

CASINO ROYALE IN CONCERT REVIEW ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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Original text for this review, in Dutch, can be found [here](#)

'Casino Royale in Concert' by the Noordpool Orkest conducted by conductor Anthony Gabriele is so much more than a film accompanied by a full symphonic orchestra. Seeing the music come to fruition before your eyes while watching the James Bond film really brings composer David Arnold's music to life. The rise and fall of the bows is like a choreographed ballet that exudes grace and power. You can tell the tension of the music and thus of the scene from the rhythm of the movement. The tones of the double basses have the warmth of wood, but at the same time you can feel the vibrations going through your body like a warning of impending doom. 'Casino Royale in Concert' makes you experience the antics of Daniel Craig, Eva Green, Mads Mikkelsen and Judi Dench even more intensely.

The Noordpool Orkest once again goes 'all-in' during this cinema in concert. This time they choose the 2006 Bond film 'Casino Royale' starring Daniel Craig. This time, James crosses swords with Le Chiffre, played by Mads Mikkelsen. As the title suggests, part of the action takes place in a casino where it comes to a real showdown at the poker table. The stakes are high and more is wagered than just poker chips.

Unfortunately, the Noordpool Orkest did not play for a full house at the Stadsschouwburg in Antwerp. We can only say that the absentees were wrong. Led by Anthony Gabriele, they delivered an amazing performance. At the moment when James Bond is crawling on a tanker truck in full action to stop a bombing of a plane, the musicians deliver an absolute top performance. The brass gurgles, the woodwinds provide an almost screaming sound of doom and all this is on a bed of strings. Drums and cymbals provide the heartbeat and gradually get support from the electric bass.

Everything is thrown into the fray and you, the audience, get to see and hear the full glory of a large symphonic orchestra. The tempo picks up further and you see the bows going over the strings of the violins at an ever-increasing pace. It looks like a dance choreography when you see how synchronised the movements are. Fortunately, it is a fairly long scene in the film which allows you as a viewer to extra enjoy what is happening on stage. The only downside is ... you're short of eyes. You have pure action on the movie screen, but at the same time at least as much animation on stage. Seeing and feeling music live on stage makes you experience it much more intensely.

There is surprisingly more music than meets the eye. In the cinema, you notice certain pieces much less because there they are somewhat pushed into the background as musical wallpaper. In 'Casino Royale in Concert', David Arnold's compositions come into their own much better. And then suddenly some things stand out.

The fact that you can not only hear but also see the musical structure makes it much more noticeable how the tension builds in certain compositions. As you follow along, you notice that the strings start and the melody is then passed on to the horns via the woodwinds before finally breaking out with the trombones. In other words, you see the build-up going from left to right while

aurally perceiving more power and feeling more tension. In this way, the music is perceived with many more senses than just the ears.

The first time we hear composer John Barry's Bond theme is when the first images of Nassau in the Bahamas appear on screen. Pictures of white beaches, palm trees and all sorts of exotic beauty fill the screen while the orchestra produces a nice full sound. These are moments to dream away tropical summers with cocktails by the pool.

Remarkably, the first meeting between Bond and Bond-girl on duty Vesper, played by Eva Green, does not sound a single romantic note. On the contrary: the orchestra has to stand idly by while James and Vesper try out their poker faces and engage in shrewd dialogue without either of them really letting themselves be seen in the cards. The romantic melody comes when James sees his new Aston Martin for the first time. It shows where his priorities lie.

A little later in the film, we see James taking care of Vesper and now romance does sound. The piano sets the tone and is supported by the warm sounds of the strings. For a little extra romance, there is also a notable role for the harp in the arrangement.

As a music lover, it's great fun that during the Noordpool Orkest's 'Casino Royale in Concert' you can see and feel how certain instruments or the combination of instruments can be used to evoke emotions. The combination of a low note on the double bass and a very high note from the violins, automatically creates a sense of doom. The piccolo is used along to depict M's panic when her 007 almost suffers a cardiac arrest. Bassoons and flute combined with a foundation of violin, in turn, proves ideal to depict the romance of a kiss. The timpani in conjunction with the trombones are the heavy artillery that can be deployed when the tension goes to a climax. And so while performing the soundtrack, you see and hear how music can drive the emotion of a film.

And now, in case you are not so analytically inclined, we can happily assure you that even without dissecting the musical components, you can perfectly enjoy a wonderful evening of live music while watching an exciting Bond film.