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CONDORMAN! A NAME TO STRIKE FEAR INTO
the hearts of the wicked—or at least induce a severe

case of heartburn! His name lowers onto the screen in golden letters, emblazoned across the wings of a burnished metal bird of prey. (Clearly an eagle, but never mind—our humble hero is nothing if not patriotic!) At last, the eponymous costumed adventurer makes his entrance, in cartoon form, and the orchestra resolutely strikes up his theme. Timpani portamenti enter first, followed by hi-hat. Next, a driving ostinato for strings undergirds stabbing brass notes, ascending in fifths and fourths until the suspense is nearly unbearable. Finally, the chorus can hold back no longer, bursting out in full-throated exultation: “Con-dor-maaaaan!”

Condorman arrived from Walt Disney Productions and director Charles Jarrott in the summer of 1981 as one of a string of films designed to appeal to the burgeoning teen and young-adult markets. Where children and their parents were concerned, Disney had ruled unchallenged for generations. But as box-office demographics shifted, the company’s approach to live-action filmmaking became more ambitious and experimental. The years before and after *Condorman* saw Disney produce or co-produce such diverse films as *The Black Hole*, *The Watcher in the Woods*, *The Last Flight of Noah’s Ark* (also directed by Jarrott), *Dragonslayer*, *Night Crossing* and *Tron*. Not all of these were well-received on initial release, either commercially or critically, but many of them would enjoy a rebirth on home video and eventually attain the status of cult classics—a delayed vindication for a creatively fertile, risk-taking period in the company’s history.

Author Robert Sheckley’s lighthearted 1965 adventure novel *The Game of X* provided the basic inspiration for *Condorman*: a Cold War tale of “upsmanship espionage” in which an ordinary man stumbles into work as a superspy, and

must perform a high-stakes international extraction of a communist defector. English actor Michael Crawford (known from the popular British sitcom *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*) was cast in the lead role of Woody Wilkins, a comic-book artist whose insistence on "realism" prompts him to dress up as his own fictional character and attempt flights from the Eiffel Tower. When Woody's bemused CIA friend Harry (James Hampton) is tasked with finding a civilian to carry out a seemingly insignificant document drop in Istanbul, Woody jumps at the chance to put his persona into action.

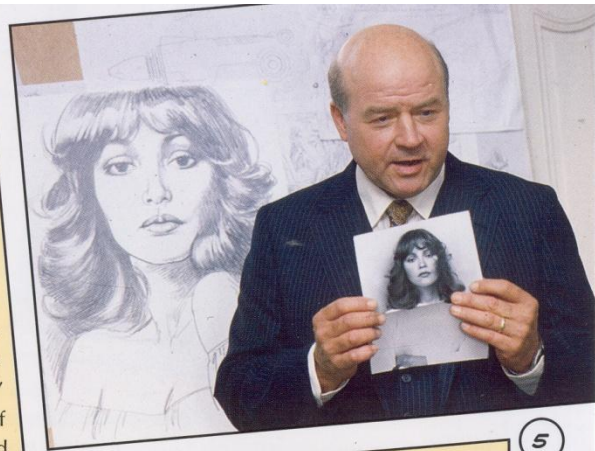
WOODY'S CONTACT TURNS OUT TO BE A RUSSIAN agent named Natalia, played by Nicaraguan-born model/actress (and future Bond girl) Barbara Carrera. "For the first time in its history, Disney even will have a kind of sex goddess," reported Earl C. Gottschalk Jr. in

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The Wall Street Journal, citing company president Ronald W. Miller's description of the role as "the sexiest in Disney history." In the actual film, the character of Natalia is fairly chaste. She is impressed by the easy confidence and improbable success of "Condorman" as he dispatches a team of would-be assassins, and subsequently insists that he be the one to help her defect from under the thumb of her sadistic boss, Krovov (Oliver Reed). Woody quickly realizes that this gives him leverage over the CIA, which has the funds to make all the gadgets and gizmos of his wild imagination into reality. A globetrotting series of misadventures ensues, as Woody and Harry alternately pursue and are pursued by Krovov and his one-eyed lackey Morovich (Jean-Pierre Kalfon)—with the Russian agents constantly dumbfounded by their adversary's outlandish bag of tricks.

Condorman's screwball humor and flights of fancy (the breakneck climax involves a speedboat-mounted laser gun) make it especially important to have a dramatic anchor for the audience. This is partly accomplished by the cast, which



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treats the material with charming earnestness. But the film also benefits tremendously from an energetic score by composer Henry Mancini. *Condorman* was Mancini's first film for Disney (he would return in 1986 to score and

co-write songs for the animated

film *The Great Mouse Detective*, and in 1988 he scored

the Blake Edwards-directed pilot *Justin Case* for Walt Disney Television). It was a well-founded choice: men of action and intrigue, from *Peter Gunn* to *Inspector Clouseau*, were the composer's bread and butter, while his deft touch with romance and comedy had helped make him a household name. He had made an effort to avoid pigeonholing—*Condorman* was followed by the psychodrama biopic *Mommie Dearest* and the gender-bending movie musical *Victor Victoria* (which earned Mancini his fourth Oscar)—but was not above adding another affable comedy-adventure to his résumé, particularly when the client was Disney.

MANCINI'S BASIC CHALLENGE ON *CONDORMAN* was to acknowledge the fundamental absurdity of

the premise without rendering the characters totally ridiculous. Woody Wilkins may be somewhat goofy (his animated counterpart even utters the

iconic "Goofy holler" during the main title sequence) but he is also good-hearted, industrious and brave. Mancini takes advantage of the cartoony opening to front-load some wacky elements—such as the aforementioned timpani portamenti, and a chorus that recalls the comic-book camp of Neal Hefti's *Batman*. Yet Mancini's *Condorman* theme is genuinely thrilling from the start, with its pulsating rhythms, syncopated stresses, and exuberant bridge passage. The direction of the theme alternates between clambering up and tumbling back down, but the three-note fanfare that punctuates these peaks and valleys is never less than heroic. It's the musical equivalent of Woody's boundless optimism: no matter how bad things get, he's ever ready to rush in and set things right.

The dynamic *Condorman* theme gets plenty of play in the score,





as Woody embarks on wild car chases, stages explosive rescues, and ultimately soars through the skies in a fully functional Condorman costume. For the evil Russian agents, Mancini provides a growling line with lots of stepwise motion and a distinctly Slavic inflection. But the heart of both film and score is the character of Natalia, who winds up falling in love with her dashing rescuer. Mancini's sumptuous theme for Natalia is certainly among the loveliest romantic themes ever to be written for a comic adventure. Often heard in delicate keyboard settings, it has a melancholy aspect that speaks to both her Russian nature

and her painful personal history. Through Natalia, Mancini is able to bring a touch of genuine pathos to what would otherwise be a carefree romp.

MUCH OF CONDORMAN WAS SHOT ON LOCATION in France, Monaco, and Switzerland (with villages in the south of France standing in for Yugoslavia and Italy). The majestic vistas and international scope provided Mancini with plenty of opportunities to show off his skill at crafting ethnic-inspired music—particularly for the film's source cues. These include exotic belly dance pieces in Istanbul, jovial beer-hall tunes for the Swiss Alps, and a pair of Russian dances for a casino sequence in Monte Carlo. There is even a brief quote of "Rule Britannia," used to salute the final moments of an unfortunate Rolls-Royce!

Condorman was released in the United States to generally slight response. It fared better in Great Britain, where Michael Crawford was more of a celebrity, and television broadcasts and home video releases ultimately earned the film a devoted cult following. As the years went on, Mancini was sometimes self-effacing where the project was concerned, although not without humor. When it was observed, during a 1992 interview with the *Houston Chronicle*, that Crawford had gone on to attain stardom by originating the title role in Andrew Lloyd Webber's stage musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, Mancini's tongue-in-cheek response was: "Why didn't he tell me he could sing?" Unusually, no soundtrack album was released to coincide with the film, making *Condorman* one of the most conspicuous gaps in the composer's extensive discography. Now, at long last, the curtain is pulled back on one of maestro Mancini's most infectiously fun scores. The listener is invited to sing along.

—John Takis

TECH TALK FROM THE PRODUCER... *The scoring sessions for CONDORMAN were originally recorded*

directly onto 35mm three-channel magnetic film from January through early March 1981. After mixing and dubbing for the picture were completed, the multi-track session elements were vaulted at Disney. Two years later, in November 1983, these masters were transferred onto digital tape for long-term storage.

For this world premiere release of Henry Mancini's dynamic score in vivid stereo sound, the Disney engineering crew made new digital transfers of the entire multi-track sessions for Intrada. Happily, every session roll survived in beautiful condition, including the choral "Con-dor-maaaaan" overdub sessions held after the orchestra sessions had been completed. The synthesized "whizzes" were actually rehearsed and recorded live onto 35mm film and these rolls also survived intact. With all of these disparate elements in hand we were now able to create brand new two-track stereo mixes for the first time ever, all from superb first-generation master elements.

The entire score is presented on this CD, including full-length versions of cues as written and recorded by Mancini prior to the picture's post-production editing. A couple of cues were simply re-tracked into later scenes ("It Was Nothing," "Fish Eye") and the music written for "Eiffel Tower Flight" was dropped in favor of re-using the last portion of the "Condorman Main Title." For the "End Title," a few seconds from "Natalia's Theme" were quickly faded in and out prior to the start of the actual end title. We have not attempted to recreate the film edits and are presenting the score as originally recorded.

The extras section of our CD offers the numerous source pieces Mancini composed for various international party and dance sequences throughout



the film. The final extra ("Condorman Logo"), written for the opening of the film, was dropped in favor of some electronic sound effects unrelated to the Mancini score. We use it to bring the CD to a satisfying and musically dramatic close.

The score offers ample amounts of Mancini's trademark melody and color, particularly the haunting theme written for Natalia. The action sequences are equally rewarding. As evidenced by the complete session masters, even with L.A.'s finest session players, numerous action cues required multiple takes to nail down polished performances. They are energetic pieces and kept brass players,



especially the trombonists playing in unison, unusually busy.

And finally, a fun note about these sessions, demonstrating the respect and affection players had for this wonderful musician. Even during normally stressful moments when problems occurred, Mancini

would frequently laugh, keep

everyone's spirits high and move right on with another take, often poking fun at himself, no less. One humorous example:

"You have to record this cue wild, Hank."

"I do? Why?"

"Because they cut the scene from the picture!"

"Then why I am recording the cue? It isn't that good!!" (*Laughter*)

Scoring his first picture in which a comic book hero becomes real was obviously a treat for this most gifted of composers. And in a world today heavily populated by fictional superheroes, Henry Mancini will always be one for real.

—*Douglass Fake*

CONDORMAN CUE ASSEMBLY

THE ALBUM

1. <i>Condorman</i> Main Title	Recording take number & additional cue titles 1AV (Orchestra) + 1AV-V (Chorus)
2. Eiffel Tower Flight	1AV-1
3. First Fight	2B
4. It Was Nothing	2C
5. Meet Laser Lady	3A
6. The Gypsy	3B
7. Free Single Woman	4AV-ALT
8. Attack Of The Prognoviach	4B Fish Eye; 4C The Black Porsche Squad; 5A (Orchestra) + 5AV (Chorus)
9. Morovich Again	5B
10. The Barn	5C
11. Natalia's Theme	5D/6A
12. Morovich Presses	6B Morovich Presses; CM1085R Hideaways
13. Welcome To The Matterhorn	6C/7A Welcome To The Matterhorn; 7B A Touch Of Italy
14. Joy Ride	7C-1 Natalia's Theme #2; 7D Joy Ride
15. I'll Bring The Dip (Natalia's Rescue)	9A Natalia's Theme #3 9AX I'll Bring The Dip (Natalia's Rescue)
16. Bye-Bye Rolls	9B Condorman Flies; 9C Bye-Bye Rolls
17. The Speed Boat Chase	9F/10A
18. More Speed Boat Chase	10B
19. End Title	10CV Natalia's Theme #4; 10CV E.T. (Orchestra) + 10CV-V E.T. (Chorus)
20. Theme From <i>Condorman</i>	CM1072R

THE EXTRAS

21. Mummy Tummy	2A
22. Mummy Tummy (Alt.)	2A Alt.
23. Belly Dance	2A-2
24. Walk On Ice	7C
25. Accordion Dance	7C-A
26. Russian Party Dance	8B-1
27. Son Of Russian Party Dance	8B-2
28. <i>Condorman</i> Logo (Outtake)	CM1076R



This soundtrack was produced in cooperation with the
American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

ORCHESTRA MANAGER
Gary L. Walker

FLUTE
Louise DiTullio (Dissman)
Sheridon Stokes
Gene Cipriano

WHISTLE/PICCOLO
Arthur C. Smith

CLARINET
Ted Nash
Ronald Langinger
Robert W. Cooper
Don Menza

ENGLISH HORN
Earle D. Dumler

BASSOON
Jack O. Marsh

FRENCH HORN
Vincent De Rosa
Sinclair Lott
Arthur N. Maebe
Richard Perissi
Gus Klein

TRUMPET
Graham Young
Walter I. Johnson
Pete Candoli
Oscar J. Brashear

TROMBONE
Richard Nash
Lloyd Ulyate
Terry C. Woodson
Hoyt Bohannon

TUBA
John T. Johnson

PERCUSSION
Larry Bunker
Tommy Vig
Emil J. Radocchia
Dale Anderson
Steven Schaeffer
Shelly Manne

VIOLIN
Erno Neufeld
Eunice Wennermark
Stanley E. Plummer
Samuel D. Cytron
Robert Sushel

Ambrose Russo
Thelma L. Beach
Alexander Murray
Dorothy Wade
Irma Neumann
Linda N. Rose
Harry Bluestone
David Frisina
Jack L. Pepper
Herman Clebanoff

Nathan Ross
Christopher Reutinger
Albert Steinberg

VIOLA
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Norman Forrester
Robert Ostrowsky
Allan Harshman
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Myer Bello
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Louis Kievman

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Michael Dvorak

FENDER BASS
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James A. Johnson

GUITAR
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HARP
Dorothy Remsen

CS80
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FENDER RHODES
Michael A. Lang

CLAVINET
John Berkman

ACCORDION
Pete Jolly

MONITOR
Willis Schafer

INTRADA SPECIAL COLLECTION | VOLUME 219



Composed and Conducted by HENRY MANCINI

CD Produced by DOUGLASS FAKE
CD Executive Producer: ROGER FEIGELSON
Director of Disney Music Group Soundtracks: DESIREE CRAIG-RAMOS
Project Consultant: RANDY THORNTON

Recorded on January 29, March 16, 17 and 18, 1981, at Disney Studios, Burbank, CA
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CD Art Direction by JOE SIKORYAK, *designWELL*, Berkeley, CA
Production Assistant: REGINA FAKE
Editorial Assistant: FRANK K. DeWALD
Production Artist: KAY MARSHALL

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GEORGE CHAMPAGNE, JEFF JOHNSON, WENDY KUPSAW, MARK HAMMON, STEVE MORI,
VERONIKA SCHRÖERS and KERRY SULLIVAN

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"He Spies! He Flies! He Death-Defies!"

CONDORMAN | ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK
MUSIC COMPOSED AND CONDUCTED BY HENRY MANCINI

THE ALBUM

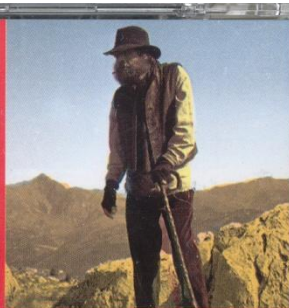
1. <i>Condorman</i> Main Title	3:05		
2. <i>Eiffel Tower Flight</i>	0:37		
3. <i>First Fight</i>	0:48		
4. <i>It Was Nothing</i>	1:52		
5. <i>Meet Laser Lady</i>	1:18	19. <i>End Title</i>	1:16
6. <i>The Gypsy</i>	2:15	20. <i>Theme From Condorman</i>	1:35
7. <i>Free Single Woman</i>	2:57	Total Album Time:	43:58
8. <i>Attack Of The Prognoviach</i>	5:14	THE EXTRAS	
9. <i>Morovich Again</i>	1:35	21. <i>Mummy Tummy</i>	3:06
10. <i>The Barn</i>	1:03	22. <i>Mummy Tummy (Alt.)</i>	2:15
11. <i>Natalia's Theme</i>	1:49	23. <i>Belly Dance</i>	2:56
12. <i>Morovich Presses</i>	3:41	24. <i>Walk On Ice</i>	0:48
13. <i>Welcome To The Matterhorn</i>	1:53	25. <i>Accordion Dance</i>	1:49
14. <i>Joy Ride</i>	2:28	26. <i>Russian Party Dance</i>	1:50
15. <i>I'll Bring The Dip (Natalia's Rescue)</i>	2:19	27. <i>Son Of Russian Party Dance</i>	2:55
16. <i>Bye-Bye Rolls</i>	3:45	28. <i>Condorman Logo (Outtake)</i>	0:32
17. <i>The Speed Boat Chase</i>	2:03	Total Extras Time:	14:21
18. <i>More Speed Boat Chase</i>	1:57	Total CD Time:	60:28

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VOLUME 219

CONDORMAN

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