 COURSE OUTLINE

Music is probably one of the commonest and most accessible forms of art. Being non-semantic and non-iconic, music has often been said to have a universal language and a message that everybody can understand. This is only partially true: music is product of a specific cultural milieu and the expression of a socio-cultural evolution. Every composer and every composition bear the peculiar marks of a specific time and socio-cultural environment. The aim of the course is to offer a general outline on European music history, especially the study of birth, evolution and characteristics of Italian opera. The aim of the course is also to provide students with a comprehensive knowledge of music production in Italy and to give them the necessary interpretative and critical tools for further analysis and research. Course will include field trips in Venice, an evening at the Fenice Opera House and the making of a video that will be sent to Boston on order to participate to the International Education Week in November.

Students are warmly invited to comment, add relevant information and exercise critical analysis. Course field trip and visits are part of the syllabus and students are expected to take part of them, since they provide crucial in situ information directly related to the course topics. The course will be taught in Italian. While all exams and home assignments will be done in Italian, bibliography includes articles, book chapter and monographs in English.
Class will be divided normally, but not necessarily always, into two sections: a lecture (first hour) and discussion/listening section (second hour). Please bring with you paper and pen in order to take notes.

**REQUIREMENTS**

No prior knowledge of history of music or skill in music practice are required.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The main aim of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive and critical view over Italian musical and more specifically melodramatic tradition, from its very beginning in later Renaissance-Early Modern Florence to mid-19th century Verdi’s repertoire. Although no prior knowledge of music history and performing ability are required, the course will include analytical and technical study of music works, offering the students the necessary basic music reading and analysis tools. Special attention will be paid to opera production in Venice between the early 17th and the 18th centuries, the time of Venice’s golden operatic time.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**MAIN TEXTBOOK**


**FURTHER READINGS (SEE COURSE PACK):**


- J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca, *Northon Anthology of Western Music*. vol. I.


- Roberto Favaro and Luigi Pestalozza, eds., *Storia della Musica*. Milan,
THE COURSE REQUIRES

1. Careful reading (with dictionary if necessary) and full comprehension of all the texts included in the syllabus.

2. Active participation in class discussion and answer all the questions about home assignments and homework.

3. To make a class presentation on a topic chosen from a list proposed by the teacher or on a subject proposed by the student and approved by the teacher. Presentation’s topic can include topics of historiographical-musicalological natures as well as analysis and suds of specific works

4. A written midterm exam.

5. A final written exam.

COMPONENTS OF THE FINAL GRADE

1. Attendance and class participation: 15%

2. Midterm written exam: 25% (includes all topics studied and discussed in
class in the first part of the course)

3. Class presentation 20%

4. 2 short essays 15% (2 pages each - in Italian, Times New Roman 12, double spaced, margins 2cm)

5. Final written exam: 25% (includes all topics studied and discussed in class during the second part of the course)

Attendance and class participation: Students are expected to be punctual, ask questions, express curiosity and participate in discussions. Field trips are part of the curriculum and participation is mandatory.

Written midterm exam: The written midterm exam will consist with 15 multiple choices and 2 open questions referring to the topics and most important musicological details discussed in class.

One class presentation: At the end of the course students will be required to do a class- presentation on a subject or topic approved by the professor. Presentations should not last more than 30 minutes. Use of powerpoints and other similar technological devices and tools are strongly encouraged.

Two short essays: 2 pages each - in Italian, Times New Roman 12, double spaced, margins 2cm). Student will be asked to answer one open question on a major topic studied in class.

Final written exam: final written will consist of 20 multiple choices and 2 open questions on all the topics and subjects studied during the second part of the course. The final written exam will include all the topics discussed during the second part of the course.

BU POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip required for the class. Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty when determining final grades. Students absent from class for medical reasons need to provide a local doctor’s note.

PLAGIARISM

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another’s work and presenting it as your own. Dictionary 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 Academic Conduct Code: http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states: ‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’ See Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
Syllabus

SEPTEMBER
WEEK 1
1 Monday
Introduction to the course. Study guidelines, methodologies, papers, presentation and exams.

3 Wednesday
THE AGE OF RENAISSANCE – INTRODUCTION
The music of the Renaissance: style, mecenatism and the political ideology of Italian Renaissance.
(Baroni-Fubini, et als., Storia della musica, pp. 70-94; Favaro-Pestalozza, Storia della Musica, pp. 481-496).

WEEK 2
8 Monday
The sacred and secular polyphonies of 16th century Italy: the state, the court, the church and other centers of music production.

10 Wednesday
Instrumental and vocal music. The Italian madrigal. Reading and analysis of four madrigals by Claudio Monteverdi.

WEEK 3
15 Monday
Dreaming of Orpheus... The gradual passage from polyphony to monody. Myth and hypotheses about the birth of the Italian melodrama. Was the melodrama really made in late Renaissance Florence?

17 Wednesday
From the court to the streets, from Italy to Europe: popular music and pre-melodramatic genres in early modern Europe: Spanish zarzuela, German singspiel, French ballet, etc..

WEEK 4
22 Monday
Orfeo e Euridice by Claudio Monteverdi: the genesis, the composition and the main technical features of an early Italian dramma in musica.
Screening of selected scenes from Act One and Two

Melodramas in English garb. The operatic production of Henry Purcell. Analysis of selected passages and
scenes from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Fairy Queen*.

### 23 Wednesday

**The development of early opera:** study and analysis of Claudio Monteverdi’s *Il ritorno di Ulisse in patria*. Screening of selected scenes from Act One, Two and Three.

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

#### WEEK 5

**29 Monday**

The “opera” market and show industries in early 17th century Venice. How Venetians made *melodrama* a commercial blockbuster. The “impresario”, the real maker of the Italian melodrama.

(Glixon and Glixon, *Inventing the Business of Opera*, pp. 3-33 [introduction to opera in Venice] and pp. 66-139 [on the “impresario” and opera production].

**1 Wednesday**

**COURSE WORKSHOP ONE:** early private and public theatres in Venice. *Visit to Venice* and creation of a map including all major centers of melodramatic production and fruition in Venice. (Bova, *Venezia - I luoghi della musica*, pp. 63-86; Worsthorne, *Venetian Opera in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 1-18 [on opera in Venice’s background and introduction], pp. 118-116, pp. [on Venetian theatres, spectacle, arias, choruses and orchestras].

n.b. Short Essay One due

#### WEEK 6

**6 Monday**

**MID-TERM WRITTE EXAM**

**8 Wednesday**

**BAROQUE MUSIC – INTRODUCTION**

The age of political absolutism: kingdoms, courts and the meaning of “baroque” in European arts and music.


N.B. H. 7 p.m., Fenice Opera House Venice, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *DON GIOVANNI*, opera buffa in three acts (t.b.c.)

#### WEEK 7

**13 Monday**

From Venice through Europe to London. Antonio Vivaldi (Venice, 4 March 1678 – Vienna, 28 July 1741) and Georg
WEEK 10
3 Monday  

5 Wednesday  
idem.  
**n.b. Short Essay Two due**

WEEK 11
10 Monday  
[2] Instrumental music: the "quartetto per archi" (string quartet) [*Part I*]. Political *equality* in a music score. Genesis, developments and main technical features of a Classic string quartet. Analysis of the following quartets:  
a) Joseph Haydn (1732-1809): string quartet in C major, op. 76 n. 3 ("Emperor/Kaiserquartett")  
b) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: string quartet in C major, KV 465 ("Dissonances").

12 Wednesday  
Il "quartetto per archi": Beethoven's quartets, a bridge between Classicism and Romantic age [*Part II*]  

WEEK 12
17 Monday  
**THE DAWN OF EUROPEAN ROMANTICISM - INTRODUCTION**  

19 Wednesday  
1861: the birth of the Italian Kingdom. One state, one language, one opera. Toward the creation of a national operatic style. From Rossini through Donizetti and Bellini to Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901).
Verdi’s *Nabucco* and *Ottello*, from Biblical myth to Shakespeare’s drama. Screening and study of selected arias and passages from *Nabucco* and *Ottello* (Peter Stamatov, *Interpretive Activism and the Political Uses of Verdi’s Operas* in the 1840, in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (Jun., 2002), pp. 345-366).

**Italian Verism, the dawn of Italian operatic tradition.**

Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci*.

(Baroni-Fubini, et als., *Storia della musica*, pp. 354-378;)

**PRESENTATION SESSION** and final discussion about the course.

**FINAL EXAM (WRITTEN).**