

# That Man From Rio

**L**'*Homme de Rio* (*That Man From Rio*) hit movie screens in 1964 and was an instant sensation, both in France, and then in the United States, where, for a foreign film, it was incredibly successful, with long exclusive runs in several major cities. The film played both in its original French, and in an English-dubbed version. Audiences ate up the antics of the film – it was hilarious, thrilling, mysterious, and all shot on location, in Paris, in Rio de Janeiro, in Brasilia (a “city of the future” that was just then being built), and the Amazon. Add to that the incredibly electric star power of Jean-Paul Belmondo (a wonderful performance – in the English version, he’s dubbed by the then up-and-coming Hal Linden), the unbelievable beauty, spunk, humor, and charm of Françoise Dorléac (sister of Catherine Deneuve), the wonderful character actors Jean Servais and Adolfo Celi, the literate and very funny screenplay by Philippe de Broca, Daniel Boulanger, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, and Ariane Mnouchkine, plus the frothy and effortless direction of de Broca, and it was no wonder the film was a hit – so much so that its screenplay was nominated for an Academy Award.

The intention of the film’s director, Philippe de Broca, was to make the kind of movie that he would like to have seen when he was twelve – an adventure film that would see its hero (according to de Broca, strongly influenced by the child he’d been) getting in and out of dangerous situations and handling them all with aplomb, whether chasing after the girl, fighting the bad guys, piloting an airplane, or parachuting into a sea of alligators. This was all done with the lightest touch and very clever staging. At the beginning of the film, the film’s heroine is abducted in broad daylight, and Belmondo chases after the car, on foot. There is a dissolve to dusk; the car is arriving at the airport and Belmondo is *still* chasing it on foot. The film is filled with wonderfully inventive sequences like that, one after another, and its 112-minute running time breezes by. If one reads comments on the film, it’s frequently stated that the movie is a Bond-like spoof – nothing could be further from the truth. It has nothing to do with Bond. If anything, Belmondo’s character is like an amateur Indiana Jones – on an adventure of a lifetime.

For the score, de Broca turned to his friend and frequent collaborator, Georges Delerue. He’d met Delerue in 1959, when he hired him to score his first film, *Les Jeux de l’amour* (*The Love Game*). For *Rio*, Delerue rose to the occasion, turning out one of his most delightful scores, one that perfectly accompanied the outrageous action on the screen. The score has so much variety and humor and melody and beauty, and in so many different styles – from pure adventure scoring to Brazilian rhythms (and some great songs), along with some hauntingly beautiful passages, and all in the classic

Delerue style. The duo of de Broca and Delerue is a triumph of music and image working hand in hand.

At the time of the film’s release, United Artists released two different 45rpm EPs – one in France, and one in the UK – both with different selections. Both were incredibly hard to find and became instant collectors items, fetching large money (when they could be found) on the collector market. There was about twenty minutes of music between the two EPs – one had some of the Brazilian source music (the French EP) and the other had a few score cues (the UK EP). In the States, United Artists Records had, in fact, prepared a soundtrack LP that they ultimately didn’t issue.

Universal France issued a two-volume compilation CD of Delerue/de Broca films – that release included four tracks from the soundtrack (taken from composer tapes supplied by Camille Delerue). A couple of years later, Universal France then issued a two-fer that included *That Man From Rio* and *Chinese Adventures In China*. As the booklet stated, “the Rio cupboard in Delerue’s archives was frustratingly bare: tapes were missing, and there were unfinished takes, etc.” So, of the six tracks included on that release, only three were actually from the soundtrack – the others were re-recorded by composer Alexandre Desplat. So, there has never really been anywhere near a complete soundtrack release of *That Man From Rio* – and certainly never one from the original source tapes.

As it transpires, the reason for the “bare cupboard” was that the actual Rio tapes (not composer backups) were happily in safe keeping right here in the United States, at MGM – all of them – every note of music written for the film. There was the proposed album master, there were the film music stems, there was a reel of the songs, there was an outtakes reel that had everything that wasn’t used on the proposed album master, and there were the original session tapes, complete with multiple takes of cues. It is from these original tapes that this album has been assembled.

We tried, for the most part, to be true to the order of the film – it’s not always possible to do so, as music in the film was edited, abbreviated, and truncated. We’ve included only the full versions of the cues as written by Delerue. Also, if one stuck completely to the film order, there would be endless solo guitar tracks in a row, endless Brazilian source music in a row – and sometimes you have to do a little rearranging to make a CD release be a good listening experience. But we’ve been as true to the essence of the film sequencing as humanly possible, taking whatever liberties we felt were necessary to

make it a good listen. Additionally, we’ve included several short bumper cues that didn’t seem to want to edit together well and were just really short repeated versions of cues we’d already used, and a few that didn’t make the final film. And we’ve included a few alternate takes of several cues, just because they sounded good and were slightly different in tempo and feel. In other words, this CD includes every note of music Delerue wrote for the film and includes a *lot* of music never before available.

Interestingly, some of the score was recorded in mono and some in stereo. If I were to hazard a guess, I’d say that the stereo tracks were recorded so that the film mixers would have control over certain things in the mix, such as percussion (there is a lot of exotic percussion), strings, etc. Those instruments were hard-panned left and right (we were able to smooth it out a bit for the CD). So, the score presentation is a combo-platter of mono and stereo, just as it was recorded.

For me, it’s a complete thrill to finally release the complete soundtrack to one of my favorite 1960s films – I think I saw *That Man From Rio* at least thirty times during its initial release. I saw it first at the Fine Arts Theater in LA, had many repeated visits there, and then obsessively followed the movie to other theaters, dragging as many people as I could to introduce them to the film. When it had its wider release in the English-dubbed version, I saw that five or six times, although it obviously lost some of its charm in the dubbing, with an especially irritating voice for Dorléac’s character. The film was issued on VHS, but has never been issued on DVD in the US. There is a French DVD (no subtitles) and a Russian DVD (with English subtitles). The film deserves a major special edition, but sadly both Delerue and de Broca have passed on, and, of the film’s principal players, only Belmondo is still alive.

In the New York Times review of the film, Bosley Crowther called it a “lulu” and said “Virtually every complication, every crisis involving imminent peril, that had ever been pulled in the movies, especially the old silent ones, is pulled in this. And they are pulled in such rapid continuity and so expansively played, with such élan and against such brilliant backgrounds, that they take your breath away.” And even though it was not something he did regularly, Mr. Crowther even mentioned the score, calling Mr. Delerue’s music “dreamy.” So, sit back and enjoy the “dreamy” and wonderful music of Georges Delerue for *That Man From Rio*. It’s a helluva ride.

— Bruce Kimmel