



MS/CU/EU 352 OPERA HISTORY 2: ROMANTIC THROUGH MODERN

IES Abroad Vienna

DESCRIPTION:

This is a survey of the history of opera from the Romantic period to the present. Opera as a performance form will be analyzed in context of pervasive socio-political, artistic, architectural, and musical climates at various stages of its development. Reading will include dramatic texts and theoretical essays (both contemporaneous and contemporary); as it will be discussed in class, required reading, viewing and/or listening assignments are to be completed prior to class lectures. Regular trips will address and expand upon material introduced during class lectures, and attendance is required.

In addition to providing an historical overview of forms and practice, this course will require students to see several live opera performances. Weekly writing assignments addressing these live performances and required reading/listening/viewing selections will be expected to integrate concepts and analytical methodology addressed in class.

Students will also be required to submit and briefly present a final project on the last day of class. As emphasis is placed on opera as a multidisciplinary theatrical experience, all aspects of its execution—from composition to staging to management to distribution—will be addressed and offered as subjects for students' final projects. Both the topic and medium of the final project will be determined by the student under the guidance and approval of the professor (parameters of the final project are addressed in further detail below).

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures and discussions, both in the classroom and at assigned exhibitions/performances/locations
- Required reading, listening, and viewing assignments, available on Moodle
- Attendance of several performances/exhibitions/etc. outside of class
- Guest lectures

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Preparation for and participation in class discussions: 10%
- Mid-term test: 15%
- Final project proposal: 10%
- Weekly written responses to readings and performances: 30%
- Final presentation and project: 35%

All sources must be fully referenced. Plagiarism will be taken seriously and will result in course failure and academic review hearing.

Preparation for and participation in class discussions

Full credit will be awarded to students who are regularly vocal in class discussions, pose questions, and contribute to lectures and trips in a way that reflects a critical engagement with reading assignments and course content.

Mid-term test

The in-class written exam will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and brief (1-page or less) essay formats.

Weekly written responses to readings and performances



As the purpose of these exercises is to develop concise, content-rich responses to reading/viewing/listening assignments, guiding questions will occasionally be posed to help direct the focus of student responses. All written assignments must be submitted electronically via Moodle or email in PDF format.

Written responses to required readings should be roughly 500 words (1 page, single-spaced/2 pages double-spaced).

Written analyses of live performances should be at least 1000 words (2 pages, single-spaced/4 pages, double-spaced).

Final Project Proposal

Students must submit a roughly 800-word (2 pages single-spaced/4 pages double-spaced) written proposal presenting their chosen topic and medium no later than the 9th class meeting (5th week of class; date TBD). These proposals will allow the professor to troubleshoot potential issues, offer possible resources, and clarify expectations concerning the scope of the student's work.

A successful project proposal is one that:

- articulates the chosen research topic in a clear and specific way
- outlines scholarly resources and student's engagement with them thus far
- stipulates the expressive medium of the final project (including specific technical requirements and duration) and reason for choosing it
- presents the student's research questions and expectations for the completed project
- provides a rough timeline for the project's execution.

Proposals will be discussed during the 10th class meeting. If a proposal is determined to insufficiently meet the criteria outlined above, the submission of a revision may be required.

Final Project/Paper

Students may select one of the following for their final project:

Paper

Students who choose this option will be required to submit a 3000-word academic paper exploring the topic presented in the student's project proposal. Their research must be well documented (including correct citation and bibliography) and reflect critical engagement with both primary and secondary resources relevant to their topic. Papers must be submitted no later than finals week (exact date TBD).

Project

In the spirit of opera's multidisciplinary scope, students are encouraged to find a field of inquiry (topic) and mode of expression (medium) that appeals to their personal interests and challenges them to broaden their expressive capabilities. While both the topic and the medium of student projects are flexible, their scope must demonstrate a depth of engagement equivalent to that of the academic paper option. While no written report is required, students who choose the project option must also submit citation for their work in the form of a bibliography.

Approved media may include (but should not be limited to) short documentary film, performance, technical drawing/design, comic/graphic series, exhibition/installation, program note/editorial, or audio podcast/broadcast. Additional ideas are welcome.

Please note: All students—including those who decide to write a paper and those whose chosen project medium is not inherently performance-based—will be asked to present a brief overview of their work on the final day of class. There is no length requirement for the presentation per se; while some students may choose performance/presentation as their project medium, others who choose non-oral media formats may only require 3-5 minutes to present their work. The use of visual aids is strongly encouraged.

Individual or group work will be accepted; for those who choose to work in groups, final projects must accordingly reflect all group members' cumulative efforts. In other words, the scope of group projects must be more comprehensive than individual projects in order to reflect the combined efforts of all group members.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- identify and discuss key developmental moments in the history of opera as a performance medium since the late Classical/early Romantic period
- situate these developments within a larger historical, cultural, and aesthetic context
- analyze trends in popular operatic themes and their relationship to audience sociopolitical engagement
- perform meaningful research through relevant scholarly channels
- demonstrate practical knowledge of Aristotelian, Brechtian, and other dramaturgical theories
- critique and analyze live performance in a way that integrates an understanding of dramatic theory and relevant performance practice
- process and present information in a way that reflects a depth of engagement with key concepts and material

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Please see the IES Vienna Attendance Policy, which can be found in your Vienna Student Handbook.

CONTENT:

Week/Session	Content	Listening/Viewing	Reading
1	1 Course Introduction, terminology review G. E. Lessing on Aristotle and the Romantic View on the <i>Poetics</i>	<i>La Cenerentola</i> (Staatsoper, Feb. 16, 19 & 22)	Lessing, G. E. <i>Hamburg Dramaturgy</i> , ed. Wendy Arons. London: Taylor & Francis, 2019. (available online: http://mcpres.media-commons.org/hamburg/essay-78/) Anderson, “A Note on Lessing’s Misinterpretation of Aristotle.” (pp. 59 – 62) Till, ed./Williams, ch. 6 “Opera and modes of theatrical production” (pp. 139 – 158)
	2 Guest lecture: Conductor Christopher Ocasek – Fundamentals of Musical Analysis	<i>La Cenerentola</i> (Staatsoper, Feb. 16, 19 & 22)	TBD by guest lecturer
2	3 Mozart’s Operas as Dramaturgical Case Studies in Opera History: lecture and guided in-class viewing of <i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch. 107 (pp. 218 – 240) <i>La Cenerentola</i> (Staatsoper, Feb. 16, 19 & 22)	Abbate & Parker, pp. 187 – 195 Volbach, pp. 106 – 110 Till, ed./Zeiss, ch. 8 “The dramaturgy of opera” (pp. 179 – 201)
	4 Trip: Wien Museum – Vienna in the early 19 th century, socio-political conditions of the Napoleonic Era	<i>La Cenerentola</i> (Staatsoper, Feb. 16, 19 & 22)	Weber, William. “Redefining the Status of Opera: London and Leipzig, 1800 – 1848” (pp. 507 – 532)
3	5 Romanticism: Beethoven, Weber, Berlioz	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch. 126 (pp. 492 – 538)	Grout, ch. 18 (pp. 299 – 314)
	6 Trip: Beethoven Wohnung, Heiligenstadt		
4	7 <i>Bel canto</i> : Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch.	Charlton, ch. 14 (pp. 258 – 290)

			125 (pp. 478 – 491)	
	8	Trip: Theater an der Wien – tour with Produktionsleiterin Anja Meier		<i>TBD by guest lecturer</i>
5	9	<i>Grand opéra</i> : Late Rossini, Auber, Meyerbeer FINAL PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE		Grout, ch. 19 (pp. 315 – 328) Charlton, chs. 8 – 10, 16 (pp. 131 – 188, 321 – 343)
	10	Content review and final project proposals/troubleshooting		
MIDTERM WEEK: TEST				
7	11	Opera and Nationalism I: Verdi and Wagner	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, chs. 127 – 128 (pp. 539 – 609)	Grout, chs. 21 – 23 (pp. 342 – 424) Nietzsche, chs. 1 – 7 (pp. 31 – 60) Wagner, <i>Opera and Drama</i> , trans. W. A. Ellis. (Introduction & Part I, ch. I “Opera and the Nature of Music”)
	12	Trip: Tour of the Wiener Staatsoper – 19 th -century changes in architecture, production, and audience		Till, ch. 3 “The operatic event: opera houses and operatic audiences” (pp. 70 – 92)
8	13	Opera (& Operetta) and Nationalism II: Russia, Bohemia, France, Britain, Austria	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, chs. 130 – 131 (pp. 627 – 688)	Grout, ch. 25 (pp. 454 – 493) Till, ed./Aspden, ch. 12 “Opera and national identity” (pp. 276 – 297)
	14	Trip: Heeresgeschichtliches Museum – Revolutions of 1848		Grey, “Opera in the Age of Revolution” (pp. 555 – 567)
9	15	Realism vs. Escapism: <i>Verismo</i> , <i>Märchenoper</i> , and Orientalism in the Late 19 th Century – Bizet, Leoncavallo, Puccini, Mascagni	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch. 129 (pp. 610 – 626)	Giger, pp. 189 – 211 Grout, ch. 24 (pp. 425 – 453) Cooke, chs. 4 – 5 (pp. 47 – 84)
	16	Trip: Schönberg Center – Atonality, Expressionism, and New Forms		Cooke, ch. 6 (pp. 85 – 104)
10	17	Navigating Nostalgia and Modernism in Post-WWI Vienna: Korngold, Strauss, Zemlinsky, Schrecker, Berg	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch. 143 (pp. 846 – 864)	Kowalke, pp. 55 – 78 Grout, ch. 26 (pp. 497 – 535) Cooke, chs. 1 – 3, 7 (pp. 3 – 44, 105 – 122)
	18	Guest lecture: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Edwin Vanecek (Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität Wien) – Mid-Century Opera and the “Entartete Kunst”		<i>TBD by guest lecturer</i>
11	19	Mid-20 th Century to the Present: Reassessing the Purpose and Dimensions of Performance – New Works (Weill, Menotti, Britten,	Burkholder & Palisca, Vol. II, ch. 161 (pp. 1230 – 1250)	Brecht, pp. (179 – 205) Grout, ch. 27 (pp. 536 – 583)

		Bernstein, Glass, Eötvös, Adams, Turnage, Saariaho) and the Emergence of “Regieoper”	Cooke, chs. 9, 14, 19 (pp. 146 – 164, 225 – 243, 321 – 340)
	20	Guest lecture/performance: Modern Opera Performance Practices – Anne Wieben, Meredith Nicollai, Anthony Oliveras, Chanda VanderHart	
FINALS WEEK: PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PROJECTS			

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Beethoven Wohnung, Heiligenstadt
- Theater an der Wien
- Wiener Staatsoper – 19th-century changes in architecture, production, and audience
- Heeresgeschichtliches Museum – Revolutions of 1848

REQUIRED VIEWING:

- G. Rossini. *La Cenerentola*. (Staatsoper, Feb. 16, 19 & 22)

In addition to the production listed above, students must choose a minimum of three operas from the following categories (at least three different categories must be represented):

VERDI:

- *La traviata*. (Volksoper, Feb. 19, 22 & 27, Mar. 2, 6, 10, 14)
- *Macbeth*. (Staatsoper, Feb. 27, Mar. 2 & 5)
- *Otello*. (Staatsoper, Mar. 12, 15, 18 & 22)
- *Aida*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 25 & 28, May 1)
- *Simon Boccanegra*. (Staatsoper, May 6, 10 & 13)

○ WAGNER:

- R. Wagner, *Das Rheingold*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 4)
- R. Wagner, *Die Walküre*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 8 & 22)
- R. Wagner, *Siegfried*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 11)
- R. Wagner, *Götterdämmerung*. (Staatsoper, Apr.15)
- R. Wagner, *Parsifal*. (Staatsoper, Mar. 29, Apr. 1 & 5)

○ MÄRCHENOPER & ORIENTALISM:

- G. Puccini, *Madama Butterfly*. (Staatsoper, Mar. 19, 25 & 28)
- A. Dvořák, *Rusalka*. (Volksoper, Apr. 3, 5, 10, 15 & 23)
- G. Puccini, *Turandot*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 10, 13, 17 & 20)
- G. Verdi, *Aida*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 25 & 28, May 1)
- J. Offenbach, *Hoffmanns Erzählungen*. (Volksoper, May 5, 10 & 13)
- C. Saint-Saëns, *Samson et Dalila*. (Staatsoper, May 12)

○ 20TH CENTURY:

- B. Britten, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. (Theater an der Wien, Apr. 15, 19, 21, 23 & 25)
- C. Debussy, *Pelleas et Mélisande*. (Kammeroper, Feb. 12, 17, 22 & 26, Mar. 2, 4, 7 & 9)
- G. v. Einem, *Dantons Tod*. (Staatsoper, Mar. 24, 27 & 31, Apr. 3, 6 & 9)

REQUIRED READING:

Selections from the following (see above for assignments):

- Lessing, G. E. *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, ed. Wendy Arons. London: Taylor & Francis, 2019. (available online: <http://mcpress.media-commons.org/hamburg/essay-78/>)
- Anderson, “A Note on Lessing’s Misinterpretation of Aristotle” in *Greece & Rome*, Vol. 15, No. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, April 1968. pp. 59 – 62.
- Grout, Donald Jay. *A Short History of Opera*, Edition 2. New York: Columbia University Press, 1965.

- Mervyn Cooke, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Opera*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- David Charlton, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca, eds. *Norton Anthology of Western Music, Volume 2: Classic to Twentieth Century*, Edition 5. London: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006.
- Weber, William. "Redefining the Status of Opera: London and Leipzig, 1800 – 1848" in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, Opera and Society, Part I. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006. pp. 507 – 532.
- Wagner, Richard. *Opera and Drama*, trans. W. Ashton Ellis. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. (available online: <http://users.belgacom.net/wagnerlibrary/prose/wlpr0063.htm>)
- Grey, Thomas S. "Commentary: Opera in the Age of Revolution" in: *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 36, No.3, Opera and Society: Part I. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006. pp. 555 – 567.
- Giger, Andreas. "Tradition in Post-World-War-I Vienna: The Role of the Vienna State Opera from 1919-1924," in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Dec. 1997), pp. 189-211.
- Kowalke, Kim H. "Singing Brecht vs. Brecht Singing: Performance in Theory and Practice," in *Cambridge Opera Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Mar. 1993), pp. 55-78.
- Brecht, Bertolt. "A Short Organum for the Theatre" in *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, trans. John Willett, ed. New York: Hill and Wang, 1964. pp. 179-205.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy in Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. New York: Random House, 2000.
- Abbate, Carolyn & Roger Parker. "Dismembering Mozart" in *Cambridge Opera Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Jul. 1990). pp. 187-195.
- Volbach, Walther R. "Synchronization of Action and Music in Mozart's Operas" in *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (May 1957). pp. 106-110.
- Nicolas Till, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Opera Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Additional reading relevant to the required viewing will be assigned according to the performance schedule. Live performances vary each season, and required viewing (and accompanying literature) will be determined once season programming is announced (usually in April). Because this course is structured to encompass opera history over two semesters, this course will be available to full year students without risk of repetition of content.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING:

- W. A. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*. (Staatsoper, Feb. 12, 15 & 18)
- L. v. Beethoven, *Fidelio*. (Staatsoper, Apr. 21, 24 & 27)
- G. F. Händel, *Ariodante*. (Staatsoper, Feb. 24 & 26, Mar. 1, 4 & 8)
- P. Hindemith. *Cardillac*. (Salzburger Landestheater, Apr. 21 & 29, May 5, 11, 13 & 15)

RECOMMENDED READING:

- Roger Parker, ed. *The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Nicolas Till, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Opera Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Sidnell, Michael J. & D. J. Conacher, eds. *Sources of Dramatic Theory, Volume 1: Plato to Congreve*. Toronto: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Sidnell, Michael J., ed. *Sources of Dramatic Theory, Volume 2: Voltaire to Hugo*. Toronto: Cambridge University Press, 1994.