

Of all Berlioz's Shakespeare-inspired works, *Roméo et Juliette* is unquestionably his masterpiece. It is also cast in an innovative new form, a kind of 'super-symphony' that incorporates elements of symphony, opera and oratorio. Berlioz composed no singing roles for the central characters, but allowed others to comment or narrate, giving latitude to incarnate the lovers in a musical language of extraordinary delicacy and passion. The vivid *Ball Scene* (CD 1 [6]) and *Romeo at the Capulet tomb* (CD 2 [2]) are intensely dramatic but the heart of the work is the *Love Scene* (CD 1 [9]), a long symphonic poem which Richard Wagner called 'the melody of the 19th century'.

Hector
BERLIOZ
(1803–1869)

Roméo et Juliette, Op. 17 (1839)

Dramatic symphony for soloists, chorus and orchestra

Text: Émile Deschamps (1791–1871) after William Shakespeare

Marion Lebègue, Mezzo-soprano

Julien Behr, Tenor

Frédéric Caton, Bass

Spirito / Chœurs et Solistes de Lyon-Bernard Tétu

Bernard Tétu, Artistic Director • Catherine Molmerret, Chorus Master

Orchestre National de Lyon • Leonard Slatkin

CD 1	60:38	CD 2	57:52
[1–5] Part One	19:34	[1–8] Part Three	34:19
[6–10] Part Two	41:01	[9] Béatrice et Bénédicte – Overture	8:11
		[10] Le Roi Lear – Overture	15:14

Full recording details, along with a detailed cast and track list, can be found on pages 2 and 3 of the booklet.

The French sung texts and English translations can be found inside the booklet, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/573449.htm

Recorded: 7–8 February 2014 (CD 1, CD 2 [1–8]), 2–3 September 2014 (CD 2 [9] [10]) at the Auditorium de Lyon, France • Booklet notes: Angèle Leroy, Keith Anderson

Cover: *Romeo and Juliet* (1869–1870) by Ford Madox Brown (1821–1893)

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DDD

Playing Time
1:58:30



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