



## CFA MH 340 Italian Music: From Renaissance to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Avant-Garde

**Instructor:** Professor Piergabriele Mancuso

**Course meets:** 2 hours twice a week + on-site classes

**Credits:** 4

**Hub Units** 1+1

### Course Description

This course will examine the history, evolution, and main aesthetic features of Italian music from approximately the beginning of the 16th century to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. By understanding music not as an abstract form of art divorced from its geography and language but as the direct manifestation of major cultural-political events taking place in Italian society, the course will provide students with critical-analytic tools to interpret Italian music from the Early Modern to the contemporary periods. Italy played a central role in the development of music, witnessing the birth of opera, the cantata, oratorio, sonata, concerto, and symphony, all of which were disseminated internationally, creating a cohesive, international musical style. Divided for centuries into a plethora of independent states, some of which were led by foreign dynasties, the Italian peninsula found in music one of its most significant expressions of cultural uniformity, as well as one of its most respected and revered forms of artistic expression. Well before the advent of mass tourism, the “Italian tour” was considered an obligatory formative requirement in the career of any major European artist, performer, and composer, who by the thousands between the late-17<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century travelled to Italy to learn the modes and authentic features of Italian music. During this course, students will understand how music, too often regarded as a “universal language” and form of art, is, in fact, the projection and most direct “by-product” of specific socio-cultural environments, whose understanding, it follows, cannot be achieved but within a comprehensive socio-cultural and historiographical frame. While the course focus is on the making and development of the Italian music repertoire, the meaning of “Italian music” will be defined in very broad terms, including the study of works produced by non-Italian composers in non-Italian contexts (the most glaring example being Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, an Italian opera, written by an Austrian and premièred in Prague), but adhering to the forms and main stylistic features of Italian music. The main aim of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive view on the making and developments of the main Italian music genres, from Renaissance to post-WWII Avant-gardes, as well to show them how they can be seen and better understood as a direct manifestation of the events that shaped and turned the Italian peninsula from a fragmented and artistically speaking extremely heterogenous entity to a unitarian and much more uniformed state. For this course students are required to sit a mid-term written exam, to make two presentations, to complete two response papers and submit a final research project. The course is taught in English.

### Prerequisites

The course is intended for the general university student and no previous knowledge of music, history of music and Italian history are required.

### BU Hub Learning Outcomes and Course-Specific Learning Objectives

This course satisfies the following requirements for the BU Hub:

#### 1. Historical Consciousness - Hub Learning Outcomes

- *Students will create historical narratives, evaluate interpretation based on historical evidence, and construct historical arguments.*

Show knowledge of the cultural, socio-political, and spiritual contexts in which these works were created, especially in relation to society values, spiritual traditions and political/ideological movements.

- *Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material (textual, visual, or aural) using a range of interpretive skills and situating the material in its historical and cultural context.*

Explain the development of music repertoire as a consequence and result of historical situations, such as the role of sacred music and of opera in shaping political ideas in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

- *Students will demonstrate knowledge or religious traditions, intellectual paradigms, forms of political organization, or socioeconomic forces, and how these have changed over time.*

Interpret the evolution (formal and functional) of musical works, period styles, and stylistic trends as a reflection of historical and socio-political developments.

## 2. Aesthetic Exploration - Hub Learning Outcomes

- *Students will demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of notable works in literature and/or the arts, including the cultural contexts in which those works were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.*

Show knowledge of the role of music as manifestation of socio-cultural processes of modern Italian society to draw down a concise but also comprehensive description of the general socio-cultural and political context in which the works took forms, were transformed and eventually re-interpreted.

- *Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art (literature, music, visual arts, etc.)*

Develop critical and listening skills, as well as related terminology to place musical compositions in their historical and cultural contexts and interpret their meaning accordingly.

- *Students will produce evaluative, analytical, or creative works that demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics—such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history— of at least one literary or artistic medium*

Students will become familiar with the various genres of Italian music and will be able to spot and identify their main characteristics and historical evolution. These will be achieved and verified with the two response papers and the two presentations, where students are asked to outline the historical context where a music work took shape, the role that it played in the socio-cultural context, and which are its most important formal-stylistic features.

### Program Learning Outcomes

BU Global Programs/study abroad learning outcomes for BU Padova:

<https://www.bu.edu/provost/planning-assessment/program-learning-outcomes-assessment/learning-outcomes-by-program-2/global-programs-study-abroad/>

### Learning Outcomes for IES Program

1. Demonstrate increased proficiency in Italian language from elementary to low- intermediate level and from intermediate to advanced level.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of Italian culture with respect to three of the following areas: history, politics, economics, religion, literature, film and the arts.
3. Develop an awareness of cultural differences and an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs and practices.
4. Develop new perspectives on one's own culture and an ability to think critically about one's own values and beliefs.

### **Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning**

Historical consciousness and aesthetic exploration are two deeply inter-connected and inter-dependent aspects of the same epistemological approach that allows student to mould forms of critical thinking and independent judgment.

The course is based on active learning approaches that include in-class lessons and on-site visits and where discussions, constructive criticism and an analytical-critical approach is not only welcomed but strongly encouraged.

The primary aim of the class is to provide a foundational understanding of music genres and characteristics, so that students can evaluate and analyze them critically and then form their own independent and grounded thoughts.

Guest-lectures will offer the class a detailed analysis of some of the topics included in the syllabus in order to foster their interest for further research.

Class presentations and writing assignments (short papers, final research papers) are primarily meant to offer the students the opportunity to describe and critically analyse different aspects of the Italian music repertoire as offered in the course.

### **Grading and Assignments**

Attendance and participation	15%
Mid-term written exam	15%
Two class presentations	20% (10% each)
Two response papers	30% (15% each)
Final research project	20%

### **Attendance and participation-**

Students are expected to be punctual, ask and answer questions (especially when concerning homework and course readings), and participate actively in the discussions. Before each class students will be asked to give a short review (3-5 minutes max) summarizing and explaining the main topics and contents of the past class or classes. Field trips and guest-speaker lectures are part of the curriculum with participation being mandatory.

### **Midterm written exam - (*Historical Consciousness*)**

The exam consists of 20 multiple choice questions and three questions with long answers (ca. 500 words each) on any aspect of the topics studied in class and the field trips during the first part of the course. Students are expected to offer concise but also comprehensive analyses as well as to offer a general chronological contextualization together with the exact and punctual references to the events, places, and most prominent historical figures.

### **Two response papers - (*Aesthetic Exploration, Historical Consciousness*)**

Two response papers, each one of about 1000 words on a topic (ranging from music work/composition/genre or specific repertoire) assigned by the instructor.

In the response students discuss the genesis, main aesthetic features and the socio-cultural context in which a music composition was created, how this was perceived by the public (also outside the specific context of music performance), in the light of historical documentation and contemporary sources.

For response paper one students will comment on a melodrama by Monteverdi or other contemporary composers, describing the opera's main aesthetical and poetical components (the link to the melodrama

is available on Blackboard). For the second response paper students will answer three open questions about the opera “La vita è sogno” by Malipiero that the class will be seeing at the Fenice Opera House in Venice.

**Two class presentations-** (*Aesthetic Exploration; Historical Consciousness*)

Students are required to prepare two oral presentations where they will provide the class with their own analysis, exegesis, and interpretation of a music work (instrumental or vocal), taken from the Italian repertoire, showing the elements of continuity with other repertoires and works. Students will also offer, if possible, a personal reinterpretation of the work examined (in the case of an opera, for example, reformulating the plot in modern terms). Students are encouraged to exercise criticism, to express personal judgments based on documentary-textual evidence and personal experiences, looking at the topic from a multidisciplinary perspective. Each presentation will be done on a topic approved by the instructor and will last no more than 20 minutes.

**Final research project** -(*Historical Consciousness; Aesthetic Exploration*)

A final paper of about 2000 words (approx. 8 pages in Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, justified, 2,5cm/0,39inch per each side, bibliography excluded) on a music topic assigned by the instructor and concerning a specific aspect of a relevant learned music genre and its connection, if possible, with the local cultural milieu. Submit provisional and final drafts of the work to the instructor by e-mail ([gmanuso@bu.edu](mailto:gmanuso@bu.edu)) as a PDF file by the dates indicated in the syllabus. The final research project is due on tbd (upload to Blackboard).

**Course materials**

There is one required textbook for this course, P. Burkholder, C. Palisca, D. Grout, *A History of Western Music*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, 2016, available online on the course blackboard. Alternative readings in Italian are also indicated and will be taken from the book by Mario Baroni, Enrico Fubini, et als. *Storia della musica*, Turin, Einaudi, 1985, also available in the course Blackboard.

There will be other weekly readings drawn from the following works:

- Jon Burlingame, Gary Crowds, Ennio Morricone, "Music at the Service of the Cinema: An Interview with Ennio Morricone," in *Cinéaste*, Vol. 21, No. 1/2 (1995), pp. 76-80.
  - Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music*, Cambridge (UK), Cambridge University Press, 2008.
  - Beth L. Glixon and Jonathan E. Glixon, *Inventing the Business of Opera*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006.
  - Robert C. Ketterer, "Why Early Opera Is Roman and Not Greek," in *Cambridge Opera Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2003), pp. 1-14.
  - John Platoff, "Il Convitato di Pietra", in Grove Music Online [<https://doi-org.ezproxy.bu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.O008522>].
  - Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, University of California Press, 1990.
  - James Schofield Saeger, "The Mission and Historical Missions: Film and the Writing of History," in *The Americas*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Jan., 1995), pp. 393-415.
  - B. Frank Sedwick, "Mozart's Sources for Don Giovanni," in *Hispania*, vol. 37, n. 3, 1954, pp. 269-273.
  - Peter Stamatov, "Interpretive Activism and the Political Uses of Verdi's Operas in the 1840," in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (June 2002), pp. 345-366.
- Simon Towneley Worsthorne, *Venetian Opera in the Seventeenth Century*. Clarendon, Oxford, 1968.
- James Wierzbicki, *Film Music - A History*, New York, Routledge, 2008

**Spotify playlist and video archive:**

During the course we will make extensive use of recording and videos that will be made available online through Blackboard.

#### **On-line sources:**

- [Jstor](#) is one of the richest and most comprehensive academic databases. It includes millions of articles and academic materials covering virtually any aspect of the humanities, including history of music and Italian music tradition. It's accessible for free from any BU's registered account (for example through the Mugar Library at <https://www.bu.edu/library/mugar-memorial/>, clicking on "Using the library online" and then "Databases") and it's the most useful user-friendly tool for the composition of final papers and dissertations.
- [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/subscriber/book/omo\\_epm](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/subscriber/book/omo_epm) (Oxford Encyclopaedia of Popular Music)
- [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/subscriber/book/omo\\_gmo](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/subscriber/book/omo_gmo) (Oxford Grove Music Encyclopaedia)
- <https://bostonuni-naxosmusiclibrary-com.ezproxy.bu.edu/recentadditions.asp> (Naxos Music Library) (containing virtually all Naxos recordings)

#### **Examinations**

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site. For more information on this issue see <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/examinations/>. If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance that causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

#### **Attendance**

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity required for the class as indicated in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

#### **Absences**

Unjustified absences from class, and any class related activity, will affect the students' participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

#### **Absence for Religious Reasons**

<http://www.bu.edu/ctl/university-policies/policy-on-religious-observance/>

#### **Lateness**

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as "late". Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

#### **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted without permission from the instructor and missed assignments will be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

#### **Plagiarism**

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as your own. Definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details, please see Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/universitypolicies/policies-code.html>

### **Disability accommodations**

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

### **Interruption of program or early departure**

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

### **Academic Advice**

The Director serves as the head of the faculty and as academic advisor. The Director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

### **Tutorials**

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

## **Class schedule**

### **WEEK 1**

Introduction to the course. Study and research methodologies, class participation and grading criteria.

The meaning and main features of Italian Renaissance: the arts and the political agenda – The princely court and the noble private theatre, and the role of music in the cultural-political and ideological Renaissance framework.

### **WEEK 2**

The music of early and late Italian Renaissance: from frottola, motet to a new monodic texture. History and reasons why of a glaring mistake: the rebirth of the Greco-Roman *melos-drama* and the invention of a new genre, “parole in musica”.

The Italian early and late Renaissance madrigals: main narrative-literary and aesthetic-formal features – Reading and analysis of Claudio Monteverdi's selected madrigals.

**First class presentation – session 1 (two students)**

### **WEEK 3**

Monteverdi's *Il ritorno di Ulisse in patria* and *L'Orfeo*: analysis of selected scenes. Mantua and Venice: theatrical production in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. The opera *libretto*: what is it and how it was composed.

**First class presentation – session 2 (two students)**

Toward the birth of public theatre and the making of the new European music market: private investment, building making and the new technical architectural features of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century theatre.

### **WEEK 4**

Early eighteenth-century Italian Baroque music: features of a new repertoire in a time of political absolutism – forms of instrumental music (toccata, sonata, etc.), sacred music and the triumph of *opera seria*. Analysis and screening of selected scenes from Antonio Vivaldi's *Ercole sul Termodonte*.

**Response paper one due (submit on Blackboard by 12pm – no late papers accepted)**

A key study: the Italian works of a German composers, in an English milieu: Georg Friedrich Handel's "Italian" operas and the Anglicization of the Italian sacred music repertoire: screening of selected scene and analysis of music and lyrics of *Giulio Cesare*, *Rodelinda* and the oratorio *Saul*.

#### WEEK 5

Vocal typologies and the role of castrato singers in the making of Baroque *opera seria*. Screening of selected scenes from various Baroque operas (videos are available in the course blackboard).

The Italian repertoire at the dawn of mid-18<sup>th</sup> century European Enlightenment - The concept of "classical" music and its forms: the tripartite model - *Opera seria* turning *buffa*: from the historical tale to daily life account. Screening of selected scenes from Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* and Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*: reading the librettos, analysis of the main music forms.

#### WEEK 6

##### Mid-term written exam

From Salzburg to Italy, to Vienna - The Italian operas - both *seria* and *buffa* - by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Da Ponte's tryptic. Screening and analysis of selected areas from *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*.

#### WEEK 7

From Salzburg to Italy, to Vienna - The Italian operas - both *seria* and *buffa* - by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Da Ponte's tryptic. Screening and analysis of selected areas from *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*.

Classical instrumental music in Italy: quartet, symphony, sonata and concerto, their main structural and expressive forms. The forma sonata - Listening to selected passages from Boccherini's quartet G 159: Op. 2 n. 1 in D minor (1761) and Mozart's quartet op. 421; Sammartini's symphony in G major, Allegro.

#### WEEK 8

**Evening event at the Fenice Opera House, Venice: "La vita è sogno" by Gianfrancesco Malipiero - h. 07.00-09.00pm**

The Romantic generation and new European socio-cultural order: 1815-1848 - Rossini and the reform of classic opera - Screening of selected scenes from Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Viaggio a Reims* and *Guillaume Tell* and analysis of their librettos (original Italian text and English translation available in the course blackboard).

**Response paper two due (submit on Blackboard by 12pm - no late papers accepted)**

#### WEEK 9

The late-Romantic Italian generation - Bellini, Donizetti and the Italian *bel canto*: aesthetic, literary and performing features of late Romantic Italian opera - The new Romantic opera *libretto* and its relations with the Italian literary *scapigliatura*. Screening of selected scenes from Bellini's *Norma* and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Giuseppe Verdi's operas: from *Aida* and *Nabucco* - The popularization of Verdi's operas in the framework of Italian *Risorgimento*.

#### WEEK 10

Giuseppe Verdi's operas: from *Otello* and *Falstaff* - The last phase of Italian Romanticism.

**Second class presentation - session 1 (two students)**

Opera and instrumental music in late 19<sup>th</sup> century-early 20<sup>th</sup> century Italy: Leoncavallo, Mascagni - Puccini's operatic revival.

**Second class presentation – session 2 (two students)**

#### WEEK 11

The music avant-garde in Italy, 1900-1950): Luigi Dallapiccola, Luciano Berio, Luigi Nono, and Bruno Maderna.

**Submit provisional draft of research project/final paper**

**onsite class to Venice:** “The places of music industry in 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century Venice: public spaces and private theatres, ridotti, casini, convents, and churches – a historical and musicological path”.

#### WEEK 12

From opera to music on screen: Italian music and the movie industry, from Enzo Masetti, through Castelnuovo Tedesco, to Nino Rota and Ennio Morricone.

From opera to music on screen: Italian music and the movie industry, from Enzo Masetti, through Castelnuovo Tedesco, to Nino Rota and Ennio Morricone.

individual meetings with students to discuss the draft of the final paper (optional)

**RESEARCH PROJECT DUE AT TBD (MID-DAY). SUBMIT ON BLACKBOARD. NO LATE PROJECTS ACCEPTED.**