

Lessons learned from love



Jake Fortune/
STAFF WRITER

“How Music can Embody Love: A Valentine’s Day Tale.”

Life can be referred to as a symphony with soaring highs and deep crashing lows. Few people understood this concept more fully than Hector Berlioz, a 19th-century composer who fell head over heels for Irish actress Harriet Smithson.

Berlioz saw Smithson playing Ophelia in 1827 at a Paris showing of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet” and was immediately captivated by the intense performance she gave.

The two would not meet again for several years, but Berlioz had not forgotten the beautiful and intelligent woman he witnessed on stage. Just over two years after seeing that showing of “Hamlet” in Paris, Berlioz was working on a new symphony to describe the profound emotional torment of his unrequited love. This

piece would be named the “Symphonie Fantastique.”

Watching that show in 1827 was a life-changing experience for Berlioz. After writing a couple of pieces dedicated to different works of Shakespeare, Berlioz realized he could not escape thoughts of Smithson.

Such obsession prompted Berlioz to send letters to Smithson and rent rooms near wherever she might have been staying. But all of this effort put forward was fruitless.

Still not having caught Smithson for even a short dialogue, Berlioz began work in 1829 on the “Symphonie Fantastique.” The work would be autobiographical, encompassing the emotional journey Berlioz was on in each movement, transitioning settings from a festive party, to walking in the woods, to opium hallucinations, even depicting a sabbath for witches.

To Berlioz, Smithson was no less grand than one of the characters written onto the stage by Shakespeare.

Berlioz would refer to Smithson as Ophelia, Juliet and Desdemona in his personal writings and letters.

Unfortunately, when the symphony

composed by Berlioz finally premiered in 1830, Smithson was not actually there to witness it. Devastated by this, Berlioz fell into a depression, as well as a short and unsuccessful relationship with pianist Marie-Felicite-Denise Moke which ended in disaster.

Berlioz would not return to Paris until 1832, where he happened to rent a room recently vacated by Smithson herself.

This reignited the spark Berlioz felt for Smithson, and at this point he would not stop until she heard his sweet symphony.

Berlioz arranged a second performance of the “Symphonie Fantastique,” this time with Smithson in attendance. She was absolutely won over by the music composed by Berlioz; and against the wishes of both of their families, the couple married in October 1833.

The most surprising part of this story is what happened after the couple rode off into the proverbial sunset.

The marriage did not exactly work out as intended, and after having a son named Louis a year after the marriage, the two actually ended up

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separating.

After the split, Smithson’s career fell apart as she fell for the sweetness of liquor instead.

Berlioz got together with a singer named Marie Recio. They married shortly after Smithson passed in 1854.

So with Valentine’s Day on the horizon, what can this story tell about love? That it is a lie? That it can only last for short moments?

Quite the opposite.

The story shared between Berlioz and Simpson shows while it can never last quite forever like most yearn for, love is a powerful emotion capable of driving people to do incredible things, and to believe in even more astonishing things about one they may be infatuated with.

Love is an enigma: invasive but welcome, painful but yearned for, fleeting yet infinite.

That is the lesson taught by the love story of Hector Berlioz and Harriet Smithson.

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Uses – pros and cons for USB sticks



Robert Meyer /
SPECIAL TO THE LOGOS

Rosalinda and Patty – not their real names -- left the Student Engagement Center together at the end of another day at UIW. Headed for the residence halls, they found a USB memory stick on the sidewalk.

It was a nice aluminum USB with 64GB! “I want it.” said Rosalinda. “No, I need it. I have a project due.” said Patty. In the end, they agreed Patty could have it and they went on their way.

Two days later, Rosalinda was startled by banging on her door. It was Patty. And Patty was frantic!

“My project is due and my computer is freaking out!” Patty said.

“What happened?” said Rosalinda.

“I was working on my project and had all the pieces worked out. I was ready to put it all together in a presentation and wanted to save it. Remember the USB drive we found? I put it in my computer so I could save all my stuff in one place, and my computer started freaking out! Now I can’t do anything with my computer! Nothing works even after I restart it!”

Patty just learned a hard lesson about USB drives. In using the USB they found, Patty released a destructive virus onto her computer. If only she had scanned the USB drive for viruses before she used it.

These devices can be put to good or bad uses, and we should all be aware.

What is a USB? The Universal Serial Bus is a standard connector for computer gear. We can all plug in a regular electric cord to a regular electrical outlet. When stuff needs electricity, we plug it in. The coffemaker, the alarm clock, the refrigerator – they’re all “plugged in” and

they work.

It’s magic.

In the world of computers, the “magic plug” is the USB port. Keyboards, mice, printers, cameras, “thumb drives,” are all “plugged in.”

Memory allows the computer to: load web pages, run apps, calculate equations, and so much more.

It is common today to use the “cloud” for our daily needs. We offload our stuff (data) to the cloud and can access it from anywhere. The cloud is magic until the Internet is down, or we cannot find a “hot spot.”

Did you know it is possible to run an entire operating system from a USB? Or that you can keep your apps on a USB to use on more than one computer?

Additionally, you can keep your videos, files and presentations on a USB stick ready to use even if the Internet is down.

USB sticks can be used to clean viruses off your laptop or PC.

It is possible to boot your computer from a USB loaded with virus-removal tools to find and fix computer problems. If you set up a USB drive as a recovery device, then you can often revive that old box if it decides not to start.

At UIW, USB drives are a great way to leverage the VLab to build your professional portfolio from semester to semester.

USB drives can be used to provide additional memory to speed up your system. They can also serve as security keys to keep prying eyes out of your computer. USB drives can be configured to provide quick access to wireless networks and synchronize important files between locations.

USB sticks are easy to use, inexpensive, and useful to all computer users. For more information, simply search “uses for USB drives.”

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Vigil spotlights guns’ impact on victims



Jackie Velez/
FEATURE EDITOR

Newtown Foundation held its own vigil on the sixth anniversary of the Sandy Hook shooting and encouraged those around the world to join them in the fight against gun violence.

Sister Martha Ann Kirk, a longtime religious studies professor at the University of the Incarnate Word, was the motivation behind the Dec. 13 event on campus. She planned it from the moment she knew the foundation was going to hold its event.

I am extremely proud of Sister Kirk and UIW for making this vigil happen; UIW was only one of two held in Texas.

I assisted a few students from the Social Justice Leadership class, taught by Sister Kirk, with setting up the event hours before it was held. Together, we handed out programs and candles, which were set around the entrance of the vigil, so attendees could pick them up on their way into the event.

A few cosponsors and I took the stage and held big signs representing our respective organizations, which included the Women’s Global Connection, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, Ettling Center for Civic Leadership and Sustainability, Social Justice Leadership, and Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, UIW’s founders. I participated on behalf of the Ettling Center

It was such a surreal moment because I had never participated in a vigil before, especially one dealing with victims of gun violence. This was an experience like no other. It puts things into perspective. Life is fleeting, and it could be gone in an instant.

The song, “Who Will Speak If You Don’t,” was sung by student Christian Rodriguez, with an added verse: “Who will speak for the victims of gun violence.” The song set the tone for the night as many stories would echo this

sentiment.

The cosponsors took to the podium one by one; each telling their stories and expressing their concerns on the all-too-often gun violence that plagues the nation. As I sat and listened to each story, I thought about how small the children were who lost their lives at Sandy Hook.

The United States experiences so many gun-related shootings. The vigil was a reminder of why it is important to advocate for those who have lost their lives to the violence. Especially the lives of children.

It was an honor and privilege to participate in this event. It humbled me to no end.

What was even more of an honor was the fact the Telemundo station had a reporter who filmed me and asked my opinion on the vigil. Here I am, a college student, and I am the one being asked my opinion on a serious issue we all should be discussing to one another.

Therein lies the problem. Every single one of us has a voice, and we should use that voice to speak up when injustices in the world happen. I’m not talking about shouting at one another, so other voices are drowned out. I am talking about sitting down and having a true, deep conversation about an issue that is continuously ignored or used as a pedestal for politicians to get ahead only to make empty promises because they were not really interested in doing something about gun safety.

For sophomore biochemistry major Selena Casanova, the vigil meant a lot.

“I guess I would say that the vigil was really important to me because we have seen so many disastrous outcomes at the hands of gun violence,” Casanova said. “Events like Sandy Hook and so many others, are not something I want to imagine in the future. I don’t want future generations to grow up with the fear that we have, the fear of someone attacking them in their school, church, or even on the street. Collectively as a society we have a chance to stop the ‘inevitable’ because it is not that at all.”

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