

# DT501: History of Music

## Classical/Romantic

Dr Adrian Smith

Berlioz

# Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)



- Born in La Côte-Saint-André near Grenoble.
- 1820: begins medical studies in Paris.
- 1824: begins studying composition with Le Seuer.
- 1826: enters the Paris Conservatory
- 1827: Berlioz attends *Hamlet* with Harriett Smithson playing Ophelia
- 1828: hears Beethoven's symphonies 3 and 5.
- 1830: Wins the *Prix de Rome* at the fourth attempt
- 1830: Composes *Symphonie Fantastique*

# *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830)

Beethoven's Symphony No 6

i) Awakening of cheerful feelings on arrival in the countryside

ii) Scene by the brook

iii) Merry gathering of people

iv) Storm

v) Shepard's song and thankful feelings after the storm

*Symphonie Fantastique*

i) Reveries, passions

ii) A ball

iii) Scene in the fields (with distant storm]

iv) March to the scaffold

v) Dream of the witches' sabbath

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# *Symphonie Fantastique: Idée fixe*



# Michael Wolgemut: *Dance Macabre* (1493)





# Thematic Transformation of the *Idée fixe*

## II. A Ball

Fl., Cl.

*p* *espressivo*

### III. Scene in the Countryside

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Fl., Ob.

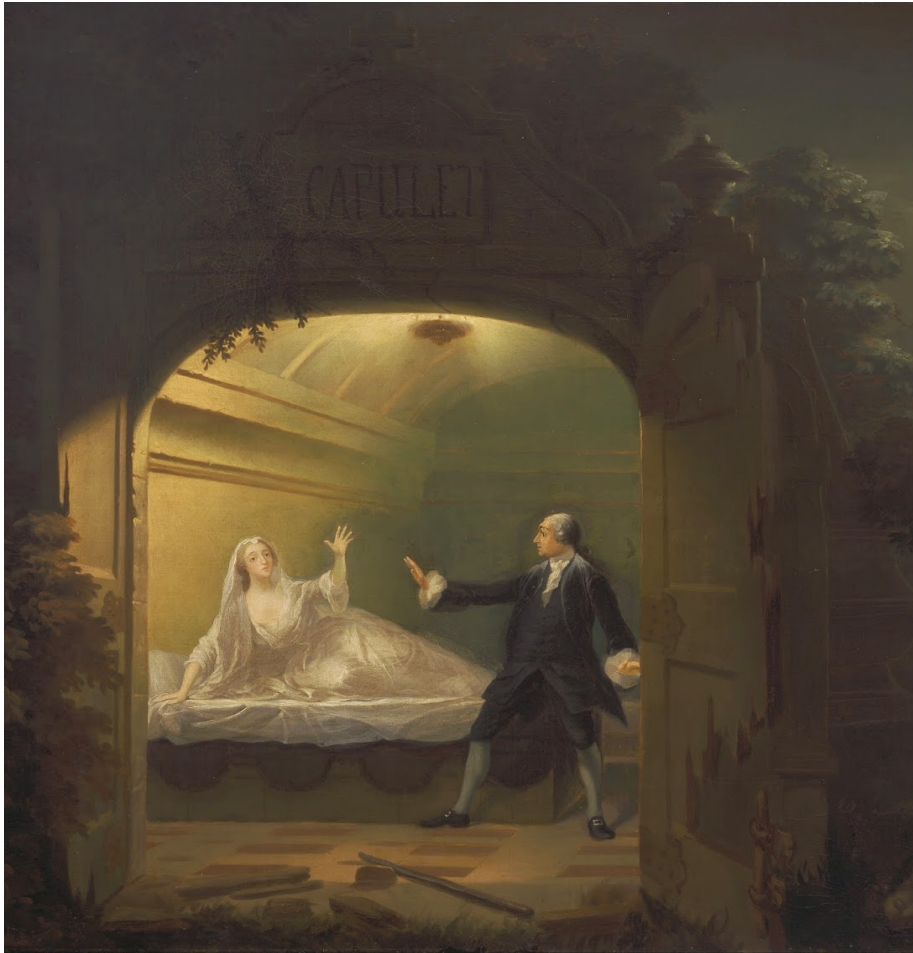
*p* *espressivo*

#### IV. March to the Scaffold

[illegible]

## V. Dream of a Witches' Sabbath

# Roméo et Juliette (1839)





Act 1  
Prologue  
Strife, intervention of the Prince

Romeo and friends  
Mercutio's Queen Mab speech  
Ball at Capulet's

Act 2 Garden. Love-scene  
The marriage

Act III Death of Mercutio,  
Romeo kills Tybalt and is banished. Love-scene in  
Juliette's room. Juliette betrothed to Paris

Act IV Juliet takes potion and appears dead.

Act V Romeo to the tomb,  
kills Paris, takes poison, dies

Juliet awakens, stabs herself, dies

Lawrence's narration  
Prince forces reconciliation

### Part 1: Introduction

No. 1 *Combats, tumulte...*  
Strife, intervention of the Prince  
Prologue (*Récitatif, Strophes, Scherzetto*)

### Part 2: Symphony Movements 1–3

No. 2 *Roméo seul* (first movement: slow introduction)

*Grande fête chez Capulet* (first movement: allegro)

No. 3 *Scène d'amour* (slow movement)

No. 4 *La reine Mab* (Scherzo)

### Part 3: Finale Structure

No. 5 *Convoi funébre de Juliette*

No. 6 *Roméo au tombeau*  
Romeo takes poison.  
Juliet awakens, brief reunion,  
Romeo dies, Juliet stabs herself, dies.

No. 7 Lawrence's narration  
Lawrence forces reconciliation

# Prescribed Listening

Berlioz: *Roméo et Juliette*, Introduction and Prologue

# Recommended Reading

For a thorough in-depth study of *Roméo et Juliette* see: Julian Rushton, *Berlioz - Roméo et Juliette* (Cambridge Music Handbooks).

For an account of *Symphonie Fantastique* see Chapter 6 in Taruskin: *Music in the Nineteenth Century*.

For detail on various aspects of Berlioz's musical style see: Julian Rushton, *The Musical Language of Berlioz*.