

Honors 329 : Topics in The Great Operas of the Western Tradition

Fall 2017

T.TH. 4-5:15 OH 204

Instructors: Louise Thomas & John Boitano

GE: Artistic Inquiry

3 units

Offered as needed

Course Description:

Prerequisite: None. An exploration of both the literary and the musical traditions of the finest operas written in western tradition (Italian, German, French and American) and their relationship to other literary genres and performing arts. Class will feature performances by invited faculty and students and fieldtrip(s) to LA Opera. Class may be repeated for credit as the topic and operas covered will change each time it is offered (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

Required Texts: (in chronological order)

Jean-Baptiste Lully. *Atys* (1674).

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786)

Charles Gounod. *Faust* (1859)

Richard Wagner. *Tristan und Isolde* (1865)

Georges Bizet. *Carmen* (1875)

Jacques Offenbach. *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (1881)

Jules Massenet. *Manon* (1884)

Giacomo Puccini. *La Bohème* (1896)

Kurt Weill. *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1928)

Ira Gershwin. *Porgy and Bess* (1934)

Met Opera on Demand (

Suggested Reading:

Buford Norman. *Touched by the Graces: The Libretti of Philippe Quinault in the Context of French Classicism*. Summa Publications, 2001.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO's):

1. To develop a better knowledge and appreciation of the historical presentation of the age of classicism, and the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV.
2. To acquire an enhanced understanding of the historical presentation of the use of the performing arts such as opera as an instrument of royalist propaganda in the time of the Sun King and as social spectacle throughout the 19th and 20th centuries .
3. To understand underlining principles of western opera when juxtaposed to other literary genre and performing arts such as theater, dance and ballet.

4. To analyze the interplay between the literary and musical nature of the operatic text (Italian, German, French, and American traditions).
5. To explore the important influence of music, dance, gardens, waterworks, fireworks and pageant on baroque age and Belle Époque opera.
6. To study the representation of French Opera, the Royal court at the Louvre and Versailles, and 19th and 20th century spectacle in modern Italian/German/French/American films and society.
7. To understand the contemporary prominence of Neo-Classical and Romantic Theater juxtaposed to seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century Italian/German/French/American Opera.
8. To compare and to contrast great operatic masterpieces of the Western Tradition.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's):

7AI: to explore all facets of the most prominent performing art of the classical age through study of the musical, historical, literary and culture traditions in which the libretti were written and performed.

Content/Major Study Units:

1. The historical presentation of the age of classicism, and the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV.
2. The historical presentation of the use of the performing arts such as opera as an instrument of royalist propaganda in the time of the Sun King and as social spectacle throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.
3. The principles of Western Opera juxtaposed to other literary genres and performing arts such as théâtre, dance and ballet.
4. The interplay between the literary and musical nature of the operatic text (Italian, German, French, and American operatic traditions).
5. The exploration of the important influence of music, dance, gardens, waterworks, fireworks and pageant on baroque age and Belle Époque opera.
6. The prominence of Neo-Classical, Romantic and Twentieth-Century Theater juxtaposed to seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Italian, German, French and American operas.

Restrictions: NONE

Grading

Compositions	30 points
Midterm	10 points
Participation/Presentation	10 points
Research Paper/Final Exam	50 points

Total 100 points

Computation of final grade: 93 to 100=A, 90-92=A-, 87 to 89=B+, 83 to 86=B, 80 to 82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73 to 76=C, 70 to 72=C-, 67 to 69=D+, 63 to 66=D, 60 to 62=D-, 0-59=F.

Chapman University’s Academic Integrity Policy:

“Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at: www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx.”

Chapman University’s Students with Disabilities Policy:

“In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.”

Chapman University’s Equity and Diversity Policy:

“Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman’s Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.”

Prepared by Dr. John F. Boitano & Dr. Louise Thomas,

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