artistry. Ideologically, they indelibly encapsulate the strivings of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 'New Deal'. Virgil Thomson's scores for both films are among the most famous ever composed for the movies. Aaron Copland praised the music for *The Plow* for its "frankness and openness of feeling", calling it "fresher, more simple, and more personal" than the Hollywood norm. He called the music for *The River* "a lesson in how to treat Americana".

* Available from Naxos on DVD (2.110521)

World Première Recordings

www.naxos.com



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Virgil
THOMSON
(1896–1989)

The Plow that Broke the Plains (1936)

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|------|
| 1 | Prelude | 4:04 |
| 2 | Pastorale (Grass) | 1:20 |
| 3 | Cattle | 2:07 |
| 4 | The Homesteader | 2:48 |
| 5 | Warning | 1:30 |
| 6 | War and the Tractor | 3:55 |
| 7 | Speculation (Blues) | 2:55 |
| 8 | Drought | 1:46 |
| 9 | Wind and Dust | 2:04 |
| 10 | Devastation | 4:23 |

The River (1937)

- | | | |
|----|----------------|------|
| 11 | Prelude | 0:40 |
| 12 | First Forest | 1:01 |
| 13 | A Big River | 2:46 |
| 14 | Cotton Pickers | 2:43 |
| 15 | Ruins | 1:19 |
| 16 | Logging | 2:00 |
| 17 | Coal | 2:37 |
| 18 | Floods | 7:39 |
| 19 | Requiem | 1:14 |
| 20 | Tenancy | 3:21 |
| 21 | Finale | 3:23 |

Post-Classical Ensemble
Angel Gil-Ordóñez

Recorded at Omega Recording Studios, Rockville, Maryland, USA, 11–12 June 2005

Producer & Editor: Steven K. Zakar • Engineer: Jim Curtis
Editions used: G. Schirmer, Inc.^{1–10} • Fleisher Collection, Free
Library of Philadelphia (The Virgil Thomson Foundation)^{11–21}

Cover image: Stills from *The Plow that Broke the Plains*
American flag, folk artist, 1880s

Playing
Time:
55:43

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