

Music 245-ILC: Music in the Theater

Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00–2:30, Campus Hall, Room 104

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

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:40–4:10, and Wednesdays, 1:00–2:30; 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. After an introduction to basic concepts and terminology used for discussing music, students 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, one of which (the “performance report”) will serve as the final examination.

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 and the performance report will both 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 performances of different types that incorporate music in a significant way. One of these must be an opera and at least one other

must also involve so-called classical music: a concert, a ballet, or some other live performance that uses music in a serious and integral way. One performance may also be a film or other type of show involving non-classical music, but it must be viewed in a theater and not in a recorded format or online. You will be expected to show me copies of concert programs, playbills, ticket stubs, or other proof of 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. Productions seen for another course *can* count toward this requirement. Your performance report will be about a major work viewed in a *professional* (non-student) 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 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 25%, respectively), one quiz (10%), regular student presentations (20%) and final examinations (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 “Online Databases” page of the Horrman Library website (<http://www.wagner.edu/library/findarticles>).

A smaller music dictionary recommended for purchase is the *Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Don M. Randel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

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. Exceptions include *Oxford Music Online* and scholarly publications accessed through *Jstor*, *Project Muse*, and some other databases available through the College Library website. You may also use commercial and personal websites for information about recent works and composers 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

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	Jan. 17	Introduction; melody and pitch (1–7)
2	Jan. 19	Texture, meter, and tempo; sound (7–15). Listen: examples 1–5
3	Jan. 24	Musical ideas (15–20). Listen: music examples 6–9
4	Jan. 26	DIAGNOSTIC QUIZ
5	Jan. 31	Music in Drama, Music in the Theater (21–24)
6	Feb. 2	Baroque Music and the Invention of Opera and Ballet (24–28)
7	Feb. 7	Monteverdi: <i>Orfeo</i> (58–60)
8	Feb. 9	FIRST PAPER DUE <i>student presentations</i>
9	Feb. 14	Lully: <i>Persée</i> (28–30)
10	Feb. 16	Classical and Romantic Opera (31–36) LIST DUE OF THREE PERFORMANCES TO BE ATTENDED
	[Feb. 21—no class]	
11	Feb. 23	
12	Feb. 28	Mozart: <i>Don Giovanni</i> <i>student presentations</i>
13	Mar. 1	QUIZ; TOPICS DUE FOR FINAL PAPER/PRESENTATION

14	Mar. 6	Verdi: <i>La traviata</i> (36–40)
15	Mar. 8	<i>student presentations</i>
[Mar. 12–16: Spring Break]		
16	Mar. 20	Wagner: <i>Die Walküre</i> (40–43)
17	Mar. 22	FINAL PAPER OUTLINES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE <i>student presentations</i>
18	Mar. 27	Music for Twentieth-Century Dance and Theater (44–51)
19	Mar. 29	Stravinsky: <i>Rite of Spring</i> ; Schoenberg: <i>Pierrot lunaire</i> ; Copland: <i>Appalachian Spring</i> <i>student presentations</i>
20	Apr. 3	Music for Film and TV (51–54)
	[Apr. 5: no class]	
21	Apr. 10	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> and <i>Psycho</i>
22	Apr. 12	<i>student presentations</i>
23	Apr. 17	<i>Kundun</i> and <i>Memoirs of a Geisha</i> (54–56)
24	Apr. 19	<i>student presentations</i>
25	Apr. 24	“Hush” (<i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>) (56–58)
26	Apr. 26	FINAL PAPER DUE
	TBA	FINAL EXAM: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS