

we hear a brilliant mixture of woodwinds with reed stops on the organ.

An aggressive, brief theme opens the Scherzo, a transformation of the motto contained in the low string outburst that follows the first phrase. When the tempo changes to Presto, the piano enters with rapid, rising arpeggios and scales, played several times on different harmonies. The Scherzo material returns, and what seems like a reprise of the Presto section introduces a new theme, played by the lower instruments under busy figurations and anticipating the finale.

The finale opens with a powerful chord played on the organ. Yet another transformation of the "motto" theme appears; this time its ties with the Dies irae are very clear. A few quiet statements follow before the organ and orchestra join in a powerful presentation of the transformed theme. After a development section, the piece closes with all the available forces in C major.



The London Philharmonic Society commissioned the Symphony No. 3 from Saint-Saëns, much as it had Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Saint-Saëns directed the first performance in London on May 19, 1886. Although he lived until 1921, Saint-Saëns would not compose another symphony. He later explained: "With it I have given all I could give. What I did I could not achieve again." He had intended to dedicate the piece to Liszt, but the score was published after Liszt's death with the inscription, "À la Memoire de Franz Liszt."

The Symphony in C minor shows Saint-Saëns' use of thematic transformation, also present in the overture *Spartacus* and the Fourth Piano Concerto. This technique Saint-Saëns observed in the symphonic poems of Liszt, as well as in Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. Following their lead, Saint-Saëns takes his principal theme through transformations throughout his Third Symphony. To the typical forces of a large orchestra he added his and Liszt's primary instruments, the organ and piano. Saint-Saëns cast the symphony in two large sections, but each of these is in two clear parts, creating

a traditional four-movement work.

After an Adagio introduction, the tempo shifts to Allegro moderato and the strings perform the main theme of the first movement, which incorporates the chant at the beginning of the *Dies irae*, a melody associated with both death and, in part because of the *Totentanz*, Liszt. The melody exhibits an AABB pattern, which is typical of the composer's works, and is the main idea, or "motto" theme, of the entire symphony. This restless theme is transformed and eventually gives way to a new, calmer idea. Afterward, these two themes appear simultaneously in the development section before a return brings more transformational episodes and prepares for the slow "movement," in D flat major.

Strings, supported by organ chords, perform the main theme of the second movement, Adagio, which is the best known section of the Third Symphony. Woodwinds take the peaceful theme and vary it until a new transformation of the "motto" theme injects contrasting, restless energy. A return of the Adagio theme rounds off the movement. Near the end

# **Saint-Saëns Symphony No. 3 In C Minor, Op. 78**

**Marcel Dupré - Organ**

**Paul Paray Detroit Symphony Orchestra**

**1 Ia Adagio - Allegro Moderato 10:14**

**2 Ib Poco Adagio 9:17**

**3 IIa Allegro Moderato - Presto - Allegro Moderato 6:29**

**4 IIb Maestoso - Più Allegro - Molto Allegro 8:12**

**Recorded at – Henry And Edsel Ford Auditorium 1957**

**Engineer - C. R. Fine**

**General Director Of The Session - Wilma Cozart**

**Recording Supervisor - Harold Lawrence**



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