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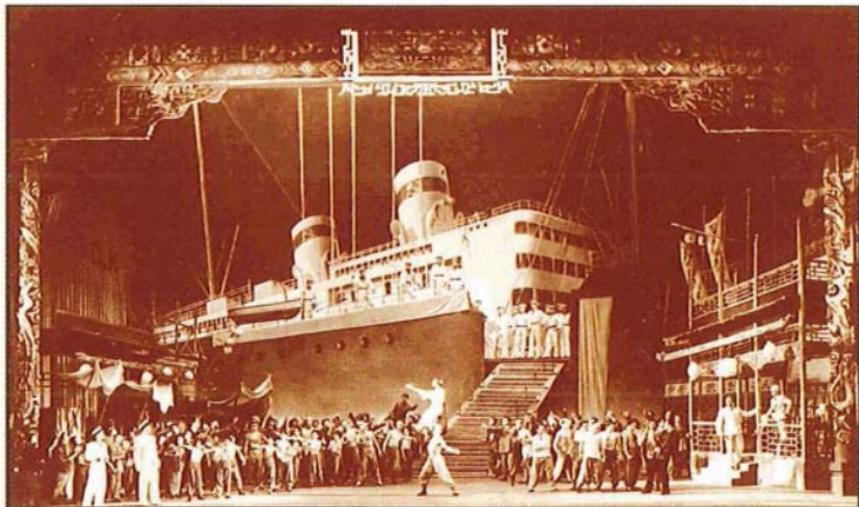
DDD

8.553496-7

**Reinhold  
GLIÈRE**

**The Red Poppy  
(Complete Ballet)**

**St Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra  
André Anichanov**



**2 CD's**

## Reinhold Glière (1875 - 1956)

### The Red Poppy

Reinhold Glière (Reyngol'd Moritsevich Glier), a Soviet composer of Belgian descent, was born in Kiev in 1875, the son of a maker of wind instruments. He played the violin and wrote music at home and studied for three years at the Kiev Conservatory before entering the Moscow Conservatory in 1894. There he studied the violin with Hřimaly and composition with Taneyev, taking lessons in harmony from Arensky and his pupil Konyus and in orchestration from Ippolitov-Ivanov. He completed his studies in 1900 with a one-act operatorio after Byron, *Zemlya i nebo* (Earth and Heaven).

Glière's first employment was as a teacher at the Gnesin Music School, and he was to spend the summer holidays of 1902 and 1903 as tutor to the eleven-year-old Prokofiev. For two years from 1905 he studied conducting with Oscar Fried in Berlin, making his first appearance as a conductor in Russia in 1908, while his compositions continued to make a favourable impression. In 1913 he returned to Kiev to teach the composition class at the Conservatory, of which he became director in the following year. In 1916 his former pupil Prokofiev appeared as soloist in Kiev in his own first piano concerto under the direction of Glière.

From 1920 until his retirement in 1941 Glière taught composition at the Conservatory in Moscow. He showed particular interest in the music of the various ethnic minorities of the Soviet Union, making a detailed study of the music of Azerbaijan that bore fruit in his opera *Shakh-Senem*, written in 1924 and performed in Russian in Baku three years later, followed by staging in Azerbaijan in 1934. His musicological investigations extended to Uzbekistan and other Soviet republics, while the more familiar music of the Ukraine provided him with another native source of inspiration.

During his career Glière occupied a number of official positions. In the early years of the Revolution he headed the music section of the Moscow Department of Popular Education and was Chairman of the organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Composers from 1938 until 1948. His work was officially recognised by various state awards, including the title of People's Artist, bestowed in 1938. He died in Moscow in 1956.

As a composer Glière followed the Russian romantic tradition, something that brought him official praise in 1948 when the music of Prokofiev and Shostakovich was condemned. In particular his ballet music proved popular. *The Red Poppy*, later known, to avoid the connotation of opium, as *The Red Flower*, satisfied political choreographic demands and became a well known part of ballet repertoire from 1926 onwards, while the later ballet *The Bronze Horseman*, completed in 1949, also retained its place in Soviet repertoire.

*The Red Poppy* (*Krasni mak*), with libretto and original décor by M. Kurilko and choreography by Lev Lashchilin and Vasily Tikhomikov, was first staged at the Bolshoy Theatre on 14th June 1927, when Ekaterina Geltser danced Tao-Hoa and Aleksey Bulgatov the heroic Captain. Set in a Chinese port, the story of the ballet is simply told. The dancer Tao-Hoa falls in love with the captain of a Soviet cargo ship, to whom she gives a red poppy. Li-Shan-Fu, her manager, plots to kill the captain by having her give him poisoned tea, but she refuses. Later, in a coolie uprising, she saves the life of the captain and is later killed in a coolie uprising by a bullet from Li-Shan-Fu. She hands a red poppy to a little Chinese girl, as she dies, a sign of love and of freedom. Scope is given for divertissements in the second act, a dream-sequence, set in an opium den. Here Tao-Hoa sees a Golden Buddha, ancient goddesses, butterflies, birds and flowers.

The ballet starts with an appropriate introduction, suggesting a Chinese setting with its pentatonic melodic material. A more ominous mood appears, suggesting the oppression to which the coolies, dock-workers are subjected, tyranny and suffering that will lead to their revolt. The dancing-girl Tao-Hoa

enters, in a more lyrical atmosphere. The restaurant itself has a cosmopolitan clientèle, represented in the various dances that follow, including a *Boston Waltz* and finally leading to the entrance of the Russian captain and the dance of his sailors. The love of the couple is established in Tao-Hoa's scene and variation, followed by a coolies' victory dance and a celebratory dance by the Russian sailors.

The second act is set in an opium den. Here there is a dance of Chinese women and an *Adagio* for the four goddesses of ancient times. Tao-Hoa dreams of the Buddha, of the fabulous phoenix of legend and of the ship of her beloved.

Reality returns with a Charleston and a dance in the restaurant, with preparations for the Chinese theatre, followed by an *Umbrella Dance*, a *Puppet Dance*, with xylophone, and a *Chinese Acrobat Dance*. The coolie uprising is plotted and in this the captain is only saved by the intervention of Tao-Hoa, allowing him to sail away with his men. In the aftermath Tao-Hoa is shot, to hand a red poppy to a little girl, as she dies. The flower, by its colour, symbolizes communism, which will bring freedom to the oppressed, a sign of hope of a better world, expressed in the well known Internationale, the Communist anthem.

*The Red Poppy*, its name changed to *The Red Flower* in 1957, was greeted with some acclaim at its first staging. It seemed innovative, with a clear and acceptable political message, fulfilling the aims of the Soviet cultural establishment. Musically the libretto presented the composer with a number of problems. While the oriental setting provided an exotic background, enabling Glière to make use of characteristic pentatonic melodies, there were inevitable juxtapositions of other musical material, associated with colonial oppression or with the gallant Russian sailors and their captain. It might, therefore, be suggested that the work as a whole lacks something of the unity that might have been found in a more traditional ballet. Whatever reservations might be held about the score, Glière certainly won lasting success with *The*

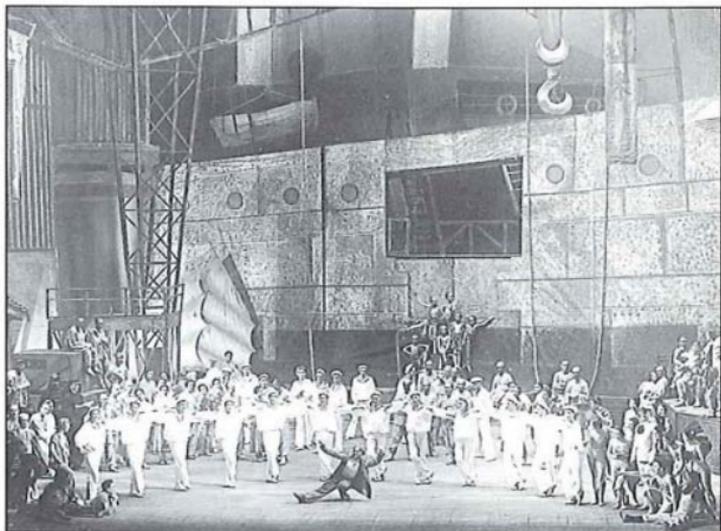
*Red Poppy*, of which excerpts, such as the *Russian Sailors' Dance*, have become very familiar.

### **St Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra**

The St Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra was established in 1969 as the Russian State Concert Orchestra. Work with the conductor André Anichanov began in March 1991. In the following year the orchestra was awarded State Symphony status and changed its name, continuing its established and wide-ranging repertoire, with particular proficiency in the interpretation of Russian music. The orchestra performs in the St Petersburg Philharmonic Hall, the Academic Capella and Smolny Cathedral and has undertaken successful tours abroad, from near-by Finland to as far afield as South Korea. Recordings for Naxos include the three symphonies of Rimsky-Korsakov and the *Spartacus* and *Gayane* ballet suites of Khachaturian.

### **André Anichanov**

Born in St. Petersburg, André Anichanov studied orchestral and choral conducting at the St. Petersburg State Conservatory. After winning an award in 1986 at the State Conducting Competition, he worked with a number of St. Petersburg choirs and in 1989 began conducting the Mussorgsky Opera and Ballet Theatre, of which he was appointed Chief Conductor in 1992, winning success in a number of theatre tours, to Italy, America, Japan and France. In 1991 he was appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra.



**The Red Poppy (1927)**

DDD

Playing  
Time:  
108'04"

Reinhold GLIÈRE (1875-1956)

The Red Poppy  
(Complete Ballet)St Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra  
André Anichanov

8.553496-7

STEREO

compact  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO

## CD 1

## Act One

- |    |  |        |
|----|--|--------|
| 1  | Introduction   | (2:19) |
| 2  | Coolies' Dance   | (2:07) |
| 3  | Scene: Tao-Hoa's Entrance  | (2:28) |
| 4  | Restaurant   | (1:32) |
| 5  | Malik's Dance  | (3:27) |
| 6  | Boston Waltz   | (2:43) |
| 7  | Scene of European Dance –<br>Captain's Entrance and Sailor's Dance | (4:28) |
| 8  | Tao-Hoa's Scene  | (5:10) |
| 9  | Variation with Gold Fingers  | (2:14) |
| 10 | Coolies' Victory Dance   | (3:32) |
| 11 | Dance of the Soviet Sailors: Apple                                 | (3:27) |

## Act Two

- |    |   |        |
|----|---|--------|
| 12 | Introduction –<br>Scene in the smoking room | (4:40) |
| 13 | Scene                                       | (3:33) |
| 14 | Dance of the Chinese Women                  | (2:16) |
| 15 | Adagio of Four Goddesses                    | (3:57) |
| 16 | Adagio                                      | (3:53) |

## CD 2

## Act Two (Cont'd)

- |   |                   |        |
|---|-------------------|--------|
| 1 | Prelude           | (3:14) |
| 2 | Tao-Hoa's vision  | (4:09) |
| 3 | Scene: Procession | (3:14) |
| 4 | Sword Dance       | (2:06) |
| 5 | Phoenix           | (2:18) |
| 6 | Adagio            | (4:49) |
| 7 | The Rose Ship     | (1:42) |

## Act Three

- |    |                                     |        |
|----|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 8  | Charleston                          | (2:46) |
| 9  | Dance in the Restaurant             | (2:34) |
| 10 | Preparation of the Chinese Theatre  | (2:02) |
| 11 | Umbrella Dance                      | (1:34) |
| 12 | Puppet Dance                        | (1:33) |
| 13 | Chinese Acrobats' Dance             | (2:00) |
| 14 | Scene: the Conspiracy               | (3:30) |
| 15 | Scene of Confusion                  | (1:03) |
| 16 | Captain's Scene                     | (3:00) |
| 17 | Tao-Hoa's Scene; the departing ship | (2:05) |
| 18 | Rebellion Scene                     | (2:09) |
| 19 | Tao-Hoa's Death                     | (5:50) |
| 20 | Apotheosis                          | (2:26) |

Recorded at the Concert Hall of St Petersburg Radio in June 1994.

Producer: Andrew Wheeler  
Engineer: Seymon Shugal  
Music Notes: Keith Anderson

2 CD's

Cover Painting: Scene from the première of  
The Red Poppy (1927)

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