

Music 245-FY: Music in the Theater (Fall 2018)

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

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

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1–2, and Wednesdays, 9:30–10:30; Campus Hall, Room 110

This course examines the ways in which music has been used in dance, drama, theatrical performing arts, 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 in Society.” 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 acquisition of these skills within the College’s general education program (details are on the last pages of this syllabus):

- creativity (C)
- information literacy (L)
- oral communication (O)
- critical reading (R)
- intercultural understanding (UU)
- written communication (W).

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

The course is conducted as a seminar in which each student is expected to participate in discussions and the presentation of material. Listening to and viewing assigned recordings and videos is the most important preparation for class. The quiz, first paper, and exams are based primarily on these assignments, as are several brief presentations which each student gives over the course of the semester. The second paper, called a performance report, is on a single dramatic or theatrical performance (with music) that you select and attend on your own.

Most readings are from an online text written by the instructor. During the semester you are expected to attend at least three “live” performances of different types that incorporate music in a significant way. Most students do this as part of the “experiential learning” that takes place in the RFT; you must, however, attend at least one additional performance, which will be the basis of

your performance report. Many free concerts and dramatic productions are given on campus, but you may not base your performance report on an on-campus event.

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 multimedia 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 course calendar below. You are expected to 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. *Laptop computers may be used by those seated in the first three rows only, to take notes or, when prompted, to conduct class-related web searches.* All students are expected to abide by Wagner's Student Honor Code, which forbids plagiarism.

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), class presentations (10%), one quiz (5%), the midterm examination (20%), 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 other electronic device in class except as required, 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 Horrman 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 resource. These 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 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 (MU 245)

All reading assignments listed below are from the online textbook (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 will be posted online, for others placed on reserve in the library).

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| 1 | Aug. 28 | Introduction; melody and pitch (1–7) |
| 2 | Aug. 30 | Texture, meter, and tempo; sound (7–15). Listen: examples 1–5 |
| 3 | Sept. 4 | Musical ideas (15–20). Listen: music examples 6–9 |
| 4 | Sept. 6 | DIAGNOSTIC QUIZ |
| 5 | Sept. 11 | Music in Drama, Music in the Theater (21–24) |
| 6 | Sept. 13 | Baroque Music and the Invention of Opera and Ballet (24–28) |
| 7 | Sept. 18 | Monteverdi: <i>Orfeo</i> (58–60) |
| 8 | Sept. 20 | FIRST PAPER DUE
<i>student presentations</i> |
| 9 | Sept. 25 | Lully: <i>Persée</i> (28–30) |
| 10 | Sept. 27 | Classical and Romantic Opera (31–36) |
| 11 | Oct. 2 | Mozart: <i>Don Giovanni</i> |
| 12 | Oct. 4 | TOPIC DUE FOR FINAL PAPER/PRESENTATION
<i>student presentations</i> |
| | | [Oct. 9—no class, fall break] |
| 13 | Oct. 11 | EXAM |

- 14 Oct. 16 Verdi: *La traviata* (36–40)
 15 Oct. 18 *student presentations*
- 16 Oct. 23 Wagner: *Die Walküre* (40–43)
 17 Oct. 25 FINAL PAPER OUTLINES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE
 student presentations
- 18 Oct. 30 **Music for Twentieth-Century Dance and Theater** (44–51)
 19 Nov. 1 Stravinsky: *Rite of Spring*; Schoenberg: *Pierrot lunaire*; Copland:
 Appalachian Spring
 student presentations
- 20 Nov. 6 **Music for Film and TV** (51–54)
 21 Nov. 8 *The Wizard of Oz* and *Psycho*
- 22 Nov. 13 *student presentations*
 23 Nov. 15 *Kundun* (54–56)
- 24 Nov. 20 *When the Levees Broke*
 [Nov. 22—no class, Thanksgiving]
- 25 Nov. 27 *student presentations*
 26 Nov. 29 FINAL PAPER DUE
- Dec. 6 FINAL EXAM