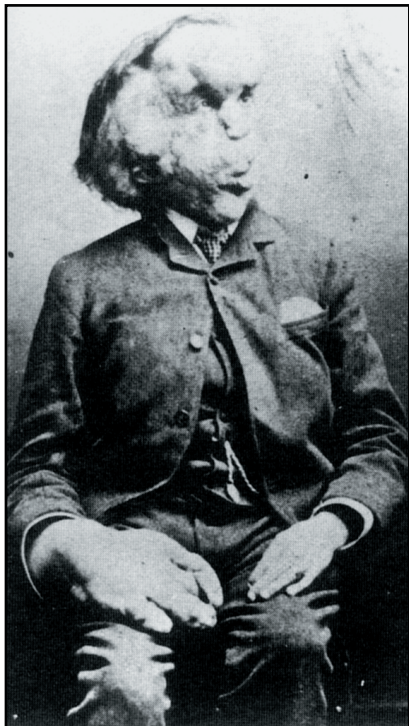




2 CDs



# Laurent **PETITGIRARD**

## Joseph Merrick, The Elephant Man

(Opera in 4 Acts  
Libretto by Eric Nonn)

Stutzmann • Rivenq • Breault  
Devellereau • Koch  
Nelson-Shafer • Courjal

Monte-Carlo Philharmonic  
Orchestra

French Opera Chorus

**Laurent Petitgirard**

**Laurent PETITGIRARD (b. 1950)**

**Joseph Merrick,  
The Elephant Man**

**Opera in Four Acts  
Libretto by Eric Nonn**

**Elephant Man** ..... **Nathalie Stutzmann**, Contralto  
**Doctor Treves** ..... **Nicolas Rivenq**, Baritone  
**Tom Norman**, showman ..... **Robert Breault**, Tenor  
**Mary**, nurse ..... **Marie Devellereau**, Soprano  
**Eva Lükes**, matron ..... **Sophie Koch**, Mezzo-Soprano  
**Carr Gomm**, hospital manager ..... **Nicolas Courjal**, Bass  
**The Coloratura** ..... **Celena Nelson-Shafer**, Coloratura Soprano  
**Jimmy**, showman's assistant ..... **Damien Grelier**, Treble

**First Boy** ..... **Christophe Crapez**, Tenor  
**Second Boy** ..... **Francis Dudziak**, Baritone  
**A Young girl** ..... **Liliana Faraon**, Soprano  
**Father** ..... **Yves Blanchard**, Baritone  
**Mother** ..... **Françoise Faidherbe**, Mezzo-Soprano  
**First Lady** ..... **Agnès Poly**, Soprano  
**Second Lady** ..... **Mari Laurila**, Mezzo-Soprano

**Monte Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra (Ronald Patterson, Violin solo)**  
**French Opera Chorus (Claire le Vacher, Chorus master)**

**Laurent Petitgirard**

**CD 1****ACT I**

❶ Scene 1 (Tom Norman, Jimmy)	4:12
❷ Scene 2 (Tom Norman, Jimmy, Chorus)	8:43
❸ Scene 3 (Tom Norman, Jimmy, Two Boys, Young Girl, Chorus)	5:45
❹ Scene 4 (Tom Norman, Jimmy, Chorus)	10:18
❺ Scene 5 (Doctor Treves, Tom Norman, Jimmy, Chorus)	13:34

**ACT II**

❻ Prelude	4:55
❼ Scene 1 (Doctor Treves, Eva Lükes)	6:28
❽ Scene 2 (Mary, Elephant Man, Eva Lükes)	11:34
❾ Scene 3 <i>La prière des malades</i> (Elephant Man, Chorus)	4:06
❿ Scene 4 (Doctor Treves, Six Patients Elephant Man)	4:16

**73:54****CD 2****ACT II CONT.**

❶ Scene 5 (Carr Gomm, Doctor Treves)	6:19
❷ Scene 6 (Elephant Man, Mary)	6:12

**ACT III**

❸ Scene 1 <i>Le serment d'Hippocrate</i> (Carr Gomm, Doctor Treves, Chorus)	5:52
❹ Scene 2 (Eva Lükes, Mary, Elephant Man)	4:57
❺ Scene 3 (Doctor Treves, Elephant Man)	9:17
❻ Scene 4 (Doctor Treves, Carr Gomm, The Committee)	6:00
❼ Scene 5 (Elephant Man, Mary)	6:34

**ACT IV**

❽ Prelude	3:29
❾ Scene 1 <i>L'air de la colorature</i> (La Colorature, Elephant Man, Doctor Treves, Chorus)	6:18
❿ Scene 2 (Doctor Treves, Mary)	6:00
⓫ Scene 3 (Elephant Man, Doctor Treves)	7:43
⓬ Scene 4 <i>La mort d'Elephant Man</i> (Elephant Man)	6:40

**75:25**

**Laurent Petitgirard (b. 1950)**  
**Joseph Merrick, The Elephant Man**

I have always wanted to write an opera with a dual personality at its centre. Eric Nonn suggested the story of the Elephant Man to me. This deals not only with the duality between Merrick's inner self and his physical appearance, but also with a theme new to opera as far as I know, and extremely relevant today, that of exclusion. This man was misunderstood, humiliated and used by others. Indeed, being displayed naked without his consent in front of dozens of doctors and a photographer at the London Hospital may have been worse than being one of Tom Norman's sideshow freaks, when he was at least fully aware of what he was doing.

In planning this opera, I knew I had to choose a subject that could touch any one of us, and not fall into the trap of setting a libretto of obscure meaning. I was also obsessed by the idea of intelligibility. Eric Nonn understood this and his libretto is full of lyricism as well as rhythm. The relationship between words and music was therefore my prime concern and while the opera is scored for substantial forces, the orchestra never prevents the voices from shining through. I planned right from the start to write the rôle for a woman, because I particularly like the tonal quality of the contralto voice, and because I wanted to create a sense of strange otherness.

Eric Nonn and I based our work on the genuine life

story of Joseph Merrick, which is quite different from that portrayed in David Lynch's film, based on the memoirs of Dr Treves, who had a propensity for portraying himself in a good light. At first a "freak" whom we discover through voyeurism, more or less, Joseph Merrick becomes a mirror in which we perceive our own fear of that which is different, and then a man with whom we can all identify as he wonders about God's mercy.

We began work on the opera in May 1995 and finished it in December 1998. It was recorded in Monte Carlo in May–June 1999 with Nathalie Stutzmann in the title rôle.

The opera had its first staging in Prague in February 2002, and the production transferred to Nice the following November. Director Daniel Mesguich's incredible staging developed even further the theme of duality on which the work is based. Jana Sykorova met the vocal and acting challenges of such an ambiguous rôle quite superbly.

**Laurent Petitgirard**  
*Translated by Susannah Howe*

## Synopsis

The story is based on the life of Joseph Carey Merrick, known as the Elephant Man. Merrick died at the age of 27, almost certainly by his own hand. He suffered from a very rare, progressive form of neurofibromatosis, a disease like some of the genetic conditions we know of today. The severity of his condition made him a social outcast; as a last resort he chose to join a freak show in order to earn a living.

### Act I

The action takes place in the world of sideshows and showmen. The impresario Tom Norman is a young man who prides himself on being a friend of the great Barnum. He is obviously attentive towards those on show, especially the Elephant Man, who is seen only in silhouette. The act ends with the banning of the show by the police, asked to intervene by Dr Treves of the London Hospital.

*(This ban leads to the decline of freak shows in England, and Joseph Merrick has to go to the continent where he appears with travelling shows before being abandoned at the side of the road like a dog. When he is found by the police on leaving a ship back in England, he is terrified, has lost the power of speech, and has no identity papers, just a card given him by Dr Treves.)*

### Act II

Merrick arrives at the London Hospital where he is looked after by Treves. Here he gradually learns to speak again, and to lose his fear of other people. At the same time, however, he conceals his life, past, intelligence and sensitivity from the doctors. He takes refuge in his status as a patient, a medical case, and waits

a long time before revealing his true self. With the nurses he rediscovers his will to live, and his human dignity. Mary, in particular, shows him a compassion close to love, and with her he finds some semblance of “normality”.

### Act III

Merrick is “exhibited” before other doctors in a kind of show–cum–lecture for the London Pathological Society. As the London Hospital cannot look after patients with incurable conditions, Dr Treves organizes an appeal for private funds through *The Times*. This makes Merrick something of a celebrity, as well as bringing renown to Treves himself. Merrick’s sense of modesty and awareness of his appearance and position lead him to reject Mary’s feelings for him.

### Act IV

Now fêted and the object of adulation, Merrick is receiving guests in his private rooms within the London Hospital. He is wooed by a famous actress and visited by nobility and even the royal family. He is naturally flattered by this sudden fame, yet tries to escape from his condition through reading. Treves tells him that the disease is worsening, sending him into a decline, and ultimately, to his death. Merrick knows that if he lies down to sleep, the weight of his head will kill him, and in April 1890 he fulfils his dream to sleep just once like anyone else, like a man.

**Laurent Petitgirard**

*Translated by Susannah Howe*

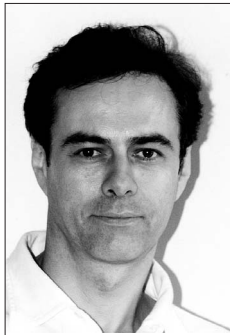
## Nathalie Stutzmann

Nathalie Stutzmann, born on 6th May 1965 in Paris, is firmly established as one of the most outstanding vocal and musical talents of her generation, making frequent appearances in recital, concert and opera. She studied singing with her mother, the soprano Christiane Stutzmann, and then at the Ecole d'Art Lyrique de l'Opéra de Paris where she studied German lied with Hans Hotter. She is also a highly accomplished pianist, bassoonist and chamber musician. She has made more than fifty recordings for major companies, including five volumes of Schumann Lieder, Chausson and Poulenc mélodies, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, and Vivaldi's *Nisi Dominus*. Awards include the Deutsche Schallplatten Kritik, Diapason d'Or, Japan Record Academy Award and Grammy Award. As a concert singer and recitalist Nathalie Stutzmann has appeared at the Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Royal Festival Hall and the BBC Proms, Carnegie Hall, the Musikverein, the Salzburg Mozarteum, the Concertgebouw, La Monnaie, the Tokyo Suntory Hall, La Scala, Geneva Opera and at the Berlin Philharmonie. Her repertoire includes all the major works in the baroque, romantic and contemporary genres. Since 1994 she has performed and recorded with the Swedish pianist Inger Södergren. On the operatic stage, work includes *Ombra felice* (Mozart Pasticcio) in Paris and Montpellier, the title rôle Radamisto in Marseille, Gluck's Orfeo in Lyon and the title rôle in *Giulio Cesare* in Bordeaux. She has also performed at the major houses in Zürich, Barcelona, Brussels, Florence, Venice, Bonn and Salzburg.



## Nicolas Rivenq

Born in London, the baritone Nicolas Rivenq began his vocal studies in Paris with Jacqueline Bonnardot, then at the Ecole d'Art Lyrique de l'Opéra de Paris with Michel Sénéchal. At the same time, he attended the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs and La Sorbonne. In 1984 he received a scholarship from the French Foreign Office to study at Indiana University. In 1990 he triumphed in the G.-B. Viotti International Competition. Nicolas Rivenq made his stage début in 1987, appearing in the same year in a filmed concert of Bach's *Coffe Cantata* and *Peasant Cantata* conducted by Yehudi Menuhin. He was then immediately engaged by William Christie in Lully's *Athys*, by Gardiner for the recording and performances in Pesaro of *Le Comte Ory*, followed by appearance in Reggio Emilia in the Pizzi production of *Hippolyte et Aricie*. His first performances as the Count in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and in the title-rôle of Don Giovanni won great critical acclaim. His career has continued with a filmed production of *La traviata* under Zubin Mehta, *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Antwerp, *The Elephant Man* in Nice and in Prague, *Robert Bruce* in Italy, France and Japan, and further collaboration with William Christie in *Les Indes galantes* at the Paris Opéra Garnier. He participated in Jean-Claude Malgouire's direction of the three Monteverdi operas and has continued a busy and successful career in a repertoire ranging from Cavaliere to the contemporary.





## Robert Breault

The tenor Robert Breault enjoys an international career that encompasses opera, oratorio, recital, and concert work. He is also the Director of Opera at the University of Utah, where he heads a small voice studio. His numerous concert appearances include performances with orchestras such as the San Francisco Symphony, Montreal Symphony, the National Symphony, National Symphony of Taiwan, the Milwaukee Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, Florida Philharmonic, Florida Orchestra, Utah Symphony, the Houston Masterworks Chorale, L'Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal, the Hamilton Philharmonic and the Toronto Symphony and Mendelssohn Choir. His opera engagements include numerous performances with the Atlanta Opera, Utah Opera, and the Opera Orchestra of New York. He has also appeared with the Opéra de Nice, Opera Pacific, Madison Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, the Canadian Opera Atelier, and Hamilton Opera, and has toured with the San Francisco Opera Western Opera Theater. Robert Breault's recordings range from the world première recording of Laurent Petitgirard's *Elephant Man* to Haydn's *Nelson Mass*. He received his Doctorate from the University of Michigan in 1991.



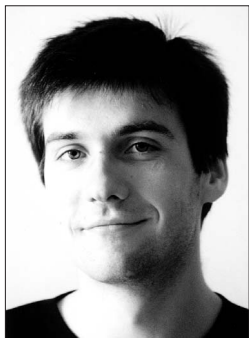
## Marie Devellereau

The French soprano Marie Devellereau is a graduate of the Juilliard School in New York, and completed her vocal studies in a programme for young artists in the Paris Opéra. She is a laureate of several international vocal competitions, with first prize at the Vienna Belvedere Competition, and in June 2001 the prestigious French Critics Award. Her repertoire includes rôles such as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Teresa in *Les mamelles de Tirésias*, Cunégonde in *Candide*, Gemmy in *Guillaume Tell*, Lakmé, Lisa in *La sonnambula*, Eurydice in *Orphée aux Enfers*, and Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*, among others. She has appeared in many leading opera houses, including the San Francisco Opera, Opéra d'Avignon, Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux, Opéra de Wallonie, Opéra National de Lyon, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Salle Gaveau, Concertgebouw, Louvre Auditorium and the Opéra National de Paris. She has worked with distinguished conductors, including Seiji Ozawa, Christoph von Dohnányi, James Conlon, Michel Plasson, Yves Abel, Marc Minkowski, Jean-Claude Malgoire, Frans Brüggen and Louis Langré. Her recordings include a collection of Poulenc's songs, and Massenet's *Thaïs* with Renée Fleming and Thomas Hampson.



## Sophie Koch

Sophie Koch, who studied with Jane Berbié in Paris, appeared in various cities of her native France before making her international début in 1998 at the Royal Opera Covent Garden in London as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Engagements with the other major European companies followed, among them the Dresden Staatsoper, Vienna Staatsoper, Bavarian Staatsoper, La Scala, the Opéra Bastille and Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. Included among the rôles she has sung in these houses are Rossini's Cenerentola, Mozart's Cherubino, Dorabella and Sesto, Massenet's Charlotte (*Werther*), as well as the Composer in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*. She has collaborated with conductors of great distinction in concert and opera with the aforementioned companies and with the Dresden Staatskapelle, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony, and the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in Florence. In January 2001 she was awarded the Christel Goltz Prize by the Dresden Staatsoper.



## Nicolas Courjal

Born in 1973 in France, Nicolas Courjal first studied at the Conservatoire in Rennes and then in Paris with Jane Berbié at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique. He joined the Paris Opéra Comique, appearing in *La cantatrice chauve*, *Il matrimonio segreto*, *La finta semplice*, *I quattro rusteghi*, *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and *Le dernier jour de Socrate*, and in *La Bohème* as Colline. He has appeared as a recitalist in Paris and in Germany and created the rôle of Marius Constant in *Une saison en enfer* in Monte-Carlo and subsequently in Paris. In 2000 he joined Wiesbaden Theatre, where he has appeared as the Hermit in *Der Freischütz*, Crespel in *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Tom in *Un ballo in maschera*, Micha in *The Bartered Bride*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, and Reimar von Zweiter in *Tannhäuser*. His career has brought appearances at Wexford, Lyon, the Paris Châtelet and in major opera houses in France. Nicolas Courjal was awarded the Gerard Arnhold Bursary at the 2001 Wexford Festival.



## Celena Nelson-Shafer



Celena Nelson-Shafer is recognized as one of the leading singers of her generation following her internationally acclaimed performances of Ismene in Mozart's *Mitridate, re di Ponto* with the Santa Fe Opera in 2001. In the 2003/04 season she made her début at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam as Zerbinetta in a concert performance of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, followed by a return to the Phoenix Symphony for Bernstein's *Symphony No. 3 "Kaddish,"* and later Handel's *Messiah* as well as a début with the Madison Symphony in a series of holiday concerts. The summer of 2004 brought a return to *La fille du régiment* for her Cincinnati Opera début and to the Santa Fe Opera as Hero in *Béatrice et Bénédicte*. She began the 2002/03 season with a highly acclaimed Lincoln Center début as the sorceress Aithra in a concert performance of Strauss' *Die ägyptische Helena*, followed by her début with the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Johanna in a new production of *Sweeney Todd*, followed by a début with the Pittsburgh Opera as Tytania in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The remainder of the season included a début in her home state with the Utah Opera as Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, a return to the Phoenix Symphony for Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms's *Deutsche Requiem* with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, a début with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Blonde in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*,

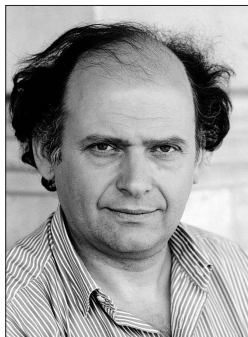
and a début with the San Francisco Symphony as the soprano soloist in Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Balancing her wide range of opera and orchestral repertoire, Celena Nelson-Shafer has also performed recitals in cities such as New York, London, Los Angeles, Santa Fe, Salt Lake City, and Indianapolis. She was the recipient of a 2002 ARIA Award, and a 2000 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation, and has received outstanding apprentice awards from the Santa Fe and Central City Operas.

## Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra

The Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1856, holds an important place in the musical world having been led by guest conductors such as Arturo Toscanini, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Bruno Walter, Richard Strauss, Victor de Sabata, Sir Thomas Beecham, Kiril Kondrashin, Raphael Kubelik, Leopold Stokowski, Charles Munch, Sir John Barbirolli, and Eugene Jochum, and more recently by Leonard Bernstein, Eric Kleiber, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Zubin Mehta, Sir Georg Solti and Lorin Maazel. In January 1999 Marek Janowski was appointed Artistic Director and Music Director/Chief Conductor as of July 2000. Past Music Directors have included Louis Frémaux, Paul Paray, Edouard van Remoortel, Igor Markevitch, Lovro von Matacic, Lawrence Foster, and James DePreist. In addition to the concert season the Philharmonic Orchestra also regularly accompanies the Opera and the Ballets de Monte-Carlo. Its rich history includes the premières of ballets of Sergey Dyagilev and operas by Berlioz, Puccini, Ravel and Massenet, among others. The orchestra has always played a significant rôle in the creation of contemporary symphonic music, giving first performances of works by Henri Dutilleux, Marcel Lansowski, Arvo Pärt and Krzysztof Penderecki, among others. Its rich list of recordings is testimony to its musical diversity. Many of the orchestra's recordings have won recognition with French and international awards. Under the presidency of H.R.H. The Princess of Hanover and with the continued support of H.S.H. Prince Rainier III and the Government, the Philharmonic Orchestra looks forward to a rich and dynamic future.

## Laurent Petitgirard



Born in 1950, Laurent Petitgirard studied as a pianist, composer and conductor. A former composition student of Alain Kremski, he combines his career as a conductor with writing for the concert hall and stage, and with a highly acclaimed career in film music. From 1989 to 1996 he was the music director of the Orchestre Symphonique Français. Other orchestras that he has conducted include the Monte Carlo Philharmonic, Zurich Tonhalle, Suisse Romande Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro La Fenice, Orchestre National de France, Paris Opéra Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra, the Bamberg Philharmonic, Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Utah Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic and KBS Orchestra. He has conducted many operas, including *Die Zauberflöte*, *Jeanne d'Arc*, *Der Freischütz*, *Werther*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Die lustige Witwe*. Laurent Petitgirard has made over thirty compact disc recordings with the OSF and other orchestras, including recordings of his own *Cello Concerto* and *Violin Concerto* and his first opera *Joseph Merrick, The Elephant Man*, which has also been seen in Prague and in Nice. Since 2002 he has been a regular guest of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra at the Berlin Philharmonic. Laurent Petitgirard received the SACD Prize for young composers (1987), the SACEM Prize (1990), and in December 2000 was elected member of the French

Académie des Beaux-Arts. He received a diamond CD (over 1 million copies sold) for his recording of Mozart's *Requiem*. In May 2000 he received the 2000 High School Award for Best Composer and in May 2001 was awarded the SACD Music Prize for his opera *Joseph Merrick, the Elephant Man*. In the same year he was elected President of the Board of Sacem, the French Composers Society, and in June 2001 started a two-year stint as composer-in-residence with the Orchestre de Rhin-Mulhouse and with the National Theatre 'La Filature'. In 2003 he was appointed Commander in the order of Arts and Letters.

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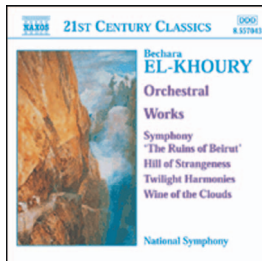
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Laurent Petitgirard is known mainly as a composer of orchestral works, including concertos, symphonic poems and film scores, and as a conductor. *Joseph Merrick, the Elephant Man*, his first opera, depicts the tragic story of Joseph Merrick, who was born with horrifying deformities and exploited both as a freak show exhibit and as a medical curiosity. Petitgirard's compelling and moving score – the composer's melodic gift is very much his own – shows us Merrick at different stages of his tragic life until his death aged 27 in 1890. 'The composer conducts a gripping performance of this fine opera' (Sunday Telegraph).

Laurent  
**PETITGIRARD**  
(b. 1950)

**Joseph Merrick, The Elephant Man**

Elephant Man .....	Nathalie Stutzmann
Doctor Treves .....	Nicolas Rivenq
Tom Norman, showman .....	Robert Breault
Mary, nurse .....	Marie Devellereau
Eva Lükess, matron .....	Sophie Koch
Carr Gomm, hospital manager .....	Nicolas Courjal
The Coloratura .....	Celena Nelson-Shafer
Jimmy, showman's assistant .....	Damien Grelier

**Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra • French Opera Chorus**  
**Laurent Petitgirard**

CD 1 73:54 CD 2 75:25

<b>1-5 Act I</b>	<b>1-2 Act II cont.</b>
<b>6-10 Act II</b>	<b>3-7 Act III</b>
	<b>8-12 Act IV</b>

Recorded at the Opéra Garnier de Monte-Carlo, from 18th to 22nd May, 1999 • Producer: Patrick Charmetant  
Engineer: Stéphane Villet • Booklet Notes: Laurent Petitgirard • Publisher: Editions Durand

**Previously released on Le Chant du Monde**

Cover Picture: *Joseph Merrick wearing his 'Sunday best' suit. c.1889* (© London Hospital Archives)

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