



MS 350 HISTORY OF ITALIAN OPERA

IES Abroad Milan

DESCRIPTION:

This course aims to introduce those students who already own a basic knowledge of music, to the history of the Italian operatic tradition from the beginnings to the present. Musical drama as a *genre* began in Italy. It was also mostly developed in Italy, and then during the XVII and XVIII Centuries, was exported all throughout Europe, gradually inheriting features that were most proper and unique of each nation.

While following the chronology of developments of the Opera composed on Italian lyrics, the course proceeds through a progressive focus on each fundamental element of the musical language and dramaturgy and a special attention to the acquisition and the critical awareness of a precise analytic method. Therefore, while keeping a constant overview of the most general phenomenon, some masterpieces will be deepened in a more analytic perspective.

The course requires constant attention and a critical reaction to all the music we hear, the text we read, the videos we watch and the performances we attend, therefore, attendance is required. The course-pack readings should be read throughout the semester in order to gain an historic perspective of all the topics covered.

Students will have the opportunity to deepen one musical topic of their choice by filling a research paper. The instructor will inform students about the existing resources at local libraries, museums, and archives. Deadlines for submitting these personal works will be announced in class.

Short quizzes may be given periodically: these are primarily designed for the instructor's benefit, to ensure that students are being taught clearly and cogently, but they also give student an idea of what is required in examinations.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: Basic Musicianship

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures, DVD watching, score analysis, CD listening

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course Participation – 25%
- Midterm Exam – 25%
- Final Exam – 40%
- Personal Project Paper – 10%

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend classes each day, including course-related excursions. IES Abroad Milan allows a maximum of two excused absences per semester. Each further absence will automatically result in a penalty of two points off (2/100) on the final grade. Seven absences per course (including the two excused absences) will result in a failing grade for that course. Furthermore, absence on the date of scheduled tests, presentations or quizzes does not entitle you to recover/reschedule such tests. Failure to attend your midterm and/or final exam will result in an F grade on that paper/exam.



It is your responsibility to manage your absences during the term. If you are sick, you will need to apply your absence to the two excused absences allowed for the term. If you use up your two excused absences for personal travel and then are sick at the end of the semester, those sick days will not be excused. Please plan wisely!

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1 Session 1	The Beginnings of Opera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 49-113)
Session 2	The Beginnings of Opera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Kerman, <i>Opera as Drama</i>, Regents of the University of California, LA 1988. (pg. 18-38) P. Smith, <i>a Historical Study of the Opera Libretto</i>, Schirmer, NY 1970. (pg. 3-41)
Week 2 Session 1	Analysis of Monteverdi's Opera: <i>L'incoronazione di Poppea</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R.L. Crocker, <i>A history of Musical Style</i>, Dover, NY 1966 (1986²) (pg. 223-243)
Session 2	Analysis of Monteverdi's Opera: <i>L'incoronazione di Poppea</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Weiss, R. Taruski, <i>Music in the Western World. A History in Documents</i>, Schirmer, NY 1984 (pg. 180-184)
Week 3 Session 1	Italian Opera in the 18th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 171-182; 189-201)
Session 2	Italian Opera in the 18th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 208-291; 317-336)
Week 4 Session 1	Analysis of Händel's Opera: <i>Giulio Cesare</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Kerman, <i>Opera as Drama</i>, Regents of the University of California, LA 1988. (pg. 80-109)
Session 2	Analysis of Händel's Opera: <i>Giulio Cesare</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Smith, <i>a Historical Study of the Opera Libretto</i>, Schirmer, NY 1970. (pg. 63-118)
Week 5 Session 1	Analysis of Mozart's Opera: <i>Don Giovanni</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R.L. Crocker, <i>A history of Musical Style</i>, Dover, NY 1966 (1986²) (pg. 340-349; 400-404)

Session 2	Analysis of Mozart's Opera: <i>Don Giovanni</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Weiss, R. Taruski, <i>Music in the Western World. A History in Documents</i>, Schirmer, NY 1984 (pg. 229-234; 301-302)
Week 6 Session 1	Midterm Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 402-419)
Session 2	Italian Opera in the first half of the 19th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Smith, <i>a Historical Study of the Opera Libretto</i>, Schirmer, NY 1970. (pg. 141-149; 161-179)
Week 7 Session 1	Analysis of Rossini's Opera: <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R. Parker, <i>The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera</i>, Oxford 1994. (pg. 169-190)
Session 2	Analysis of Rossini's Opera: <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Weiss, R. Taruski, <i>Music in the Western World. A History in Documents</i>, Schirmer, NY 1984 (pg. 336-337)
Week 8 Session 1	Italian Opera in the second half of the 19th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 419-433)
Session 2	Italian Opera in the second half of the 19th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Smith, <i>a Historical Study of the Opera Libretto</i>, Schirmer, NY 1970. (pg. 191-206; 233-245)
Week 9 Session 1	Analysis of Verdi's Opera: <i>La traviata</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R. Parker, <i>The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera</i>, Oxford 1994. (pg. 190-198)
Session 2	Analysis of Verdi's Opera: <i>La traviata</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Weiss, R. Taruski, <i>Music in the Western World. A History in Documents</i>, Schirmer, NY 1984 (pg. 406-411)
Week 10 Session 1	Italian Opera in the 20th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D.J. Grout, <i>a Short History of Opera</i>, Columbia University Press, NY 1988. (pg. 508-516)
Session 2	Italian Opera in the 20th Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P. Smith, <i>a Historical Study of the Opera Libretto</i>, Schirmer, NY 1970. (pg. 332-360)



Week 11 <i>Session 1</i>	Analysis of Puccini's Opera: <i>Turandot</i> – completed by Berio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">R. Parker, <i>The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera</i>, Oxford 1994. (pg. 198-205)
<i>Session 2</i>	Analysis of Puccini's Opera: <i>Turandot</i> – completed by Berio	
Week 12 <i>Session 1</i>	Final Exam	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Instructor's choice of a live attendance of a local operatic production

REQUIRED READINGS:

- D.J.Grout, *A Short History of Opera*, Columbia University Press, NY 1988.
- J. Kerman, *Opera as Drama*, Regents of the University of California, LA 1988.
- P. Smith, *A Historical Study of the Opera Libretto*, Schirmer, NY 1970.
- R. Parker, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera*, Oxford, 1994.
- R.L. Crocker, *A history of Musical Style*, Dover, NY 1966 (19862)
- P. Weiss – R. Taruskin, *Music in the Western World. A History in Documents*, Schirmer, NY 1984
- Librettos
- Enrico Girardi, *Guida all'ascolto dell'Opera*