

Music 245-LC: Music in the Theater

Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:40–11:10, Campus Hall, Room 104

Instructor: Prof. David Schulenberg (email: dschulen@wagner.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00–2:30, and Wednesdays, 2:40–4:10; Campus Hall, Rm. 110

This course examines the ways in which music has been used in drama, in the theater, and in related venues, primarily in Europe and North America from 1600 to the present. Together with AR 203-LC and a reflective tutorial (RFT) it forms first-year Learning Community 15, “Music and Art in the Theater and the Marketplace.” In MU 245, after an introduction to basic concepts and terminology used for discussing music, we will consider examples of music in opera, dance, film, and television. Although the course studies the use of music in various media, the focus is on the music itself, considered from both historical and interpretive points of view.

Course objectives. At the completion of this course, you should be able to:

- understand the broad outlines of the history of Western art music
- understand how music has been used in various forms of theatrical presentation
- have greater sensitivity to and recognition of the ways in which music is incorporated into other performing activities
- write and speak about that music using commonly accepted terminology.

The course promotes these goals of the College's general education program:

- critical thinking
- an appreciation of different modes of inquiry
- competence in the skills of listening, speaking, and writing
- an appreciation of and sensitivity to the arts
- familiarity with one's own culture and other cultures in a global context.

Work for the course includes reading, listening, attending screenings of videos of various types of performances, two written assignments, a quiz, and student presentations.

The course will be conducted as a seminar in which each student is expected to participate in discussions and the presentation of material. Listening to assigned recordings and watching assigned videos will be the most important preparation for class, and the quiz and first paper will be based primarily on these assignments. The second paper will be on a dramatic or theatrical performance with music that you select and attend on your own. Over the course of the semester, each student will also make several smaller presentations to the class that involve both historical background and critical interpretation of works listed on the syllabus.

Most readings are from a coursepack distributed in class. This coursepack is the only textbook, and it includes the texts or lyrics of most of the vocal compositions that we will be studying.

During the semester you will be expected to attend at least three “live” performances of different types that incorporate music in a significant way. Most students will do so as part of the “experiential learning” that takes place as part of the RFT. *You may not use musical comedy*

(“Broadway” musicals) to satisfy this requirement. At least two events must be professional-caliber performances that involve classical music: concerts, ballets, or other live performances that use music in serious and integral ways. One of these performances must be an opera or other staged work. I will expect you to show me original concert programs, playbills, ticket stubs, or other proof of your attendance at these three events. Many free concerts and dramatic productions are given on campus, but no more than one on-campus event can count toward this requirement.

One of the three required performances that you attend will be the basis of your performance report. The performance report will involve a major work viewed in a professional-caliber setting. Possible topics include scenes from operas, ballets, plays, and films; concert performances of dramatic works; non-traditional multi-media installations or other events with a substantial musical or audio component.

Class policies. All assignments are due *in class* on the dates shown in the syllabus. Please come to class prepared to discuss and ask questions about both the reading and the listening or viewing assigned for that day. Absences and work received late will earn a reduced grade unless you have made prior arrangements with me, or in case of a documented medical excuse or other emergency.

Email and internet. Please do not submit work as email attachments unless I specifically ask you to do so. Also, please do not send me email messages asking questions about matters discussed in class, in the textbook, or in handouts and assignment sheets; I will not respond to such messages. Although you may consult websites and use music and video downloads for some purposes of the course, successful completion of the course will require you to view performances in actual theaters and to obtain information that is available only from scholarly databases and from printed books and articles, CD recordings, and other hard-copy sources. **Websites are not acceptable sources for papers or presentations except as noted below.**

Grades and attendance. Your final grade will be based on the two papers (10% and 20%, respectively), one midterm (20%) one quiz (5%), student presentations (10%) and the final examination (25%). Attendance and participation, including your fulfillment of the performance requirement, are worth 10%. Attendance is mandatory, and grades will be reduced for unexcused absences. *Anyone arriving to class late or leaving early will be marked absent. You will also be marked absent if you use a cellphone or text messaging in class, or if you leave the room more than once during a class period except for a documented medical reason.*

Only documents from medical or other appropriate professionals will be accepted as excuses for lateness or absence. Make-up exams will not be given; students excused from tests will instead be assigned additional written work.

Music reference sources. The Library possesses reference works on music that will provide assistance with unfamiliar terms and names. Two standard works are:

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2d edn., ed. Stanley Sadie, 29 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001). This is the standard English-language music encyclopedia, especially notable for its biographies of composers, including detailed lists of their compositions. An electronic version, *Oxford Music Online*, is available on the Horrmann Library website (<http://proxy1.wagner.edu:2914/subscriber/>, or go to <http://wagner.edu/library/> and click on “Databases”).

Wikipedia and most other online sources may be helpful for getting started on a research assignment, but in general they are *not* acceptable as references in a paper or presentation. On the other hand, *scholarly databases* available through the Wagner Library are an important type of source. They include *Oxford Music Online*, *Jstor*, and *Project Muse*, as well as several collections of e-books. You may also use commercial and personal websites for information about recent works and composers, but only if no other sources are available.

The course calendar (*not yet updated for 2016!*) below lists assignments and topics. You should do all listening and reading assignments before coming to class. Some listening or viewing assignments in addition to those listed below may be placed on reserve in the library or assigned in class

Course Calendar

All reading assignments listed below are from the coursepack (numbers in parentheses indicate the assigned pages). In addition to doing the reading, please listen or view the works listed, as assigned in class (audio or video for some works may be posted online, for others placed on reserve in the library).

- 1 Aug. 27 Introduction; melody and pitch (1–7)
- 2 Aug. 29 Texture, meter, and tempo; sound (7–15). Listen: examples 1–5

- 3 Sept. 3 Musical ideas (15–20). Listen: music examples 6–9
- 4 Sept. 5 **DIAGNOSTIC QUIZ**

- 5 Sept. 10 **Music in Drama, Music in the Theater** (21–24)
- 6 Sept. 12 **Baroque Music and the Invention of Opera and Ballet** (24–28)

- 7 Sept. 17 Monteverdi: *Orfeo* (58–60)
- 8 Sept. 19 **FIRST PAPER DUE**
student presentations

- 9 Sept. 24 Lully: *Persée* (28–30)
- 10 Sept. 26 **Classical and Romantic Opera** (31–36)
LIST OF THREE REQUIRED PERFORMANCES DUE

- 11 Oct. 1 Mozart: *Don Giovanni*
- 12 Oct. 3 TOPIC DUE FOR FINAL PAPER/PRESENTATION
student presentations
- 13 Oct.8 EXAM
- 14 Oct. 10 Verdi: *La traviata* (36–40)
- [Oct. 15—no class, fall break]
- 15 Oct. 17 *student presentations*
- 16 Oct. 22 Wagner: *Die Walküre* (40–43)
- 17 Oct. 24 FINAL PAPER OUTLINES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE
student presentations
- 18 Oct. 29 **Music for Twentieth-Century Dance and Theater** (44–51)
- 19 Oct. 31 Stravinsky: *Rite of Spring*; Schoenberg: *Pierrot lunaire*; Copland:
Appalachian Spring
student presentations--let Madison do a BVS presentation today
- 20 Nov. 5 **Music for Film and TV** (51–54)
- 21 Nov. 7 *The Wizard of Oz* and *Psycho*
- 22 Nov. 12 *student presentations*
- 23 Nov. 14 *Kundun* and *Memoirs of a Geisha* (54–56)
- 24 Nov. 19 *student presentations*
- 25 Nov. 21 “Hush” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) (56–58)
- 26 Nov. 26 FINAL PAPER DUE
 [Nov. 28—no class, Thanksgiving]
- Dec. 3 *optional review session?*
- Dec. 10 FINAL EXAM