

Revolutionary Romanticism: Berlioz, Chopin and Liszt

John Gibbons, lecturer



Course Description:

From fragmentary piano character sketches to massive oratorios, this course will analyze and contextualize the most dramatic era of change in western music history. Four composers, born at the outset of the 19th century, will lead us on this musical hero's journey; the grandiose, ambitious, eccentric Berlioz; the poignantly intimate Schumann; the subtle and perfect Chopin; and the superhumanly energetic Liszt: pianist, composer, conductor, and promoter.

Week 1: The Artist as Virtuoso

Piano Concerti by Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt
Liszt: Transcendental Etudes

Week 2: The Artist as Faust

Berlioz: The Damnation of Faust
Liszt: Sonata in b minor and "Faust" Symphony
Schumann: Scenes from Goethe's "Faust"

Week 3: The Artist as Poet

Berlioz: "Summer Nights"
Schumann: "Dichterliebe"
Liszt: Petrarch Sonnets
Chopin: Ballades

Week 4: The Artist as Shakespearean Hero

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet Symphony, King Lear Overture, Beatrice and Benedict
Liszt: Hamlet

Week 5: The Artist as Nationalist Icon

Chopin: Many pieces, including mazurkas and polonaises
Liszt: Many pieces, including Hungarian Rhapsodies
Berlioz: Funeral and Triumphant Symphony
Schumann: Forest Scenes

Week 6: The Artist Contemplates the Divine

Berlioz: Requiem

Liszt: Various Choral Works (including "Stations of the Cross") and "Religious and Poetic Harmonies"

Schumann: Mass

Week 7: The Artist Contemplates Nature

Liszt: Years of Pilgrimage

Berlioz: Selections from opera, overture, and Harold in Italy

Chopin: Selected Nocturnes

Schumann: "Rhenish" Symphony

Week 8: The Artist as Anti-Hero

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique and Harold in Italy

Liszt: Dante Sonata and Symphony

Chopin and Schumann: Selected (short) piano pieces

Recommended Reading:

Jacques Barzun, *Berlioz and the Romantic Symphony*

Hector Berlioz, *Memoirs*

Alfred Brendel, *Music Sounded Out*
Musical Thoughts and Afterthoughts

David Cairns, Berlioz biography (2 vol.)

Carl Dalhaus, *19th Century Musical Romanticism*

Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*

Alan Walker, *Liszt: The Virtuoso Years* (vol. 1)

Liszt: The Weimar Years (vol. 2)

Liszt: the Late Years (vol. 3)

Franz Liszt, *Chopin*

Hugh Macdonald, Berlioz biography (Master Musicians series)

Leon Plantinga, *Music in the Romantic Era*

Jim Sampson, *Chopin* (Master Musicians series)

George Sand, *Lettres di un voyageur*;
A Season in Majorca

Ronald Taylor, *Liszt*