PART IV

Execution

13 Performing Berlioz

D. KERN HOLOMAN

Berlioz left posterity an admirable performance legacy. The scores and parts published under his supervision and, for the most part, to his satisfaction, are sources that typically offer unambiguous direction as to his intent. They often reflect years of perfecting the manuscript materials in conjunction with live concerts under his own baton. His personal involvement with multiple performances of the symphonic works, unusual for its time (and far greater, for instance, than Beethoven's), led to meticulous and ongoing recomposition, and with his orchestration and conducting treatises he left useful guides to the performing forces at his disposal and his notions as to their most effective deployment.[1] His sensitivity to the practical issues of live music-making, if not always to the cost of music and musicians, makes his work feel somehow welcoming to those who undertake it. With the exception of perhaps a half-dozen passages of legendary difficulty, the music lies well beneath the fingers and is rewarding to discover and re-create – that is, to perform.

Berlioz the conductor left across Europe a generation of professional musicians schooled in how his music was supposed to go – though too few conductors committed to his cause. By the end of his life, most of the completed works had been well performed. A good proportion of these had been heard often and were familiar to serious listeners both in Paris and elsewhere; a few – the *Fantastique*, the Pilgrims' March from *Harold in Italy*, the *Roman Carnival* Overture, the Hungarian March from *Faust*, and portions of *L'Enfance du Christ* – were even popular: hummed in the streets, known to hundreds. After his death thinking musicians continued to promote the Berlioz legacy, at least so far as they could acquire the performance materials, and those who knew his life's story did it both from enthusiasm for these "lovely pages" and out of a sense of atonement for the difficulties the master had encountered in being understood.

Jules Pasdeloup (1819–1887) began to popularize some of the orchestral excerpts in his mass-market Popular Concerts, from 1861, and can be credited with the universal popularity of the so-called "Three Pieces from *The Damnation of Faust*": the Hungarian March, the *Ballet des sylphes*, and the Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps. Édouard Colonne (1838–1910), whose orchestra concerts began in 1873, premiered a complete, well-rehearsed *Damnation de Faust* in February 1877, repeated it for six consecutive weeks, and eventually conducted more than one

hundred and sixty performances of the work. The best orchestra in France was the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, to which, despite its wary relationship with Berlioz as an active composer and potential conductor, he donated all his performance material in 1863. By 1918 the Société had used his collection to master, in the systematic fashion that was their habit, most of the major works.[2] Their version of *Roméo et Juliette*, undertaken in 1873 with the *Scène d'amour*, was completed in January 1879 under E.-M.-E. Deldevez (1817–1897) and became a staple of their repertory: they were the only orchestra in the world, it was said, capable of playing the Queen Mab Scherzo accurately and at sufficient speed.

The better French conductors (Colonne, Danbé, Taffanel, Gaubert, and, later, Dervaux and Prêtre; the notable exception is Messager) were for the most part familiar with *Les Troyens*, Berlioz's masterpiece, and there were important complete productions in Germany as from 1890.[3] In England, plans for a Covent Garden production were delayed by World War II, but in 1947 Thomas Beecham led a radio broadcast from the Maida Vale studios of the BBC, to which London enthusiasts flocked. In short succession came Sir Jack Westrup's 1950 reading of the work with the Oxford University Opera Club, the Westminster recording of *Les Troyens à Carthage* with the Société des Concerts under Hermann Scherchen (and a post-recording concert performance at the Palais de Chaillot on 10 May 1952), Rafael Kubelik's 1957 Covent Garden production of the complete opera, and a two-year project of the Chelsea Opera Group: concert performances of *La Prise de Troie* in 1963, and *Les Troyens à Carthage* in 1964. These undertakings did much to shape modern enthusiasm for *Les Troyens* in specific and for performing Berlioz in general: among those who participated in the Chelsea Opera Group at the time were David Cairns, Colin Davis, Roger Norrington, and John Eliot Gardiner, all of whom have played critical roles in later stages of the Berlioz "revival." By the time of the Berlioz centennial, in 1969, a coherent and visionary approach to *Les Troyens* was in place, resulting in Hugh Macdonald's publication of the score in the *New Berlioz Edition*, the lavish Covent Garden production of 1969, and the release of the first complete recording as, essentially, the flagship of the Colin Davis Berlioz Cycle for Philips Records. Musicians and music lovers alike thereupon discovered the majesty of *Les Troyens*: as a summary of the composer's art, as the last of the great lyric tragedies, as a worthy companion to *Tristan* and to *Otello.* If live performances remain exceptional, the main reason is the ongoing shortage of tenors trained for and capable of mastering the part of Aeneas – a difficult and taxing role, notably in the fifth act.

Today, as devoted scholars and performers look back on careers of promoting these masterpieces, they have reason to take pride in having

established the order and breadth of Berlioz's artistic accomplishment. A vibrant critique of his life and work has replaced the old, unseemly jousting of partisans and detractors. The three operas (*Benvenuto Cellini*, *Les Troyens*, and *Béatrice et Bénédict*), left in 1869 without anything approaching standard texts, can now be brought to life more or less routinely. Lost works and artifacts of the composer's study, notably the *Messe solennelle* recovered in 1991, have resurfaced and taken their place in the Berlioz lore. Now it seems foolish to argue that Berlioz is any longer "misunderstood and misperformed."

But performing Berlioz still has its particular challenges. For one thing the Berlioz repertory demands rigorous forethought as to venue and personnel – and, as I have written elsewhere, not a little carpentry. The *Te Deum* cannot be done effectively without a pipe organ to the rear, behind the audience, an arrangement common only in French cathedrals and basilicas; *La Damnation de Faust* demands a choral force large enough for the men to be split into two distinct groups for one of its central moments; *Roméo et Juliette* requires its choruses of Capulets and Montagues (and an intermission for them to take their place on stage), a third chorus for the recitatives, and a contralto and tenor soloist who sing briefly at the beginning and then disappear. Berlioz's interest in musical instruments led him to employ novelties of manufacture and curiosities of antiquity that failed to achieve permanence in a typical orchestra's inventory. And still only a half-dozen titles are to be found in its orchestral library: the three pieces from *Faust*, the Royal Hunt and Storm from *Les Troyens*, the *Roman Carnival* and *Corsaire* overtures, the *Fantastique*, and *L'Enfance du Christ.*

So even if performers and listeners can take satisfaction in frequent live performances of the principal compositions and in the wide dissemination of their recordings, it would be wrong to consider the repertory fully discovered or the aesthetic issues of performing Berlioz fully engaged. One would not talk of a rich performance tradition for either the *Te Deum* (requiring its pipe organ and basilica) or *Benvenuto Cellini* (of which there is but a single recording, and for which adequate materials have only recently become available). And there is much fine music to be found among works hardly performed at all, especially in the short vocal works Berlioz developed for his own public concerts. Here, particularly, I think of *Zaïde* and *Sara la baigneuse*, where the only explanation as to why they are so frequently overlooked must be the difficulty of fitting single short works for voice and orchestra onto modern concert programs. Such ceremonial patriotic works as *Le Cinq Mai*, the *Hymne à la France*, *L'Impériale*, and even the *Chant des chemins de fer* are certainly worth an occasional hearing, too.

One might summarize the challenges of performing Berlioz, then, as those of finding the hardware and personnel on the one hand, and the software on the other.

Generally a modern symphony orchestra (ninety-some musicians: a dozen players in each string section, quadrupled winds) with an affiliated large choral society (one hundred and fifty to two hundred singers) is ample for the Berlioz repertory. The Société des Concerts, Berlioz's paradigm, numbered about eighty players and eighty professional singers – including opera virtuosi. Most of the necessary hardware – piccolo, English horn, E-flat and bass clarinet, light percussion – is in keeping with nineteenth-century norms. Among the exceptional requirements are the following:

WOODWINDS. Four bassoons are customary for the French orchestral repertory, owing to the smallish envelope of the instruments of the era; Berlioz occasionally writes four-voice chords for the bassoon section. The contrabassoon part in the *Francs-Juges* Overture may be omitted. There are instances of two and three simultaneous piccolos. While Berlioz arranged the *Chant sacré* (from the *Neuf Mélodies*) for six wind instruments invented or built by Adolphe Sax, including saxophone, the source – from early 1844 – is lost. Saxophones are otherwise nowhere required in Berlioz.

BRASS. Here lie some of the most critical issues of Berlioz performing practice, affecting all the sections. Though the piston- and rotary-valved chromatic horns were claiming a place during the epoch of the *Fantastique*, Berlioz himself preferred to write for natural horns, where the key of the instrument was established once per movement with a crook of appropriate length. (In the *Mémoires*, however, he comes out – not surprisingly – in favor of valved instruments.) Owing to the chromaticism of Berlioz's harmonic rhetoric, he thus often needs horns pitched in multiple keys. In *Roméo et Juliette*, for instance, the Love Scene calls simultaneously for first horn in E, second horn in F, third horn in high A, and fourth horn in D. While such parts are not intrinsically difficult for professional musicians either to read or to play, they do require of the conductor a particular mental gymnastic. Additionally there is a distinct loss of color when out-of-series pitches that would have been achieved by stopping the bell are played in conventional fashion. Be that as it may, it is important to execute the notated *sons bouchés* with the hand and not with a mute.

The Berlioz trumpet section usually consisted of two trumpets and two piston cornets, the latter having a sweeter, somewhat more delicate sound than modern trumpets. It makes sense to try pairs of modern trumpets and cornets in these cases. Additionally there is a lovely solo part for piston cornet in the waltz from the *Fantastique*, a later addition to the score that was probably composed for the great virtuoso Jean-Baptiste Arban (1825–1889).

Many informed listeners think that the greatest loss from the tone-color spectrum of nineteenth-century orchestras is caused by the modern practice of using three large, triggered double trombones in place of the alto–tenor–bass trio favored from Mozart to mid-century; a better compromise is to use two tenor trombones and a bass, or even, as sometimes favored by Berlioz, three tenor trombones. From the *Fantastique* (1830) through *Faust* (1846), Berlioz generally calls for ophicleide (a keyed bugle of airy tone quality and dubious pitch), or ophicleide and the old French revolutionary serpent still in use during that era for ecclesiastical chant. (The *Requiem* calls for *grand ophicléide monstre,* amusing to imagine but impractical to duplicate.) Starting with the *Marche funèbre pour la dernière scène d'Hamlet* (1843) he calls for ophicleide or tuba, or ophicleide and tuba. In the manuscript parts for *L'Impériale*, he replaces *ophicléide* with *saxhorn basse* and *tuba* with *tuba (saxhorn contrebasse)* (see below). Tubas will suffice for all these parts, but the baritone model is sometimes, as in the case of the *Dies irae* in the *Fantastique*, a better solution than the powerful all-purpose double-bass tuba.

Berlioz asks for a double quartet of saxhorns (soprano, contralto, tenor, and contrabass) in the *Marche troyenne* and a quartet of tenor saxhorns in the Royal Hunt and Storm from *Les Troyens.* For visual effect as well as for tone color, the latter – the most frequently performed excerpt from *Les Troyens* – might well be played on baritone horns. One recommended solution for the former is to use the E-flat cornet or trumpet, flugelhorn, French horn, and baritone tuba. The parts for saxhorn *suraigu* in the *Te Deum* and Trojan March are best played on a piccolo trumpet. A number of period-instrument brass bands in the United States own sets of saxhorns (and a matched set is pictured on the 7.7¢ stamp released by the United States Postal Service on 20 November 1976).

PERCUSSION. Each timpanist – Berlioz often calls for multiple players – requires a minimum of three pairs of mallets: hard, medium, and soft, to answer the composer's call for *baguettes de bois*, *de bois recouvertes en peau*, and *d'éponge.* The implication of Berlioz's sometimes puzzling use of these terms is that the leather-covered medium stick is the norm.[4] Recent developments in coating plastic drumheads duplicate the sound

of nineteenth-century skin heads quite satisfactorily.[5] The ordinary orchestral snare drum has little use in Berlioz: for the fourth movement of the *Fantastique*, the *Symphonie funèbre*, the *Marche funèbre pour la dernière scène d'Hamlet*, and the *Marche pour la présentation des drapeaux* of the *Te Deum*, players should use snareless field or tenor drums.

The bells in the last movement of the *Fantastique* present the most celebrated of all the challenges in performing Berlioz, since the symphony is the second most frequently performed of all his works. (The *Roman Carnival* Overture is the first.) The customary acceptable solution is to use large suspended metal plates, available from percussion suppliers by rent; the customary unacceptable solution is to use standard tubular orchestral chimes. A still better course of action is to borrow the largest moveable G and C from a local carillon. (A half-dozen major orchestras in the United States have had their own bronze bells cast for the *Fantastique*, but those of the San Francisco Symphony, for example, sound an octave higher than Berlioz probably intended.)

The tuned antique cymbals in *Roméo et Juliette* and *Les Troyens*, which Berlioz first saw when he visited the museum in Pompeii, are generally replaced by crotales struck with a plastic mallet. (The other "antique" instruments in *Les Troyens* – double flute, sistrum, and tarbuka – are on-stage visual props, matched respectively by oboes, triangles, and the one-headed Provençal *tambourin*.[6]) An anvil (*petite enclume*), struck with "a small sculptor's hammer," is required for one of the smiths' choruses ("Bienheureux les matelots") in *Benvenuto Cellini*. The Hamlet March reaches climax with the arrival of a *peloton* – a firing squad; theatre companies are usually equipped to provide some sort of appropriate effect.[7] The jingling johnny, or *pavillon chinois*, needed for the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, is usually to be found at a local Shriners' band – in France, at the band of the *Légion étrangère*.

HARPS, KEYBOARDS. The nineteenth-century Érard pedal harp was considerably smaller and quieter than the standard modern Lyon & Healey, but the overall effect is roughly the same. Berlioz calls for pairs of harps from the second movement of the *Fantastique* forward; both the solo exposition of *Harold en Italie* and the mezzo-soprano strophes in *Roméo et Juliette* feature important solo harp work, as does Berlioz's orchestration of *L'Invitation à la valse*. In the *Fête chez Capulet* from *Roméo et Juliette* and the scene of the Trojan women in *Les Troyens* ("Complices de sa gloire," in the finale of Act II), some three to six pairs of harps are envisaged. (Wagner probably got the idea for the similar effect at the close of *Das Rheingold* from having heard and seen *Roméo et Juliette* at the Paris première in 1839.)

In *L'Enfance du Christ* Berlioz asks for the harmonium organ he knew as the *orgue mélodium d'Alexandre*, the inventor, Édouard Alexandre (1824–1888), having become a close friend. Purists will need to look around for a foot-pumped model; a more practical solution is the electronic synthesizer or baroque positive.

The guitar is needed for Méphistophélès's scene in *Huit Scènes de Faust* and Somarone's scene at the opening of Act II of *Béatrice et Bénédict*. It was first envisaged for the strophes in *Roméo et Juliette*; two are needed for *Benvenuto Cellini*.

STRINGS. The period from the *Fantastique* to *Les Troyens* saw the complete redesign of the violin family for increased power, a development in which the Parisian violin maker J.-B. Vuillaume (1798–1875) and the bow-maker F.-X. Tourte (1747–1835) took the lead. New instruments were built to bolder specifications and older instruments refitted. Amount and frequency of vibrato certainly increased as the decades elapsed. Berlioz would have been happy enough with this apparent progress, and it makes little sense to ask players to adopt a substantially different approach to bowing, articulation, and vibrato from the one they use for the Beethoven-to-Mahler repertory.

SINGERS. As indicated above, a large chorus of some one hundred and fifty to two hundred – that is, twice the size of the standing chorus of the Société des Concerts – will usually suffice. The problem is the balance of voice parts, since Berlioz typically envisages a little over one-third women, with equal numbers of tenors and basses. For the choruses in *Roméo et Juliette* he suggests seventy Capulets and seventy Montagues (thirty sopranos, twenty tenors, twenty basses); the same sort of force would work for *Sara la baigneuse,* with half of all men and women assigned to chorus I, the remaining women to chorus II, and the remaining men to chorus III. *Faust* calls for similar or larger numbers, but with two significant movements for men alone and added children's chorus for the final *Apothéose*; the *Te Deum* specifies a double chorus (each with forty sopranos, thirty tenors, thirty basses) and a massed children's chorus of six hundred. Works thereafter are for SATB; the cast list for *Les Troyens* calls for "une centaine de choristes surnuméraires" – a hundred choral singers more than the approximately eighty who normally sang at the Opéra (for which theatre Berlioz's opera was conceived).

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The published Berlioz performance material follows three avenues: (1) scores and parts descended from the original publications contracted with and overseen by the composer; (2) scores and parts descended from

the Berlioz *Werke* edited by Charles Malherbe and Felix Weingartner and published in Leipzig by Breitkopf & Härtel (1900–1907), now generally called the *Old Berlioz Edition* (*OBE*); and (3) scores and parts based on the *New Berlioz Edition* (*NBE*), edited by Hugh Macdonald and a team of specialists and published in Kassel by Bärenreiter (see Appendix).

While at least a few copies of the first publications are preserved in research libraries, very little of the performance material available today for hire or purchase descends photographically from the Berlioz originals. (Exceptions are some of the vocal scores and a few sets offered for sale by Kalmus, including those for *La Marseillaise.* But the vocal scores tend toward disorder and aberrant readings, and the parts, lacking rehearsal letters and bar numbers, are viable only for the shortest works.) By contrast, descendants of the Breitkopf & Härtel edition are widely available at attractive prices: parts from Kalmus and Luck's Library, scores from Dover, Kalmus, and Broude. These have become essentially the standard texts, and with a little work by conductor and librarian – addition of rehearsal indications and the blotting out of extraneous text – they remain highly serviceable.

Scholarly considerations aside, the practical triumph of the *New Berlioz Edition* is in how it provides musicians with scores and parts for works that have heretofore been simply unavailable. The project began with two such works, the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* (1967) and *Les Troyens* (1969–1970), and has recently unveiled two others: the newly discovered *Messe solennelle* (1994) and, more than one hundred and fifty years after the first performances, *Benvenuto Cellini* in a workable edition of score and parts (1994–1996). (All four are the work of the general editor, Hugh Macdonald.) Bärenreiter's preferred business practice is to rent the performance materials, withholding them from direct sale. End-users dislike this form of capitalism, since it makes it impossible for orchestras or conductors to own sets with their own markings; the corollary – the attempt to control performance rights, practiced aggressively for the first performances of the *Messe solennelle* – seems particularly objectionable. One obvious result is to occasion fewer rather than more performances using these important new materials; another is to favor entertainment cartels and the major opera houses and orchestras over regional, local, and educational institutions. Nevertheless we must be patient as private enterprise recuperates its investment: the cost of preparing these materials is something on the order of $100 per page, and it is said that the parts for *Cellini* alone cost in excess of $50,000. As of this writing, about half the published volumes of the *NBE* have accompanying parts (see Appendix).

Given that on the whole there is comparatively little in the *New Berlioz Edition* that changes the overall sound of the familiar works, it is important to emphasize that the *NBE* achieves a considerably more accurate representation of the composer's notions than did the Malherbe and Weingartner edition, and represents a significant corrective to the misleading characteristics of the materials in common use. For one thing, the old edition attempts, unsuccessfully, to present trilingual readings of titles and lyrics: German at the head, then French and English. In score and parts for the *Fantastique*, for instance, we find at the start of the first movement:

Träumeraien, Leidenschaften
Rêveries – Passions Visions and Passions

– not all that egregious an English translation, to be sure, but misleading as to the *rêveries* and missing the pointed suggestion that the reveries and the passions are two different parts of the movement (the slow introduction and the Allegro, respectively). The English rhymed texts are barely viable for singing and useless as translations. In the case of *Zaïde*, for example, we have the following:

«Ma ville, ma belle ville,	Granada my native city
C'est Grenade au frais jardin,	'Tis the home of all that's fair
C'est le palais d'Alladin,	Bright as a gem past compare.
Qui vaut Courdoue et Séville.»	Though some may other towns more splendid
[Qui vaut Courdoue,	Perchance prefer,
Qui vaut Courdoue et Séville.]	There's naught fairer than Granada!
Roger de Beauvoir	transl. Percy Pinkerton

["My town, my lovely town, / Is Granada of the cool garden, / Is Aladdin's palace, / Worth as much as Cordoba and Seville [put together]!"]

Including lyrics in three languages not only clutters the voice lines with alternative recompositions to fit the foreign languages, and the vertical layout with the non-Berlioz texts, but in turn forces re-engraving the other stanzas of these simple strophic *mélodies*. Berlioz would merely give the texts of subsequent *couplets* on the last page, sometimes with the adapted melody, sometimes with the lyric text alone.

Then, too, Malherbe and Weingartner adopted principles of layout that actually run counter to Berlioz's musical thought. The chief of these was to place the horn staves above the bassoon, woodwind-quintet fashion, suggesting a philosophy of orchestral choirs that has more to do with Wagnerian ideals than anything Berlioz ever thought or espoused. Further, in my view, Berlioz's manner of notating the trombone parts

(often with the bass trombone on one line and the tenor and alto on a second line above) suggests his understanding of voice- and chord-function, such that the Breitkopf re-notating of the two lower parts in the bass clef and the upper part in a C clef can confound the reader as to what is really meant to happen. Jacques Barzun, at the close of his two-volume biography of Berlioz, presents a useful list of dozens of "Errors in the 'Complete' Edition of the Scores"; quite a number of these imply an audible difference between Berlioz's conception and that of Malherbe and Weingartner.[8]

The *New Berlioz Edition* presents no-nonsense, French-only scores, with each staff identified on every page, bar numbers in the upper-left corner of each system, and on the average at least one rehearsal letter for every two-page opening. The guiding principles of editorial policy were formulated with performers in mind: notes and critical apparatus are short, important, and of practical use. (It thus makes sense for conductors to use the full, clothbound *NBE* volumes as opposed to the paperback "Urtext" scores furnished with the rentals but lacking the critical matter.) The overall look of the *NBE* has mutated according to rapid changes in the technology of music typesetting and in the global labor force. The crisp, clean character of the early volumes, prepared in-house in Kassel with presstype (rub-off transfers), was replaced by a bolder and less attractive typeface with scores produced in Asia. Bigger, blacker notes led to wider layout and more frequent page-turns; more pages led to longer volumes and higher prices. (Compare, for instance, pp. 162–163 of the *Fantastique* – *NBE* 16, 1972: seventeen bars – with pp. 266–267 of *Roméo et Juliette* – *NBE* 18, 1990: eleven bars). With *Benvenuto Cellini* (*NBE* 1, 1994) the *NBE* returned to a somewhat tidier look, thanks in large measure to the use of computerized typesetting and page design.

Otherwise there is little to quibble over in the accuracy and usefulness of the *New Berlioz Edition* scores (but for the fact that the silver ink on the spines wears quickly away). One grows accustomed to the minor idiosyncrasies – beams, not flags, for the vocal syllables; slurs, not beams-and-slurs, for melismas; dots dropped for dotted-quarter flagged triplets and dotted-half flagged sextuplets (see the illustrations below) – and one accepts the inevitable discrepancies in widths of wedge accents and crescendo/decrescendos. The clarity of the *NBE* often surpasses that of the precedent publications, and the extra space can be seen to have advantages that perhaps outweigh the frenetic page-turns demanded, for example, by its Queen Mab Scherzo.

Let us compare the first page of the published viola part for *Roméo et Juliette* in the editions of Brandus et C^{ie} (1847), Breitkopf & Härtel

(1901), and Bärenreiter (1990).[9] The musical text is substantially the same in all three, the chief difference being the *divisi* called for in bar 41 of the Brandus part, reflected in neither subsequent edition. (The bar in question is no different, technically, from what precedes and follows. Whether to divide for these effects is best left to the players; professional musicians will generally choose the double stops.) The Brandus part is from a first drawing of the set used by Berlioz for performances in 1846 and corrected in his hand and that of his copyist. (The penciled indication "N° 2" in the upper-right corner is autograph, as are the rubrics on the tissue wrapper, not pictured.) At the top, the part carries the rubber stamp of the Société des Concerts, where it arrived in 1863 and probably served for the performances of 1877 and thereafter; at the bottom it carries the stamp of the Bibliothèque Nationale (where the archives of the Société des Concerts began to arrive in 1974) and, at the lower left, the library shelfmark, Rés. Vma 215, in the hand of the librarian, Jean-Michel Nectoux. One hundred and two bars are given on eleven staves of the first page, compared with sixty-eight bars for the *OBE* and sixty-one bars for the *NBE* parts with ten staves each.

The *NBE* part gives a more accurate representation of Berlioz's intent for the wedge decrescendo as carrying through the sixteenth-note of the main figure in the fugue subject, while the reading in the *OBE* looks more like an accent; by contrast bars 38 and 39 are more successfully represented by the *OBE*. Note, too, the dot-saving scheme the *NBE* uses for the sextuplet figures beginning in bar 24. Both the *OBE* and the *NBE* give a "courtesy" A-natural in bar 44 lacking in the Brandus part. Brandus has no rehearsal or bar numbers; the *OBE* gives rehearsal numbers 1 to 3; the *NBE* gives both bar numbers at the start of each line and rehearsal letters A to F. The cued snippet of the trombone recitative (the "intervention du Prince"; bars 87–91), as given by Brandus at the foot of the page, also appears on p. 2 of the *OBE* part (not pictured); but Brandus lacks the new tempo-character indication, and the *OBE* gives it in Italian: "Fieramente, un poco ritenuto, col carattere di Recitativo misurato." The *NBE* (p. 2, not pictured) gives the correct French original, "Fièrement, un peu retenu et avec le caractère du récitatif," but, curiously, only bars 90–91 of the trombone cue.

Whether these kinds of differences matter to the everyday performing viola player is open to speculation. Though musicians always seem reassured by the traditional Breitkopf & Härtel look, the more spacious layout of the *NBE* does offer a psychological advantage (but yields thirty page-turns as opposed to twenty-eight in the *OBE*). In this particular case the primary advantage of the *NBE* parts would appear to be the line-by-line bar numbers and frequent rehearsal letters. In fact what might make the

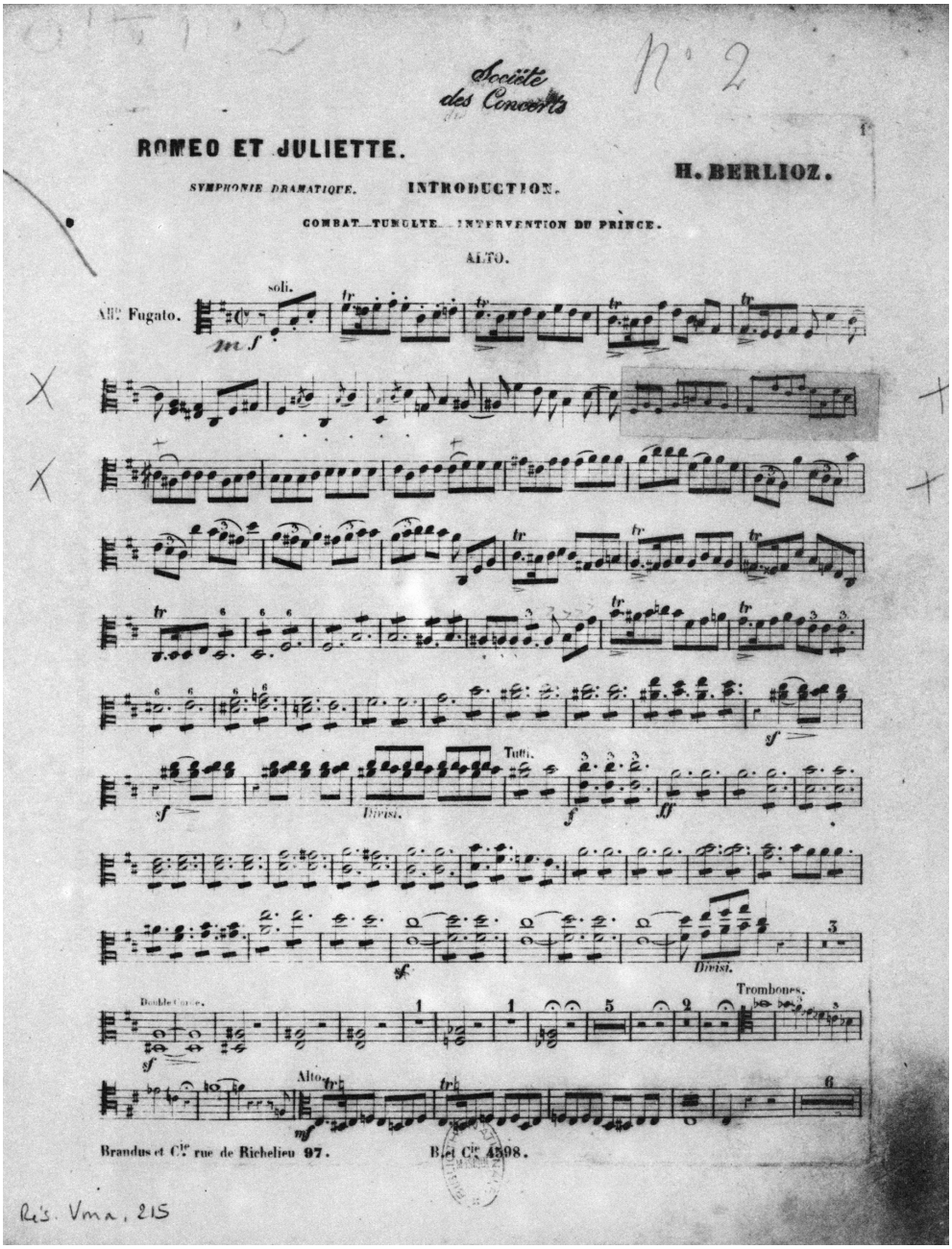

Fig. 13.1 *Roméo et Juliette*, first page of the viola part as printed by Brandus et C^ie^ in 1847.

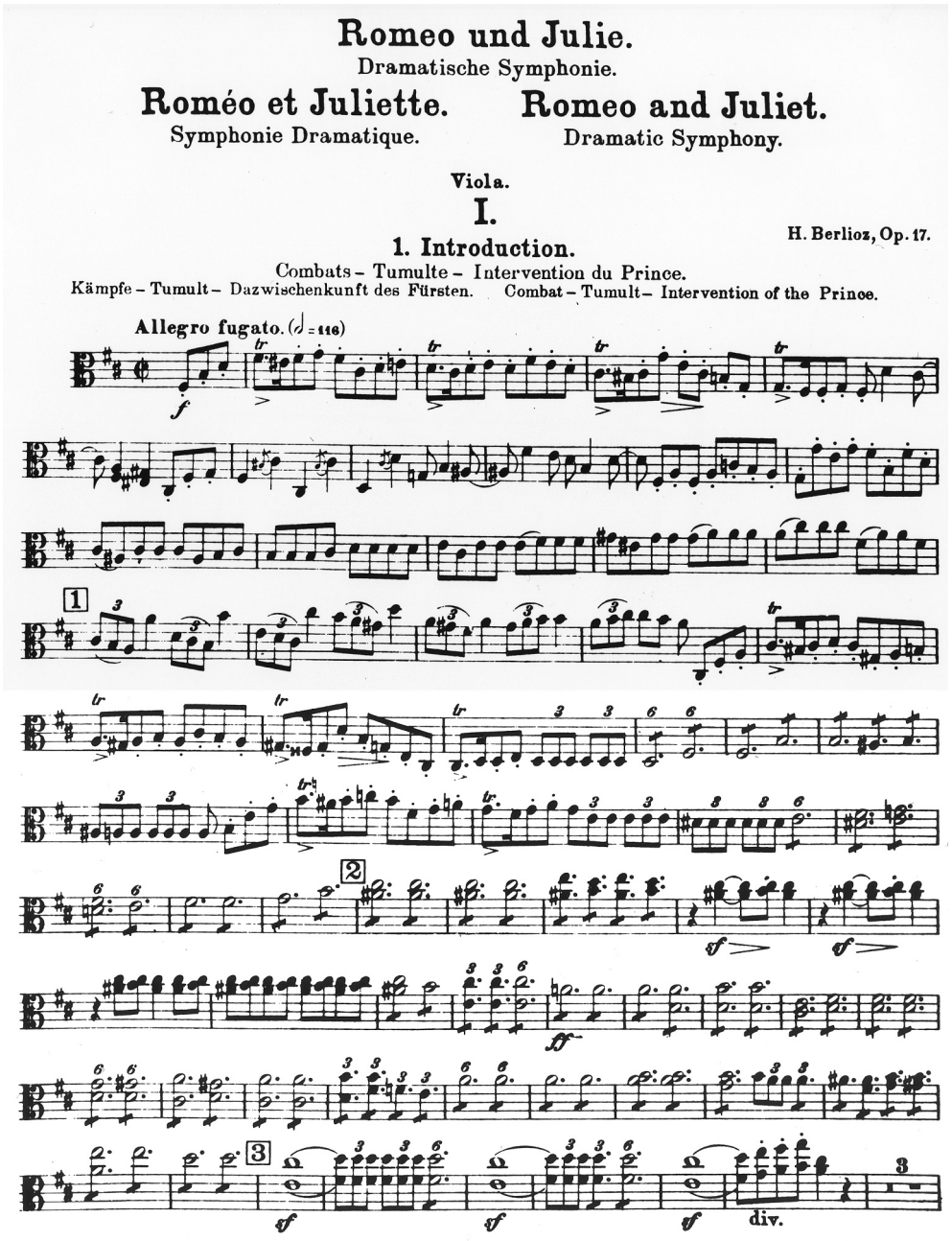

Fig. 13.2 *Roméo et Juliette*, first page of the viola part as printed by Breitkopf & Härtel (*OBE*) in 1901.

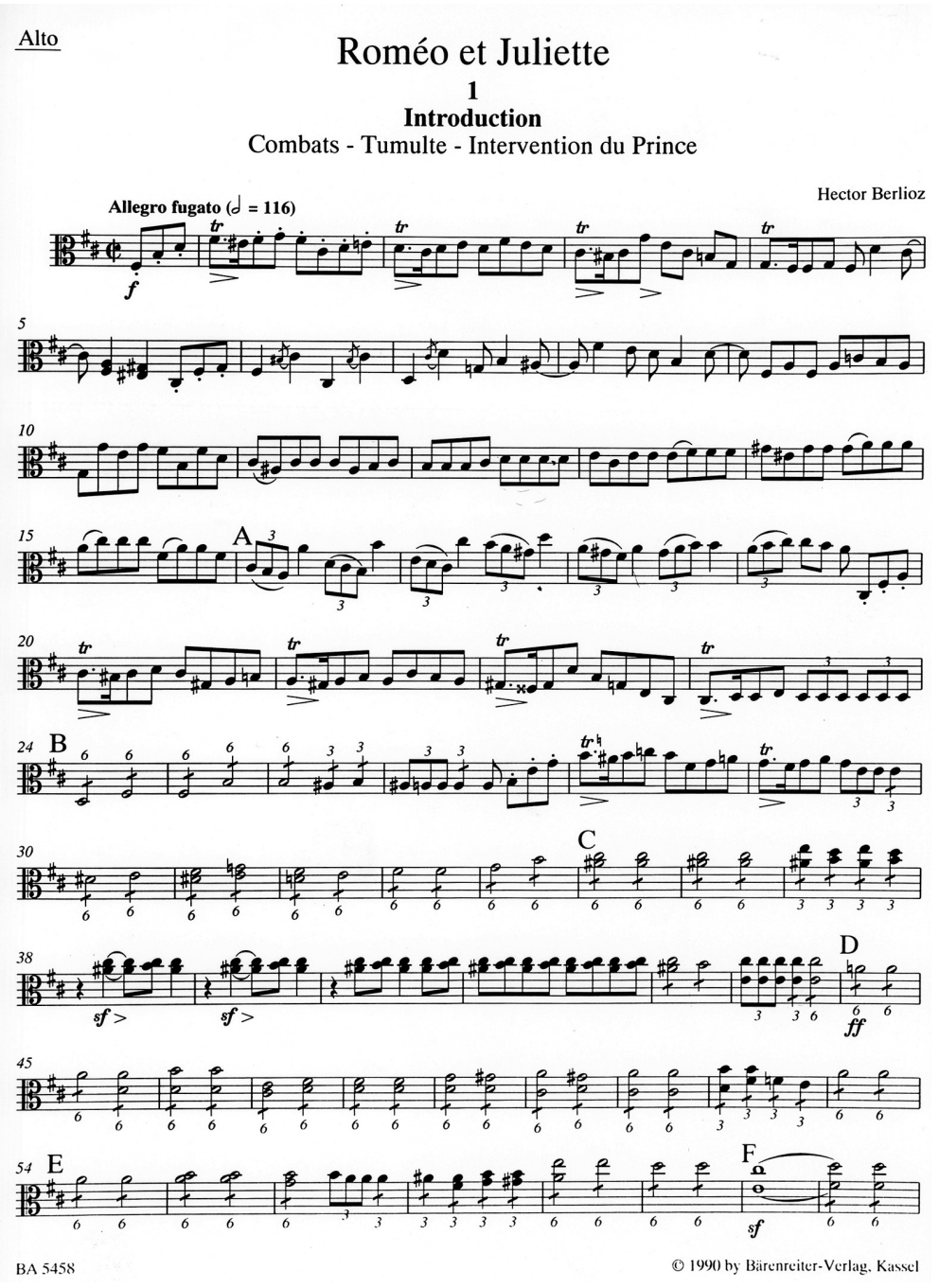

Fig. 13.3 *Roméo et Juliette*, first page of the viola part as printed by Bärenreiter (*NBE*) in 1990.

most positive difference to the overall shape and concept of *Roméo et Juliette* from using the *NBE* parts is simpler still: the proper numbering of the seven movements, as opposed to the *OBE's* contorted and thoroughly wrongheaded attempt to force the structure into four Roman-numeralled symphonic movements.

In sum, one must hire the *NBE* materials for the operas and such less-familiar and available works as the *Messe solennelle*: there is no other viable choice, and the enterprise deserves support. For the symphonic canon it makes good sense to rent the *NBE* materials for works not already in the library, and to base other decisions on considerations of budget and rehearsal strategy. Note that the only parts presently for direct sale by Bärenreiter are those for the *Fantastique*, co-published with Breitkopf & Härtel of Wiesbaden. Since these amount to the old Breitkopf parts with bar numbers added (but no rehearsal numbers or letters), one would make the decision based on the cost of the materials and labor to prepare them for rehearsal.[10]

In the case of the *Requiem* I strongly recommend the full *NBE* materials, with vocal scores purchased by the chorus. All too commonly, modern productions of this work bring together mismatched parts owned by the many groups who need assembling for the final rehearsals and performance: the orchestra plays from descendants of the Breitkopf & Härtel parts, the chorus sings from inexpensive vocal scores from Schirmer and Kalmus, and the conductor reads the *NBE* score, presumably setting afoot three different rehearsal-letter schemes. The vocal scores, descended from a Brandus publication of 1882 based on the 1838 original, embrace a passage in the *a cappella Quaerens me* that was deleted from the 1853 second edition published by Ricordi, as well as dozens of details of voice-part disposition and declamation subsequently improved by Berlioz himself. Further, the timpani parts, as published by Breitkopf & Härtel, have been redistributed and bear little resemblance to Berlioz's own scheme: using them embraces unnecessary compromises to both the visual and (to my ear) audible impact of the timpani choir, particularly if drums are re-tuned, as it were, *en route.* The timpani parts *can* be arranged for four players each controlling four instruments, but who, having assembled the rest of the performing force, would want to bypass this central effect? (Additionally, there is the problem of the disposition of the cornets in the *Sanctus* and the trombone players after the *Lacrymosa* for the final movements – points on which Berlioz is somewhat ambiguous and the parts more ambiguous still.)

Enhanced accessibility to Berlioz materials is not uniquely the work of

the *NBE*. In the recent past, for instance, facsimiles of two piano-vocal *mélodies* (the *Élégie en prose* and *La Captive*) were included in Garland's series of *Romantic French Song, 1830–1870*, and Peter Bloom published an edition of the piano-vocal *Nuits d'été* based in part on newly recovered manuscript material. For the French bicentennial ceremonies in 1989, a team of graduate students at the University of California at Davis and I published the newly discovered *Chant du 9 Thermidor* in score and parts, along with editions of the *Marche pour la présentation des drapeaux* and of Berlioz's arrangement of the *Marseillaise*.[11] A facsimile reprinting of the 1863 *Collection de 32 Mélodies* in conjunction with the Berlioz bicentenary in 2003 would go a long way toward making these songs available to singers far and wide.

The performance practice movement reached Berlioz with Roger Norrington's performances and recording of the *Symphonie fantastique* in 1988–1989, a natural outgrowth of his immediately preceding, now famous Beethoven recordings. Norrington's London "Berlioz Experience" of 4 = 6 March 1988 featured, in addition to the *Fantastique* (and lectures, roundtables, and recitals), a vibrant *Roméo et Juliette* – broadcast but not released on disc – and a *Francs-Juges* Overture later released in a collection of *Early Romantic Overtures*. In 1991 John Eliot Gardiner's Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique audio- and video-recorded a *Fantastique* in the Salle des Concerts du Conservatoire, the old hall in which it was first performed in December 1830. Gardiner's period orchestra and Monteverdi Choir released the first-ever *Messe solennelle* in 1993, likewise including a laser-disc; 1998 saw publication of a remarkable pick-and-choose recording of the various versions of *Roméo et Juliette*. Both Norrington and Gardiner were already admired for Berlioz recordings with conventional forces.[12]

Efforts to approximate the conditions of a live performance during the composer's lifetime – the use of period instruments or replicas thereof, corresponding phrase and bowing strategies, and the composer's preferred layout of performing forces and specified tempos – were in the late nineteen-eighties and remain now very much in vogue. The European Community could boast a cohort of properly equipped young professional musicians available to travel the relatively short distances involved to constitute more-or-less authentic performances in the era's main venues. The big recording companies, anxious to acquire novel audio and video "content," arranged for the mixed-media packaging.

All five "performance practice" recordings are worthy additions to the Berlioz discography, the Gardiner *Fantastique* perhaps especially so by

Table 13.1 Performance practice recordings

Symphonie fantastique (Norrington, 1989). London Classical Players, Roger Norrington, conductor. EMI CD CDC 7 49541 2. 1989.

Les Francs-Juges Overture (Norrington, 1990), London Classical Players, Roger Norrington, conductor. *Early Romantic Overtures*, with works of Weber, Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Wagner. Recorded 1988. EMI CD CDC 7 49889 2. 1990.

Symphonie fantastique (Gardiner, 1991). Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner, conductor. Recorded and filmed at the Salle des Concerts of the old Conservatoire (now the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique), September 1991. Philips video 440 070 254–1 (laser disc), . . . 254–3 (VHS cassette). 1991. Philips CD 434 402–2. 1993.

Messe solennelle (Gardiner, 1993). Donna Brown, soprano; Jean-Luc Viala, tenor; Gilles Cachemaille, bass-baritone; Monteverdi Choir, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner, conductor. Recorded live at Westminster Cathedral, London, October 1993. Philips video 440 070 272–1. Philips CD 442 137–2. 1993.

Roméo et Juliette (Gardiner, 1998). Catherine Robbin, contralto; Jean-Paul Fouchecourt, tenor; Gilles Cachemaille, bass-baritone; Monteverdi Choir, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner, conductor. Philips 454 454–2 (2 discs). With alternative and variant readings. 1998.

virtue of a video component that preserves something of the look and feel, if not in fact the acoustic, of a beloved hall now consigned to other uses. Even though the sounds of Beethoven-era strings and old-fashioned woodwind and brass have by now become familiar, one cannot help being intrigued by the woodiness of the woodwind, the stern brass voices of the Berlioz era, the short bow strokes and limited vibrato of the strings. These serve to remind us of a certain loss of personality that resulted from the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century quest for a united, rich-and-round sonic ideal – the near equivalence in tone quality, for instance, of the tenor register in horn, bassoon, saxophone, and even cello – and for the "long line." If the net result seems "stringy" or "harsh" by comparison with traditional recordings, that is in many respects the point.

Norrington's particular focus has been on scrupulous attention to a composer's metronome markings. It does not take much to see the limitations of manuscript metronome marks: composers are notorious for attaching them without actually consulting a metronome; the old-fashioned clockwork mechanism can be unpredictable outside mid-range; and speed as imagined by a composer in his workshop is often markedly different from speed as sensed by working musicians in live concert venues. Berlioz himself favored cautious use of the metronome: music played by imitating the "mathematical regularity of the metronome," he wrote, "would be of glacial rigidity." But in his precedent-setting cycle of the Beethoven symphonies, Norrington demonstrated incontestably (except, perhaps, in the case of the famously slow scherzo of the Ninth) that a fundamentally musical use of the metronome markings, combined with other levels of musical rethinking, could afford intellectually

provocative readings of old, familiar works. His readings are surprisingly novel, challenging to the intellect, and – often as not – obviously "right." Norrington's "nice and slow" March to the Scaffold from the *Fantastique* – "because that's the right speed" – has fostered a vogue for such accounts and perhaps a certain rivalry among conductors to see who can go slowest.

But is slow "right," and is Norrington's account of the last movement, at ten-and-a-half minutes, "nice and slow," or simply ponderous? For that matter, do the "performance practice" recordings really follow the composer's scheme? Berlioz's indications are as follows:

Movement IV *Marche au supplice*
Allegretto non troppo 𝅗𝅥 = 72
Movement V: *Songe d'une nuit du sabbat*
Larghetto ♩ = 63
Allegro ♩. = 112
("mockery of the beloved" I, bar 21)
Allegro assai 𝅗𝅥 = 76
("roar of approval," bar 29)
Allegro ♩. = 104
("mockery" II, bar 40; presumably slower owing to technical difficulty)
sans presser –
(*Dies irae*, bar 127)
animez un peu (from bar 223) –
Un peu retenu ♩. = 104
(*Ronde du sabbat*, bar 241)
(HB: "The tempo, which should have picked up a little, returns here to that
of bar 40: ♩. = 104.)[13]
animez (bar 492) –

Both movements consistently struggle to break free of the composer's metronome indication owing, in the March, to the change of character between the lugubrious, sinister first theme and the swashbuckling second, as well as to the mounting frenzy toward the end; and, in the *Ronde du sabbat*, to the general sense that witches must dance faster than ♩. = 104. (A Sousa march in $\frac{6}{8}$ – Marines, not witches – travels at ♩. = 120.)

The received French performance tradition takes both movements considerably faster than Berlioz's metronome marks. Charles Munch, who left the most persuasive Berlioz recordings of the first half of the century (his cycle with the Boston Symphony and the Harvard/Radcliffe/New England Conservatory choruses has recently appeared as an eight-CD set),[14] begins the March at 𝅗𝅥 = 76 and gathers consistently in speed to reach 94 at the end, having skipped the repeat. He takes the "mockery of the beloved" at a relatively strict ♩. = 104 and the Round Dance just short of ♩. = 132 – i.e., a great deal faster than Berlioz says. The young Spanish

Table 13.2 *Symphonie fantastique*

Performance times

	Movement IV	Movement V	All
Munch / BSO RCA 1954; rpt. CD 1996	04:27*	08:42	46:38
Argenta / Société des Concerts London 1955; rpt. CD 1998	06:25	09:39	50:38
Davis / Concertgebouw Philips 1974	06:48	09:57	55:31
Norrington / London Classical Players EMI 1989	07:25	10:37	52:48
Gardiner / Orchestre Révolutionnaire Philips 1991	06:41	11:08	54:45

* Munch does not take the repeat.

conductor Ataulfo Argenta, who left the later of two recordings by the Société des Concerts,[15] follows much the same tempos as Munch. Colin Davis and the Concertgebouw take the March at 𝅗𝅥 = 80, the Round Dance at ♩. = 130.

Norrington, by contrast, begins the March well under 𝅗𝅥 = 72, reaching only 74 by the end; the Round Dance goes at between ♩. = 116 and 120 throughout. Gardiner's March to the Scaffold begins at 𝅗𝅥 = 80 and settles at 84, with a strict ♩. = 104 for the "mockery of the beloved," and a Round Dance at "traditional" speeds, i.e., starting at about ♩. = 120 and reaching 132 toward the end.

During a London roundtable discussion of conducting Berlioz held in October 1995, Norrington, Macdonald, David Cairns, and I discussed the matter of finding workable tempos for these two movements.[16] David Cairns found Norrington's reading of the March to the Scaffold powerful, because it was "more brutal and obscene." (Norrington himself remarked that "I haven't changed since I discovered this lovely metronome marking – how it kind of ponderously goes on.") But Cairns thought even the ♩. = 120 of the last movement, as recorded by Norrington, "too held back."

The conversation turned naturally to other unaccountably slow markings in Berlioz: the ♩. = 76 at the start of *Harold en Italie*, which, according to Macdonald, "has to speed up" at the entry of the viola or else is, according to Norrington, "distressingly slow"; the ♩. = 63 for *La Mort d'Ophélie*, which instead might well go "swingingly along" (Norrington: "She was floating down the river. Very nice; and then she sank."); and the ♩ = 50 for the *Te ergo quaesumus* in the *Te Deum*, a thoroughly impractical speed for the tenor soloist. Both the Love Scene from *Roméo et Juliette* and the Shepherds' Farewell from *L'Enfance du Christ* often seem lethargic in

otherwise well-conceived performances, but this is more commonly the result of slipping into a ponderous eighth-note pulse than a function of the calibrations themselves (♩. = 88; ♩. = 50). The only reasonable explanation of a performance time left in Berlioz's hand for the Queen Mab Scherzo, ten minutes for a movement usually played in seven, is that it reflects an earlier, longer musical text.[17]

Norrington summarized an approach to these questions that amounts to giving first priority to Berlioz's metronome marks, but only so long as they can be made to work:

> People get the impression that one sees a metronome mark or hears of a timing and then uses it for some religious reason. I only do it when they appeal. And sometimes I just don't do it. *Harold* is one of those cases: I don't see how I can do the metronome marking. You have to really be convinced. What's nice is that one so often is. The Beethoven symphonies are a case in point. Except for the Ninth, every single marking in the first eight symphonies is a revelation. It suddenly sounds right.[18]

"It's a revelation," I remarked, "if you're Roger Norrington and if you make such beautiful music from the revelation."

The participants in the London roundtable discussed matters concerning the layout of the Berlioz orchestra, all favoring the composer's preferred antiphonal placement of the two violin sections. Berlioz's attitudes were largely conditioned by the cramped quarters of the Salle des Concerts at the old Conservatoire, where the violins filled the forestage and the chorus continued outward over the covered pit; a desk or two of bass strings was wedged between the violin sections, and the remainder of the orchestra was consigned to steeply rising platforms reaching back to the walls of a removable shell.[19] (The one legible illustration of the nineteenth-century Société des Concerts at work clearly shows the double basses on the top platform, far removed from the violins.[20]) Few of these accommodations to an unusual room seem to merit duplicating for modern performance in more spacious quarters. Even the chorus-in-front strategy for *Roméo et Juliette* (and by extension for the other choral works up to *Faust*), though extraordinary in both visual and acoustic effect, is probably too costly in terms of inherent dangers for conventional modern performance. A large, wrap-around chorus accomplishes the same effect and can be controlled by the chief conductor.

The discussants – all of them conductors – closed by advocating a return to another lost tradition of nineteenth-century performance: applause between the movements. Norrington attributed the demise of applauding between movements, and of on-the-spot encores, to Sir Henry

Wood's discouragement of it beginning in the nineteen-thirties. But "it's wonderful," said Cairns, "when people applaud when they shouldn't."

"It seems to me," said Norrington, "that a concert should be a good deal more fun." Later than evening, in the Royal Festival Hall, I led a salvo of applause after the Pilgrims' March from *Harold en Italie* – over a chorus of shushing from the London regulars. Norrington turned and acknowledged our corner of the *parterre* with a satisfied nod. But he did not grant an encore.

Appendix

Hector Berlioz: New Edition of the Complete Works
General Editor: Hugh Macdonald
Bärenreiter (Kassel, Basel, London, New York, 1967–)

Issued by the Berlioz Centenary Committee London in association with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon. Except for the *Symphonie fantastique* and the *Te Deum* (which are copublished with Breitkopf & Härtel of Wiesbaden), parts are identified here with the Bärenreiter edition number (BA 5441*ff.*) plus 72; vocal scores with edition number plus 90. Scores with rental sets come with paper bindings and without commentary and notes. An "Index to the New Berlioz Edition" appears on pp. viii–ix of *NBE* 1a (*Benvenuto Cellini*). For the latest information, one may search the on-line catalogue at www.barenreiter.com.

1 *Benvenuto Cellini*, ed. Hugh Macdonald (4 vols.: 1a–d). 1994–1996 [vol. 1d forthcoming].
BA 5441. Parts (with the versions Paris 1 and Paris 2/Weimar). Overture separately available. Vocal score ed. E. Wernhard and M. Schelhaas (BA 5441a; 1999).

2 *Les Troyens*, ed. Hugh Macdonald (3 vols.: 2a–c). 1969–1970.
BA 5442. Parts. Vocal score ed E. Wernhard forthcoming. "Chasse royale et orage" ("Royal Hunt and Storm") separately available. Eulenberg pocket score EE 6639 (1973); "Chasse royale," EE 1371 (1978).

3 *Béatrice et Bénédict*, ed. Hugh Macdonald. 1980.
BA 5443. Parts. Vocal score ed. D. Müller, W. Konold, J. E. Durek (BA 5443a, 1985). Overture separately available.

4 Incomplete Operas. Forthcoming.
[BA 5444.] *Les Francs-Juges*; *La Nonne sanglante.*

5 *Huit Scènes de Faust*, ed. Julian Rushton. 1970.
BA 5445. Parts forthcoming.

6 Prix de Rome works, ed. David Gilbert. 1998.
BA 5446. Parts (by cantata title). Fugue (1826); *La Mort d'Orphée*; *Herminie*; Fugue à trois sujets (1829); *Cléopâtre*; *Sardanapale.*

7 *Lélio ou Le Retour à la vie*, ed. Peter Bloom. 1992.
BA 5447. Parts. Vocal score ed. E. Wernhard (BA 5447a; 2000).

8 *La Damnation de Faust*, ed. Julian Rushton (2 vols.: 8a–b). 1979, 1986.
BA 5448. Parts. Vocal score ed. E. Wernhard (BA 5448a, 1993).

9 *Grande Messe des morts* (*Requiem*), ed. Jürgen Kindermann. 1978.
BA 5449. Parts. Vocal score ed. M. Töpul, D. Woodfull-Harris (BA 5449a, 1992). Study Score TP 332 (1992).

10 *Te Deum*, ed. Denis McCaldin. 1973.
BA 5450 and 5782 (Parts). Vocal score ed. Otto Taubmann (BA 5782a); copublished as Breitkopf & Härtel 8061 (1978).

11 *L'Enfance du Christ*, ed. David Lloyd Jones. 1998.
BA 5451. Parts. Vocal score ed. E. Wernhard (BA 5451a; 1999).

12 Choral Works with Orchestra. 2 vols.: 12a, ed. Julian Rushton, 1991; 12b, ed. David Charlton. 1993. Parts.
BA 5452/I, vol. 12a: *Resurrexit*; *Scène héroïque*; *Chant sacré*; *Hélène*; *Quartetto et coro dei maggi*; *Sara la baigneuse*; *Le Cinq Mai.*
BA 5452/II, vol. 12b: *Tristia (Méditation religieuse, La Mort d'Ophélie, Marche funèbre pour la dernière scène d'Hamlet)*; *Vox populi (La Menace des Francs, Hymne à la France)*; *Chant des Chemins de fer*; *L'Impériale.* Parts: *Chant des Chemins de fer*, *Tristia.* Others forthcoming.

13 Songs for Solo Voice and Orchestra, ed. Ian Kemp. 1975.
BA 5453. Parts. *La Belle Voyageuse*; *La Captive*; *Le Jeune Pâtre breton*; *Les Nuits d'été*; *Le Chasseur danois*; *Zaïde*; *Aubade.* Parts for *Les Nuits d'été. Les Nuits d'été* vocal score with transpositions for mezzo-soprano, ed. D. Woodfull-Harris (BA 5784; 1995).

14 Choral Works with Keyboard, ed. Ian Rumbold. 1996.
BA 5454. *Le Ballet des ombres*; *Chant guerrier*; *Chanson à boire*; *Chant sacré*; *Le Chant des Bretons*; *L'Apothéose*; *Prière du matin*; *Hymne pour la consécration du nouveau tabernacle*; *Le Temple universel*; *Veni creator*; *Tantum ergo.*

15 Songs for One, Two, or Three Voices with Keyboard. Forthcoming.
BA 5455. *Le Dépit de la bergère*; *Le Maure jaloux*; *Amitié, reprends ton empire*; *Pleure, pauvre Colette*; *Canon libre à la quinte*; *Le Montagnard exilé*; *Toi qui l'aimas, verse des pleurs*; *Nocturne à deux voix*; *Le Roi de Thulé*; *Le Coucher du soleil*; *Hélène*; *La Belle Voyageuse*; *L'Origine de la harpe*; *Adieu Bessy*; *Élégie en prose*; *La Captive*; *Le Jeune Pâtre breton*; *Les Champs*; *Je crois en vous*; *Chansonnette*; *Aubade*; *Les Nuits d'été*; *La Mort d'Ophélie*; *La Belle Isabeau*; *Le Chasseur danois*; *Zaïde*; *Le Trébuchet*; *Nessun maggior piacere*; *Le Matin*; *Petit oiseau.*

16 *Symphonie fantastique*, ed. Nicholas Temperley. 1972.
BA [5456] and 5781. Parts (BA 5781 [65 winds; 74,75,79, 82, 85 individual strings], copublished as Breitkopf & Härtel 4929). Study score TP 331 (1972).

17 *Harold en Italie*, ed. Paul Banks, forthcoming (2001).
BA 5457.

18 *Roméo et Juliette*, ed. D. Kern Holoman. 1990.
BA 5458. Parts. Vocal score ed. E. Wernhard (BA 5458a, 1995). Study Score TP 334 (1996).

19 *Grande Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, ed. Hugh Macdonald. 1967.
BA 5459. Parts. Eulenberg pocket score EE 6642 (no. 599) (1975).

20 Overtures, ed. Diana Bickley. 2000.
BA 5460. *Waverley*; *Le Roi Lear*; *Rob-Roy*; *Le Carnaval romain*; *Le Corsaire.* (See *NBE* 1 and 3 for the overtures to *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Béatrice et Bénédict.*) Parts forthcoming.

21 Other Orchestral and Instrumental Works, ed. Hugh Macdonald. Forthcoming.
BA 5461. *Rêverie et caprice*; *Sérénade agreste à la madone*; *Toccata*; *Hymne pour l'élévation*; *Marche troyenne.*

22 Arrangements. 2 vols.: 22a: Arrangements of Works by Gluck, ed. Joël-Marie

Fauquet; 22b: Arrangements of Works by Other Composers, ed. Ian Rumbold. Forthcoming.

BA 5462/I. *Orphée*; *Alceste.*

BA 5462/II. *Fleuve du Tage* (Pollet); *Recueil de romances avec accompagnement de guitare*; *Hymne des Marseillais* (Rouget de Lisle); *Chant du neuf Thermidor* (Rouget de Lisle); *Sur les Alpes, quel délice!* (Huber); Recitatives for *Le Freyschütz* (Weber); *L'Invitation à la valse* (Weber); *Marche marocaine* (Meyer); *Plaisir d'amour* (Martini); *Le Roi des aulnes* (Schubert); *Invitation à louer dieu* (Couperin).

23 *Messe solennelle*, ed. Hugh Macdonald. 1994.

BA 5463. Parts. Vocal score ed. E. Wernard (BA 5463a, 1994). Study score TP 333 (1993). "O Salutaris" for chorus, organ, BA 6394.

24 *Grand Traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes*, ed. Peter Bloom and Hugh Macdonald. Forthcoming.

25 *Catalogue of the Works of Hector Berlioz*, by D. Kern Holoman. 1987.

26 Portraits, ed. Gunther Braam. Forthcoming.