

The Plow that Broke the Plains • The River

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'.

The Plow that Broke the Plains 27:02

The River 31:23

Special Features include:

George Stoney on *The Plow* and *The River* 15:01

Stoney on The New Deal, *The River*, and Race 6:09

Charles Fussell on Virgil Thomson 17:35

Virgil Thomson on Virgil Thomson (audio only)* 7:15

Soundtracks re-created by

Post-Classical Ensemble

Angel Gil-Ordóñez, music director

Joseph Horowitz, artistic director

Floyd King, narrator

Recorded at Omega Recording Studios, 5609 Fishers Ln., Rockville, MD 20852, on 11th and 12th June, 2005

DVD Executive Producer: Joseph Horowitz • DVD Author: Oliver Clements (K&A Productions Ltd)

Recording Producers: Steven K. Zakar • Recording Engineer: Jim Curtis • Recording Editor: Steven K. Zakar

Cameraperson for Stoney and Fussell interviews: Cheryl Furjanic

* Interview with Virgil Thomson conducted in 1979 at the Peabody Conservatory of Music by Roger Hall

Editions used: *The Plow that Broke the Plains* – G. Schirmer, Inc.; *The River* – Fleisher Collection. Free Library of Philadelphia (The Virgil Thomson Foundation) • Cover design: Ron Hoares

Support for this DVD was provided by The National Endowment for the Arts (USA), The American Film Institute, Virgil Thomson Foundation (USA), The MARPAT Foundation (USA)



Total Running Time 112:20 • NTSC: No Region Coding
Aspect Ratio 4:3 • Dual Layer Disc • Made in Canada
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