

Visions and Voices and the USC Libraries have collaborated to create a series of resource guides that allow you to build on your experiences at many Visions and Voices events. Explore the resources listed below and continue your journey of inquiry and discovery!

L.A. PHILHARMONIC: DUDAMEL CONDUCTS BERLIOZ, ADAMS AND BENZECRY

USC LIBRARIES RESOURCE GUIDE



Berlioz's psychedelic masterpiece *Symphonie Fantastique* has become a specialty of conductor Gustavo Dudamel. One of the most important works of the early Romantic period, the piece tells the story of a gifted artist with a lively imagination and goes through various episodes in his life. Hear it in conjunction with John Adams's *Tromba Lontana* and Esteban Benzecry's *Rituales Amerindios*.

ROSS SCIMECA of the **USC LIBRARIES** has selected the following resources to help you learn more about Berlioz, Adams and the evening's program.

The Program

Besides Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, the first part of the program has been changed from what was originally advertised. Instead of John Adams's *Short Ride on a Fast Machine* and Stravinsky's *Symphony in C*, you are very fortunate to hear Adams's *Tromba Lontana* and the U.S. premiere of Esteban Benzecry's *Rituales Amerindios*.

Short Notes on the Program

John Adams is one of our country's great living composers. He has composed not only in orchestral music, but also in opera, song cycles and chamber music. His *Tromba Lontana* is an antiphonal work for two trumpets and orchestra from 1985 that lasts about four minutes. For more information see John Adams's website at www.earbox.com.

Esteban Benzecry is a young Argentinian composer whose *Rituales Amerindios* is based on pre-Columbian music in three movements: Ehecatl (Aztec wind god); Chaac (Mayan water god); and Illapa (Inca thunder god). For more information see Esteban Benzecry's website at estebanbenzecry.com/eng/.

Hector Berlioz, one of the greatest 19th-century French composers, wrote the *Symphonie Fantastique* in 1830. The symphony is really a musical depiction of the composer's erotic obsession with Harriet Smithson, an Irish actress. Berlioz stated in the program notes of the first performance that the symphony tells the story of "an artist gifted with a lively imagination" who has "poisoned himself with opium" in the "depths of despair" because of "hopeless love." The symphony is in five movements. Each movement depicts a dream that the composer had because of this "hopeless love." The titles given to these movements are: (1) Reveries and passions; (2) A ball; (3) A scene in the fields; (4) March to the scaffold; and (5) Dreams of a witches Sabbath. For an excellent analysis of this masterpiece, see the Wikipedia entry at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphonie_fantastique.

Recommended Books

Memoirs

By Hector Berlioz; translated and edited by David Cairns

The *Memoirs* of Hector Berlioz has long been considered to be among the best of musical autobiographies. Like his massive compositions, Berlioz (1803–69) was colorful, eloquent and larger than life. His book is an account of his important place in the rise of the Romantic movement.

Music Library: ML 410.B5A3 2002

The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz

Edited by Peter Bloom

This volume contains essays by eminent scholars on Berlioz's place in 19th-century French cultural life, on his principal compositions, on his major writings, on his direct and indirect encounters with other famous musicians (Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner) and on his legacy in France. The volume is framed by a detailed chronology of his life and a usefully annotated bibliography.

Music Library: ML 410.B5C27 2000

The John Adams Reader: Essential Writings on an American Composer

Edited by Thomas May

This collection of 59 essays—comprising the first full-length book in English on the music of American composer John Adams—contains mostly reprints by critics and musicologists. Also compiled are new interviews with Adams, his colleagues, collaborators and performers of his music.

Music Library: ML 410.A233J65 2006

The Music of Berlioz

By Julian Rushton

Julian Rushton discusses all aspects of Berlioz's works, without undue emphasis on a few more popular pieces.

Music Library: ML 410.B5R87 2001

Unfortunately, there are no books about Esteban Benzecry, the other composer whose work is featured this evening. However, there is an excellent website that pertains to Argentinian composers called *Compositores & Interpretes* at www.ciweb.com.ar/Benzecry_Esteban/index2.php.

Recordings

There are over 150 recordings of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. I would recommend the following three performances, all available from the Music Library:

Colin Davis with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw (Call Number 9 6 3 8 m u s)

Charles Dutoit with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal [4 0 1 4 m u s]

John Eliot Gardiner with the Orchestre révolutionnaire et romantique [9 8 1 6 m u s]

If you wish to purchase a recording of *Symphonie Fantastique*, I highly recommend Charles Munch's with the Boston Symphony on RCA Living Stereo or Herbert von Karajan's with the Berlin Philharmonic on DG.

The Music Library has an interesting collection of the works by John Adams that contains his *Tromba Lontana*, plus *Harmonielehre*, *The Chairman Dances* and *Short Ride on a Fast Machine*. [6 4 3 1 m u s]

Esteban Benzecry's music can be ordered from his personal website.