

Overture to “King Lear”  
(abridged)

Hector Berlioz

Scored for 12 trombones

arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

Music from the

ROMANTIC BONE COLLECTION

VOLUME THREE

## About the Composer

The Overture to "King Lear" of Hector Berlioz (1803-69) is the first of three major works composed during his "Prix de Rome" years of 1831 and 1832, although it was actually composed in Nice, where he stayed for three weeks on his way to Rome. The other two are Rob Roy overture, based on the Sir Walter Scott novel, and Lelio, a sequel to "Symphonie Fantastique" that also has references to Shakespeare (Hamlet and The Tempest). This preoccupation certainly had a lot to do with his obsession with the English Shakespearean actress Harriet Smithson, who he eventually married. It turned out to be a very unhappy alliance, although his love for Shakespeare never wavered. His later masterpieces, the Romeo and Juliet Symphony and the Opera Beatrice and Benedict (Much Ado about Nothing), certainly attest to that fact.

"King Lear" is stylistically very similar to the first movement of "Symphonie Fantastique", a strong indication that he was reluctant to move on from the success of that work. Lelio, his unprecedented work that features a narrator, tenor and piano as an orchestral instrument (the first appearance in the literature for all three), even quotes the principal theme at the beginning and end of the orchestral passages in the composition. Once he returned to Paris, though, he started moving in other directions, this time with an obvious reflection upon his two years in Italy. ("Harold in Italy", the viola symphony, and the opera "Benvenuto Cellini"). All of Berlioz' Shakespearean works (King Lear, Lelio, Romeo and Juliet, Beatrice and Benedict) easily fall into the category of neglected masterpieces; none of them receives anything but token performances today.

## About the arranger

Bob Reifsnyder, a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, has two degrees from Juilliard and a Doctorate from Indiana University. As a trombone teacher, he has served on the faculties of the Juilliard Pre-College Division, Indiana University, Indiana State University, and Ithaca College. As a professional trombonist, he has been a member of the West Point band, the National Orchestra of New York, the Spoleto Festival orchestra, Goldman Band, Ringling Brothers, the German orchestras of Bielefeld, Kaiserslautern and Solingen, Terre Haute Symphony, Tri-Cities Opera, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Manitowoc Symphony and the Wisconsin Philharmonic. As a gig musician, he has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, the orchestras of Wuppertal and Dusseldorf in Germany, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Chamber Orchestra of Lausanne, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony, Binghamton Pops, Ithaca Opera, the Wisconsin orchestras of Sheboygan, Oshkosh, Green Bay and the Fox Valley Symphony.

## Notes for this arrangement

1. **Performance-** These works are designed to add to the performance repertoire of the low brass choir.
2. **Clef reading-** These arrangements will hopefully also serve as advanced clef practice for trombonists playing the top parts. It is unfortunate that clef reading skills don't seem to be a priority for many contemporary trombone teachers, but the ability to transpose at sight remains a prerequisite for becoming an excellent professional musician. Please keep in mind that the first time one has to ask a conductor for a transposed part is likely the last time one will perform with that ensemble!
3. **Scoring-** There is some octave displacement to keep the individual parts within the comfortable range of the performing instruments and to establish the alto trombone as the highest voice.
4. **Range-** The basic range of these transcriptions is from high D to low B. For each of the three quartets, the ideal mix would be alto, .525 bore tenor, .547 bore tenor and bass trombone.
5. **Breathing and Articulation-** There are no breath marks in these transcriptions; that is perhaps the most personal decision a brass player ever makes. There are, however, notes left out in extended passages that would be otherwise impossible to perform well, hopefully in the most appropriate locations. Performers are also encouraged to add slurs whenever it is deemed appropriate.



44

6

*mf* <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup> *dim.* *p*

6

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 44-48) is in 3/2 time. It begins with a sixteenth rest, followed by a sixteenth note G4, and then a series of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. A sixteenth rest is followed by a sixteenth note G4. A triplet of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4) is marked with a '6' above it. The staff continues with a half note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The dynamics are marked *mf*, *dim.*, and *p*.

49

*ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 49-55) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of half notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 50. The dynamics are marked *ff* in measures 49, 51, 53, and 55.

56

*ff* *p* *ff* *ff* *f*

*♩* = 100

3

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 56-62) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of half notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 57. The dynamics are marked *ff*, *p*, *ff*, *ff*, and *f*. A tempo marking of *♩* = 100 is present. A triplet of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4) is marked with a '3' above it.

63

*ff*

3

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 63-68) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 64. The dynamics are marked *ff*. A triplet of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4) is marked with a '3' above it.

69

*f* *ff*

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 69-75) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 70. The dynamics are marked *f* and *ff*.

76

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 76-82) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 77. The dynamics are marked *f* and *ff*.

83

*ff*

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 83-87) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 84. The dynamics are marked *ff*.

88

*ff* *ff*

3

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 88-94) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 89. The dynamics are marked *ff* and *ff*. A triplet of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4) is marked with a '3' above it.

95

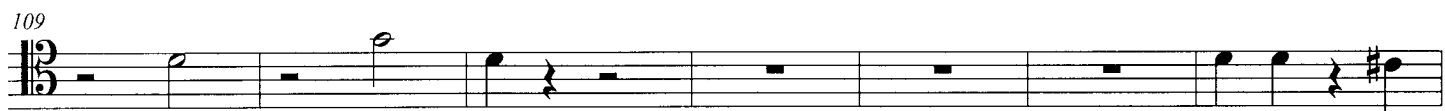
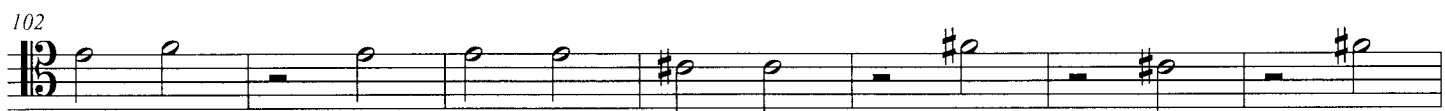
*f*

3

Detailed description: This musical staff (measures 95-100) is in 3/2 time. It features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a half rest in measure 96. The dynamics are marked *f*. A triplet of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4) is marked with a '3' above it.

# Overture to "King Lear"

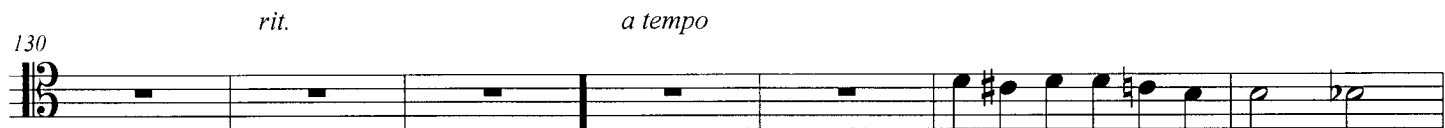
3



*pp*



*mp*



*rit.*

*a tempo*

*mf* 3 *dim.* 3

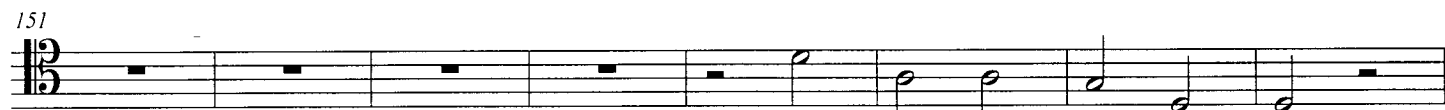


*pp*

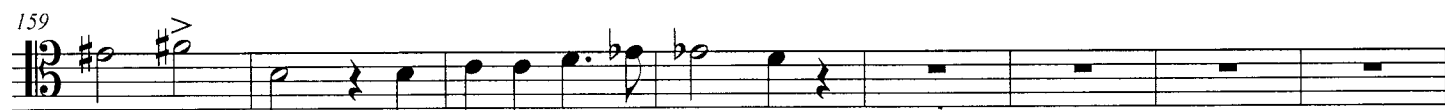
*pp*



*pp*



*pp*



*p*

*cresc.*

*mp*

## Overture to "King Lear"

167

174

181

187

195

201

208

216

224

*mp* *cresc.*

*rit.* *a tempo*

*f* *p* *p*

*cresc.* *f* *f*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*pp*

*f* *dim.* *mp*

*p* *p*

*p* *f* *p*

*p*

233

240

*f cresc. ff*

This musical staff contains measures 233 through 240. It begins with a whole rest in measure 233, followed by a half note G4 in measure 234. Measures 235-238 contain eighth notes: A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4. Measure 239 has a half note G4 with an accent (>). Measure 240 has a half note A4 with a sharp sign (#).

240

246

This musical staff contains measures 240 through 246. It continues the eighth-note sequence from the previous staff. Measure 246 has a half note A4 with a sharp sign (#).

246

253

*ff*

This musical staff contains measures 246 through 253. It begins with a whole rest in measure 246, followed by a half note G4 in measure 247. Measures 248-253 contain eighth notes: F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3. Measure 253 has a half note G3.

253

260

*mf cresc. ff*

This musical staff contains measures 253 through 260. It begins with a whole rest in measure 253, followed by a half note G3 in measure 254. Measures 255-258 contain eighth notes: F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2. Measure 259 has a half note G2. Measure 260 has a half note A2.

260

267

*ff*

This musical staff contains measures 260 through 267. It begins with a whole rest in measure 260, followed by a half note G2 in measure 261. Measures 262-265 contain eighth notes: F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1. Measure 266 has a half note G1. Measure 267 has a half note A1.

267

273

*ff*

This musical staff contains measures 267 through 273. It begins with a whole rest in measure 267, followed by a half note G1 in measure 268. Measures 269-272 contain eighth notes: F1, E1, D1, C1, B0, A0, G0, F0. Measure 273 has a half note G0.

273

279

*f mf f*

This musical staff contains measures 273 through 279. It begins with a whole rest in measure 273, followed by a half note G0 in measure 274. Measures 275-278 contain eighth notes: F0, E0, D0, C0, B-1, A-1, G-1, F-1. Measure 279 has a half note G-1.

279

284

This musical staff contains measures 279 through 284. It begins with a whole rest in measure 279, followed by a half note G-1 in measure 280. Measures 281-284 contain eighth notes: F-1, E-1, D-1, C-1, B-2, A-2, G-2, F-2. Measure 284 has a half note G-2.

284

291

*ff*

This musical staff contains measures 284 through 291. It begins with a whole rest in measure 284, followed by a half note G-2 in measure 285. Measures 286-289 contain eighth notes: F-2, E-2, D-2, C-2, B-3, A-3, G-3, F-3. Measure 290 has a half note G-3. Measure 291 has a half note A-3.



352

*rit.*

*a tempo*

*pp*

*cresc.*

*mf*

3

3

# Overture to "King Lear"

7

359 *poco animato* *a tempo*

*mp* 3 3 3 3

367 *rit.*

*mf dim. p*

376 *a tempo*

*mp pp*

383

*p*

389

*mp cresc. mf cresc.*

396 *rit.* *a tempo*

*f p* 3 3 3 3

402

*p* 3 3 3 3

409

*p cresc. mp*

414

*p cresc. mp*

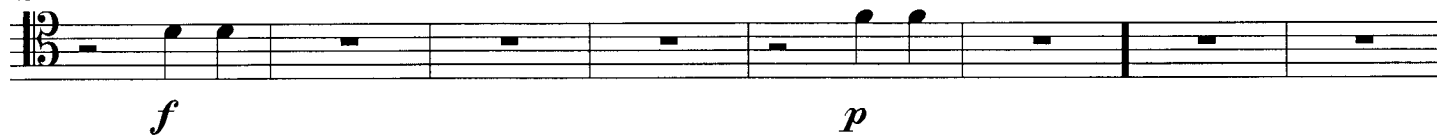
421



429



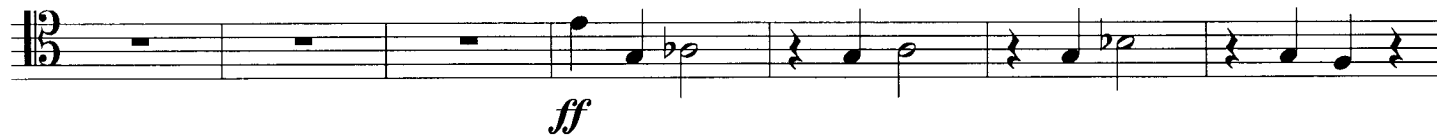
437



445



452



459



466

