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program of 90.9 WGUC



OF NOTE is a service of Classics for Kids, the award-winning program that is designed to introduce children to classical music in a fun and entertaining way.

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Enriching Young Lives

PARENTS/EDUCATORS

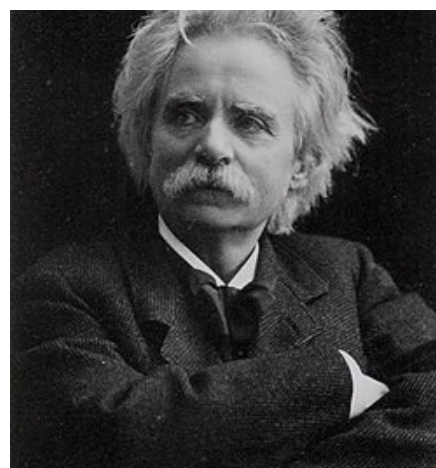
Hector Berlioz was a famous French composer, conductor, and hopeless romantic. His most famous work is *Symphonie fantastique*, an epic five movement masterpiece for symphony orchestra. The piece was inspired by Harriet Smithson, an Irish actress that Berlioz deeply fancied.

Symphonie fantastique is a prime example of **programmatic music**; this means that instrumental music is utilized to tell a story through specific themes and musical effects. In *Symphonie fantastique*, Berlioz uses an **idée fixe** to portray the idea of love. "Idée fixe" is French for "fixed idea." In music, this looks like a repeated motif that is assigned to a specific element, character, or emotion.

Berlioz's idée fixe is established in the first movement as he reminisces on the joys in his life prior to being struck with his obsessive, sickening feelings of love. He depicts his lovesick suffering through the unpredictable temperament of the music. In the fourth movement, Berlioz dreams that he murdered his love, leading to a march to his death sentence. At the end of the movement, the idée fixe returns for a brief moment of bliss as Berlioz thinks of his love one last time before being interrupted by a loud eruption from the orchestra, representing his public execution. The fifth movement is an incredibly dramatic finale, with Berlioz imagining troops of witches and monsters appearing at his funeral. The idée fixe has now morphed into being unsettling and shrill. Berlioz feels like he is being mocked by the monsters and his past love.

A new motif is introduced in the fifth movement of this work. As the music grows more and more grotesque, the lower instrument voices begin to play a parodical version of the famous chant, **Dies Irae** (Day of Wrath). This chant is very commonly quoted in scary films as an indication of death and doom. *Symphonie fantastique* is the perfect piece to discuss as the spooky season dawns upon us, with it being one of the most notably absurd stories to narrate a piece of classical music.

COMPOSER OF THE MONTH



Norwegian composer and pianist Edvard Grieg was a highly influential composer during the Romantic Era of classical music. Grieg was born on June 15, 1843, in Bergen, Norway. At the age of 6, he was already taking piano lessons from his mother, who was a prominent figure in Bergen's classical music scene.

Grieg was very impacted by his home country's culture, using many Norwegian folk melodies and rhythms as motifs in his own music. Among Grieg's most notable works include his Peer Gynt Suites, which feature "Morning Mood" and "In the Hall of the Mountain King." These pieces are used frequently in cartoons and children's films. His Piano Concerto in A minor is another very famous work, being a staple in the solo pianist's repertoire. Grieg struggled with lung issues throughout his life, leading up to his death on September 4, 1907, at the age of 64.



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NEW ON DR. KORI'S BLOG

Read along as Dr. Kori takes us through an introduction of the orchestra, what makes up a music archive, good music for the spooky season, and composers such as Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, George Gershwin, and Edmund Jenkins.