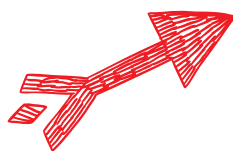


BERLIOZ



SYMFOMANIA!
DO IT YOURSELF

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE



HECTOR BERLIOZ: THE COMPOSER

Louis Hector Berlioz was born on 11 December 1803 in a small town in France. When he was 12, he hears a girls' choir sing in church and instantly fell in love with the music, as well as with one of the girls.

His father as a doctor and his parents sent him to Paris to study medicine. But Hector was so impressed by the operas that he saw there that he decided to become a composer.



DO YOU HAVE A LOT OF IMAGINATION?

Complete the following sentences. The crazier, the better!

If I close my eyes I see

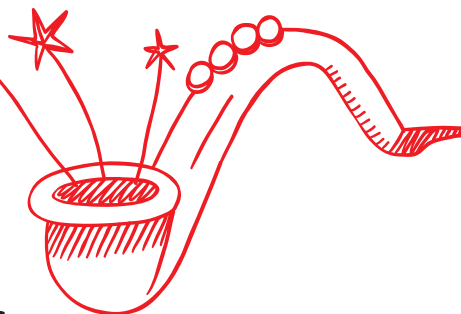
.....
.....

Once I was in the forest and I saw

.....
.....

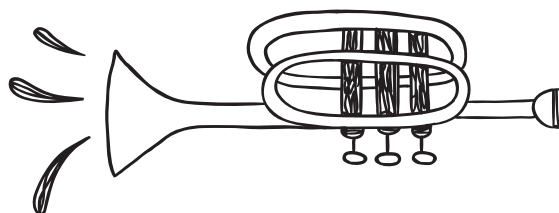
I was at a party one day, and I saw

.....
.....



IMAGINATION AND INNOVATION

Berlioz was an innovator, and you can hear that in his *Symphonie Fantastique*. This is no ordinary work of music. It is full of fantasy and new musical ideas and is played by a superlarge orchestra with harps and many wind instruments and even church bells! It was so innovative that during its premiere in 1830, the audience found the music so strange that they walked out. There were even musicians who left! Yes, that's what people are like sometimes, they have to first get used to new ideas before they can enjoy them.





PROGRAMME MUSIC

Berlioz wrote the story of the music in a programme. Each member of the audience received a paper copy and so was able to understand the composer's intentions better. That was also something new at the time.

ACTIVITY:

Make your own fantastical programme!

Make your own brochure that you could give the audience when they come into the concert hall to hear the Symphonie Fantastique. In these pages you will find all the information you need. You can choose what you want to write and draw in it. Think up some activities for the audience as well.

Take photos of your brochure and email it to the

INFO@BRUSSELSPHILHARMONIC.BE

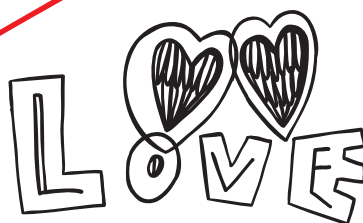
and who knows, we might use your programme for real!



The Irish actress Harriet Smithson.

IN LOVE AGAIN!

The story is about an artist who falls hopelessly in love with a woman. And who knew better than Berlioz that this was really the story of his life. For he was in love with the Irish actress Harriet Smithson after he saw her perform. He wrote many love letters to her, but she never answered. So he wrote his Symphonie fantastique as another effort to win her over. Smithson heard the piece two years after the premiere and understood that it was about her. In the end, they did meet each other and married.



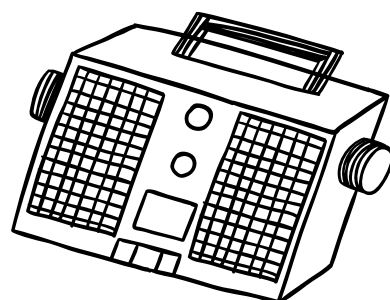
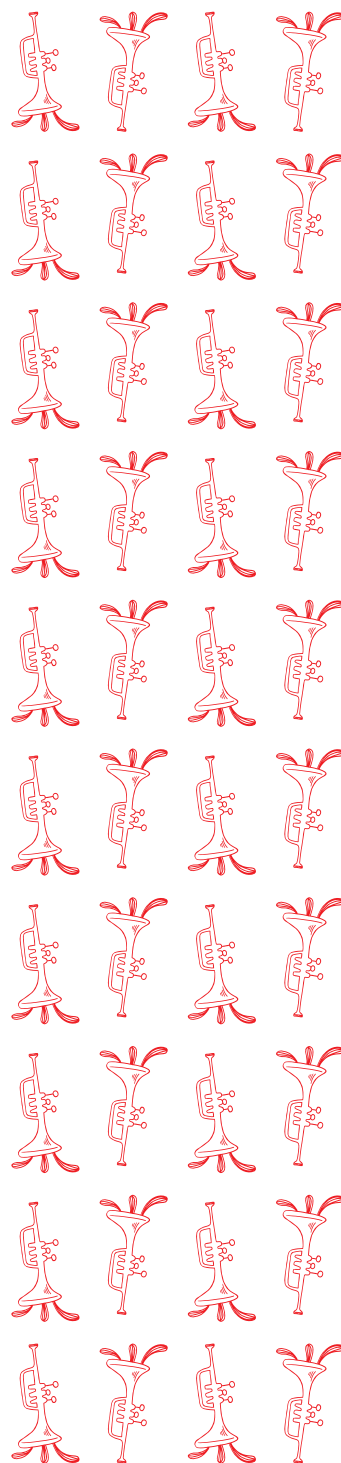
Have you ever been in love How did you feel?

Circle the words that you think fits with being in love:

cold
hot
lukewarm
fizzy
floffy
prickly
hard
soft
my heart is going crazy
butterflies in my stomach
nervous
unable to speak
afraid
happy
sorrowful
angry
burning
melting
transparent

DID YOU KNOW?

... Berlioz wrote a musical work for an even larger orchestra? With 40 extra brass instruments and 15 timpani!



THE SYMPHONY IN 5 MOVEMENTS

A symphony usually has 4 movements, but we already know that Berlioz enjoyed doing new things, and so he gave his symphony 5 movements. Below, you will discover the story and the music.



1. REVERIES - PASSIONS

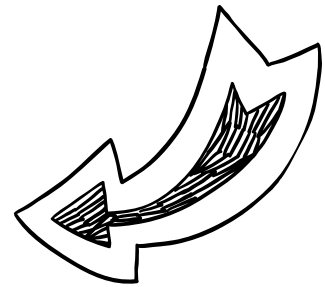
An artist falls hopelessly in love with a woman (Harriet, in other words 😊). She is his dream woman. He can think of nothing else, and whenever she comes to his mind, we hear the same melody. The first time, it is played by the flutes and the strings. You can hear it starting at minute 4:21. The theme of his beloved will return again in this movement.



2. A BALL

In the second movement, the artist sees his beloved dancing at a ball. At minute 0:40, you hear the violins play an elegant waltz. But if you listen closely, you can sometimes hear the restless feelings of the artist return.

A waltz is dance music in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. That means you can always count to 3 and the 1st beat is a bit heavier. 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, ...



ACTIVITY: perform an image in dance!

Start the music and dance a waltz. Whenever you hear the restless feelings of the artist, act it out. Are you nervous, shy, jealous, desperate, ...?

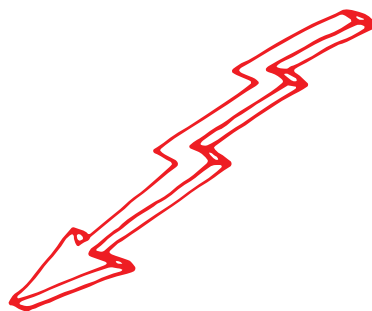


3. SCENE IN THE FIELDS

The artist seeks peace in the countryside. He meets 2 shepherds who are conversing with each other from a great distance.

Berlioz used a special technique for this: The shepherds' flutes are played by the oboes, one of whom is on stage and another outside the hall. This way, he could use the music to illustrate that this scene takes place in the open fields.

Starting at minute 14:20 you hear the timpani imitate rolling thunder. A storm is on the way!



4. MARCH TO THE SCAFFOLD

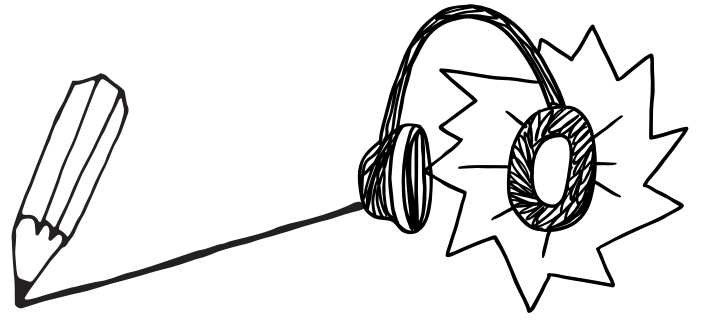
In this movement, the artist begins to hallucinate as he grows mad with love. Hallucinating means that you see things that are not there. He imagines that he has killed his beloved and that he has now been condemned to death. He is taken to the scaffold, and watches himself being beheaded. You hear the heavy footsteps of the march and heavy blows. At the end of this movement (minute 6:20), you hear the theme of his dream woman played by the oboe. But this final reminder of love is brutally ended by the axe.





5. DREAM OF A WITCHES' SABBATH

The artist is present at his own burial. He is surrounded by all sorts of frightening beings, sorcerers, witches, monsters and spirits. We hear the church bells, all sorts of strange sounds, moans, and outbursts of laughter. All these beings dance around the artist's grave. Spooky!



ACTIVITY: Listen and draw!

Make a drawing of the spookiest burial you can imagine. Use your imagination!

ENJOY THE MOST FANTASTIC SYMPHONY EVER WRITTEN!