

Reverie et Caprice

Hector Berlioz/Walter Verdehr

In 1838, Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini* was premiered at the Paris Opera. After the first performances failed to excite the audience and gain critical acceptance, Berlioz withdrew the opera for revision. The *Reverie et Caprice* was then written for the Belgian violinist Alexandre Artot using some of the materials Berlioz had discarded from *Benvenuto Cellini*. In 1841, the work was transcribed for violin and orchestra as well as for violin and piano. Thereafter, it was frequently performed throughout Europe and by several of the leading and celebrated violinists of the age including Ferdinand David, Joseph Joachim, and Henri Wieniawski. Also, Berlioz frequently programmed the work on his concert tours abroad. The version for violin, clarinet, and piano was made by Walter Verdehr.

Hector Berlioz (1803–1968) was born in La Côte-Saint-André, France and became a celebrated French composer, critic, and conductor of the Romantic period. He was particularly known for his *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830), the choral symphony *Roméo et Juliette* (1839), the dramatic piece *La Damnation de Faurst* (1846), and the opera *Les Troyens* (1858).

The Belgian composer Caesar Franck once said the Berlioz's whole output is made up of masterpieces. He felt that each of the composer's dozen great works was the realization of a concept distinct from all the others. Franck's judgment is borne out by the fact that, unlike many composers, Berlioz almost never repeats himself, and it is said that he created a fresh style for each of his subjects.