

Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre For Saxophone Quartet SATB: A Comprehensive Guide

The Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre for Saxophone Quartet SATB is a haunting and evocative piece that has captivated audiences worldwide. Composed by the renowned French composer Camille Saint-Saëns, this piece showcases the rich and expressive capabilities of the saxophone quartet, taking listeners on a journey through the haunting and ethereal realm of the danse macabre.

Historical Context

The danse macabre, or "dance of death," is a medieval allegory that depicts the inevitability of death and the equality of all people before it. Originating in the 14th century, the danse macabre was often depicted in art, literature, and music, serving as a reminder of the fragility of life and the importance of living each day to the fullest.



Saxophone Quartet score: Danse Macabre: Symphonic poem - Op. 40 (Danse Macabre for Saxophone Quartet satb Book 5) by Camille Saint-Saëns

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

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Screen Reader : Supported

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Camille Saint-Saëns composed the Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre in 1874, at the height of the Romantic era. During this time, there was a renewed interest in medieval art and culture, and Saint-Saëns's piece reflects this fascination. The composer was also inspired by the popular poem "Danse macabre" by Henri Cazalis, which vividly describes the dance of death.

Musical Analysis

The Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre is scored for saxophone quartet SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone). The piece opens with a haunting melody played by the soprano saxophone, accompanied by a pizzicato accompaniment in the lower voices. This melody is based on the Dies Irae, a medieval plainchant that is often associated with death and judgment.

The music builds in intensity as the other voices enter, creating a swirling and chaotic soundscape that evokes the image of a macabre dance. The use of dissonance and chromaticism adds to the sense of unease and foreboding.

The middle section of the piece provides a brief respite from the chaos, with a more lyrical and melodic passage. This section is played by the alto and tenor saxophones, and it offers a moment of reflection and contemplation amidst the swirling dance of death.

The music then returns to the opening theme, but this time it is played with even greater intensity and passion. The piece concludes with a powerful and dramatic coda, which brings the dance of death to a close.

Performance Considerations

The Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre is a challenging piece to perform, both technically and musically. The saxophone quartet must be able to produce a wide range of dynamics and articulations, and they must be able to work together to create a cohesive and expressive ensemble sound.

The piece is also demanding from a musical standpoint. The saxophones must be able to play with precision and intonation, and they must be able to convey the emotional depth and intensity of the music.

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Whether you are a performer, a listener, or simply a lover of classical music, the Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre is a piece that is sure to move and inspire you.

Additional Resources

* [The Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre on Wikipedia]
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danse_macabre_\(Saint-Saëns\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danse_macabre_(Saint-Saëns))) * [The Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre on IMSLP]
([https://imslp.org/wiki/Danse_macabre,_Op.40_\(Saint-Saëns,_Camille\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Danse_macabre,_Op.40_(Saint-Saëns,_Camille))) *
[A performance of the Symphonic Poem Op 40 Danse Macabre by the Raschèr Saxophone Quartet](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42_qP8zOc9E)



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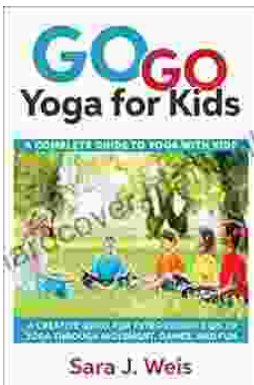
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