

SAINT-SAËNS: SONGS WITH ORCHESTRA

1. **L'Attende** (Waiting) – Victor Hugo (1855)

Climb, squirrel, climb up the great oak,
To the branch nearest the sky
That bends and trembles like a reed!
Stork, faithful to the ancient towers,
Oh, fly swiftly up on outstretched wings
From the church to the citadel,
From the tall steeple to the great keep!
Old eagle, rise up from your eyrie
To the age-old mountain
White-coated by eternal winter.
And you, whom dawn has never yet seen silent
In your uneasy nest,
Mount, mount, bright lark,
Bright lark, mount up to the sky!
And now, from the top of the tree,
From the spires of the marble tower,
From the high mountain, from the flaming sky,
On the horizon, amid the mist,
Do you see a plume waving
And a steaming horse galloping,
And my beloved returning home?

2. **La Brise** (The Breeze) – Armand Renaud

Persian Songs op. 26 no. 1 (1870)
The beauties of Zabulistan
Dance like kid goats stung by a gadfly.
Their nails are varnished light pink;
None may see them except their sultan.
In each hand they hold a tinkling sistrum;
Sword in hand, the turbaned eunuch stands by.
But from the pale river where the lily slumbers
The night wind comes up like a pirate;
It comes to charm their hearts and their lips
Under the guard's jealous gaze, despite the firman.
O Dreamer, be proud! That breeze
Has taken your love poems for its talisman.

Yann Beuron (tenor) ^{1, 3}

Tassis Christoyannis (baritone) ^{2, 4}

Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana
Markus Poschner

3. **L'Enlèvement** (The Abduction) – Victor Hugo (1848)

If you like, let's have a dream:
Let us mount two palfreys;
You guide me, I abduct you.
The bird sings in the woods.
I am your master and your prey;
Let's go! It is the close of day;
My horse will be joy,
Your horse will be love.
Come! Our gentle, illusory horses
Are both stamping the ground,
Mine in the heart of my dreams
And yours in the heart of the heavens.
We'll need some luggage;
We'll take our vows,
Our joys, our poverty
And the flower in your hair.
Come! Evening shadows the oaks;
The sparrow laughs; that sardonic bird
Hears the gentle sound of the shackles
You have placed on my heart.
It won't be my fault
If the forests and mountains,
Seeing us side by side,
Don't murmur: 'Let us love!'
Let's set off by way of Austria!
We shall have the dawn on our brows;
I shall be great, and you rich,
Since we will love each other.
Let's set off by land,
On our gentle, charming horses,
Amid the azure, amid mystery,
Amid bedazzlements!
You shall be a lady, and I a count;
Come! My heart swells;
Come! We'll tell this tale
To the stars of the night.

4. **Danse Macabre** – Henri Cazalis (1872, orch. 1874)

Zig-a-zig-a-zig, Death, beating time
With his heel on a tomb,
Plays a dance tune at midnight,
Zig-a-zig-a-zag, on his fiddle.
The winter wind blows, and the night is dark;
The lime-trees creak and groan;
The white skeletons move through the gloom,
Running and leaping in their ample shrouds.
Zig-a-zig-a-zig, they all jig about,
You hear the bones of the dancers clattering.
A lustful pair sits down on the moss
As if to savour past delights anew.
Zig-a-zig-a-zag, Death continues
To scrape away endlessly on his shrill instrument.
A veil has come off! The dancer is naked!
Her partner squeezes her amorously.
They say the lady is a marquise or a baroness
And the vigorous gallant a poor wheelwright –
Oh horror! And now she's giving herself
As if the peasant were a baron.
Zig-a-zig-a-zag, what a saraband!
What circles of corpses holding hands!
Zig and zig and zag, in the company you can espy
The king capering alongside the villain!
But psst! All at once they cease their round dance,
They jostle and flee: the cock has crowed!
Oh, a fine night for poor folk!
And long live Death and Equality!