

Sir Arthur Bliss, Master of the Queen's Music from 1953, was one of the leading British composers of his generation. The sparkling *Mêlée 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)

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

Royal Scottish National Orchestra • David Lloyd-Jones

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Playing Time
65:03



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