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The *Symphonie Fantastique* was sub-titled 'Episode in the life of an artist', and it deals autobiographically with Berlioz's overwhelming infatuation with an Irish actress, Harriet Smithson. Another major influence on the Symphony was Berlioz's reading of Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. This may well have introduced a certain nightmarish character into his dreams of his beloved. She is represented by a musical 'idée fixe' which occurs in many different guises throughout the symphony and which provides a unifying element. Each of the work's five movements describes different aspects of the composer's passion, from the romantic and reflective to the garish and vulgar. The *Symphonie Fantastique* is a supreme example of the romantic imagination in action.

Hector BERLIOZ

(1803-1869)

Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14

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| 1 | Rêveries - Passions | 13:10 |
| | (Largo - Allegro agitato e appassionato assai) | |
| 2 | Un Bal | 6:16 |
| | (Valse - Allegro non troppo) | |
| 3 | Scène aux champs | 15:30 |
| | (Adagio) | |
| 4 | Marche au supplice | 4:48 |
| | (Allegretto non troppo) | |
| 5 | Songe d'une nuit de Sabbat | 10:00 |
| | (Larghetto - Allegro - Dies irae - Ronde du sabbat (Un pen retenu)
Dies irae et Ronde du Sabbat ensemble) | |

San Diego Symphony Orchestra • Yoav Talmi

Recorded at the Copley Symphony Hall, San Diego, California on 18th and 19th November 1995
 Producers: Marina A. Ledin, Victor Ledin and Lolly Lewis • Executive Producer: Paul Myers
 Engineers: Stuart A. Rosenthal and Michael Weakley • Music Notes: Keith Anderson
 Cover Image: *The Witches' Sabbath* (1797-98) by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828)
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