

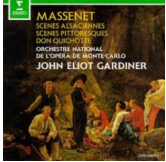
## Massenet - Suites d'orchestre (Gardiner) [1992]

Written by bluesever

Friday, 23 October 2009 16:26 - Last Updated Saturday, 15 February 2014 17:10

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01. *Scenes Alsaciennes - Dimanche Matin* [0:06:59.67] 02. *Scenes Alsaciennes - Au Cabaret* [0:05:09.18] 03. *Scenes Alsaciennes - Sous les Tilleuls* [0:04:51.30] 04. *Scenes Alsaciennes - Dimanche Soir* [0:05:59.40] 05. *Scenes Pittoresques - Marche* [0:03:47.00] 06. *Scenes Pittoresques - Air de Ballet* [0:02:48.17] 07. *Scenes Pittoresques - Angelus* [0:05:04.40] 08. *Scenes Pittoresques - Fete Boheme* [0:05:05.68] 09. *Don Quichotte - Interlude 1 (S r nade de Don Quichotte)* [0:02:03.25] 10. *Don Quichotte - Interlude 2 (La Tristesse de Dulcin e)* [0:03:38.20] Orchestre National De l'Opera De Monte-Carlo John Eliot Gardiner – conductor

Massenet's orchestral works are shamefully neglected. If you like, say, Tchaikovsky's ballet suites, then you should love this richly scored, wonderfully tuneful music. Dramatic Scenes is fascinating in that its finale features a march theme curiously similar to that in the finale of Sibelius' Third Symphony. Fairy Scenes is French Mendelssohn with sexier scoring, while The Last Sleep of the Virgin is one of those yummy bits of sugary fluff that only a French composer could take so seriously, and execute so flawlessly.

These are handily the best versions of these works available (not that there are many). Once upon a time John Eliot Gardiner was an up-and-coming conductor with what sounded like genuine talent. This was before he got hooked on the period-instrument cult, was dumped by Universal, and took revenge (just on who remains controversial) by embarking nonetheless on his egomaniacal "Bach pilgrimage", a conceptually silly enterprise dedicated to the discographically redundant recording of all the Bach cantatas in different, often acoustically miserable churches across Europe. ---classicstoday.com

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