

Kurt Atterberg (1887-1974)

ALADDIN, Op. 43 [1941]

Music theatre in 13 scenes to a libretto by Falk Richter

German

full eve

Aladdin	lyric tenor
Nazzredin, Sultan of Samarkand	bass
Princess Laila, his daughter	soprano
Muluk, the Grand Vezier	baritone
Muluk's friend: Balab	tenor or baritone
Dorim	baritone
Blind Beggar / Dschababirah, spirit from the magic lamp	bass
Two Muslims	2 baritones
Crier of the Sultan	tenor or baritone
Hashish seller	tenor
Carpet sellers, jeweller, runner.	speaking roles
Merchants, porters, dalliers, sedan-chair carriers, donkey drivers, harem ladies, dignitaries, female slaves	choir and ballet
2(picc).2(cor anglais).2(Eb clar, bass clar).2 – 4.3.3.1 – perc (timp, oriental timp, 2 tgl, tamb, side dr, bass dr, cym, tam-t). harp. piano. cel. strings	

The poor Aladdin dreams of love – longingly, his thoughts centre round the beautiful Princess Laila, whom no one besides her maids has yet seen unveiled. Without thinking much about it, Aladdin gives his last coin to a blind beggar. The powerful Grand Vezier Muluk is also obsessed by Laila's legendary beauty – moreover, he makes treacherous plans to dethrone Laila's father and himself become Sultan of Samarkand. The sound of trumpets and the calls of the criers announce the retinue of the Princess, who is on her way to the Hamam. Everyone must leave the street, for whoever glimpses the Princess unveiled must die. The blind man asks to be allowed to stay, but the Grand Vezier drives him away with merciless blows. In sympathy, Aladdin comes to the beggar's defence.

Before the Hamam Aladdin comes out of his hiding-place and throws himself before the Princess's feet. He is prepared to pay for a glimpse of her otherworldly beauty with his life. However, when Laila and Aladdin see each other, they are seized with a deep love for each other. At this moment, the palace guards appear to take Aladdin away. Then the blind beggar turns to the Grand Vezier with a mysterious prophecy and the promise to make Muluk infinitely rich and powerful: if he lets Aladdin go, the young boy will lead him into an underground treasure-cave where a magic lamp is burning which will fulfil all wishes of its owner. Without thinking this over very long, Muluk has the captives freed. Fired by the prospect of seeing the beautiful Laila once again, Aladdin, followed by the Grand Vezier, enters a secret entrance into the mysterious cave, illuminated by the flickering flame of the magic lamp ...