Iannis Xenakis - La Legende D'Eer (1978)

1. La Légende d'Eer (The Legend of Eer) 45:26 Electronic Studio Westdeutscher Rundfunk Koln

La Légende d'Eer (1977-1978) was composed when Iannis Xenakis was in the midst of his far-reaching explorations of mythology and philosophy. Variously inspired by Plato's myth of Er in The Republic, Pascal's Pensées, and even an article on supernovas in Scientific American, this piece transcends programmatic considerations and presents a strange, roiling soundscape that dwarfs Xenakis' earlier electro-acoustic efforts in scope and imagination. This astonishing piece begins with an extended passage of penetrating, shrill tones that break up into unevenly staggered and twittering pulses. These gradually widen into thick bands of gliding microtonal clusters and bulging intrusions of processed noise, harsh percussive attacks, and throbbing ostinati that grow in density and intensity, only to thin out by the end in distant, glassy pitches similar to the opening. The cumulative effect is similar to the immense roar of Xenakis' Bohor (1962), a shimmering congeries of metallic and rumbling tones that, for its time, seemed the ultimate expression of cosmic vastness and chaos. More than twice Bohor's length, La Légende is also richer in its materials and more polymorphous in its extended processes. Recommended for adventurous listeners and serious students of musique concrète, this CD poses extreme challenges and offers its rewards only to the most dedicated explorers. --- Blair Sanderson, Rovi

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