

Film and Opera

BASIC INFORMATION

Professor: Daniel H. Foster; Office: 213 Bivins Building; Phone: 660-3364; Email: dhfoster@duke.edu

Office Hours: MW 11:10-11:40 in 209 East Duke and by Appointment

Class Times and Locations:

Monday/Wednesday 11:40-12:55, 209 East Duke

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course studies the relationship between film and opera from four different perspectives: 1) the similarities between opera and film, 2) opera's evolution into film, 3) operas that have been made into films, and 4) films that have been made into operas. We will investigate topics such as the similarities between the libretto and the film script; the ways in which different kinds of film music correspond to different kinds of operatic styles; how film and opera borrow from and influence each other; how certain technological demands in opera necessitated the birth of film; the remaking of opera into musical and non-musical film; and the more recent and less usual practice of turning opera into film. These topics will be addressed from the perspective of gender, class, racial, and national identity, as well as aesthetics and technology. No musical training is necessary.

TEXTS

By handout, online reserve, or at Lilly and Music Library Reserve

REQUIREMENTS

Written Requirements

3 longer essays based on works we will discuss in this course

Class Participation

Students are expected to participate in class discussions, to complete reading assignments on a regular basis, and to take an active part in scene work.

GRADES

Grade Distribution

1 st Essay:	20%
2 nd Essay:	25%
3 rd Essay	30%
Class Participation:	25%

Grade Definitions

Please note the meaning of each grade as defined in the Undergraduate Bulletin for 2004-2005:

- A, Exceptional
- B, Superior
- C, Satisfactory
- D, Low Pass
- F, Fail

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

I. Cinematic Versions of Operas

MON. AUG. 29	<u>Introduction to the Course</u>
WED. AUG. 31	<u>Watch</u> <i>What's opera, Doc?</i> Chuck Jones-Lilly DVD 4227 <u>Read</u> Schroeder, "What's opera, doc?"
MON. SEP. 5	<u>Watch</u> <i>The Magic Flute</i> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart/Ingmar Bergman-Music Media Center DVD 126
WED. SEP. 7	<u>Read</u> Tambling, "Opera as Culinary art: Bergman's <i>Magic Flute</i> "
MON. SEP. 12	<u>Watch</u> <i>The Tales of Hoffmann</i> Jacques Offenbach/Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger-Lilly VC 11363
WED. JAN. 14	<u>Read</u> Stern, "The Tales of Hoffmann: An Instance of Operality" <u>Read</u> Babbington and Evans, "Matters of Life and Death in Powell and Pressburger's <i>The Tales of Hoffmann</i> "
MON. SEP. 19	<u>Watch</u> <i>Parsifal</i> Richard Wagner/Hans Jürgen Syberberg- Music Media Center DVD 270
WED. SEP. 21	<u>Read</u> Citron, "Cinema and the Power of Fantasy Powell and Pressburger's <i>Tales</i> "

of Hoffmann and Syberberg's Parsifal'

- MON. SEP. 26 Watch *Don Giovanni*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart/Joseph Losey-Music Media Center DVD 57
- WED. SEP. 28 Read Steinberg, "Don Giovanni Against the Baroque; or, The Culture Punished"
Read Tambling, "Losey's '*fenomeni morbosi*': *Don Giovanni*"
- MON. OCT. 3 Watch *Bizet's Carmen*
Georges Bizet/Francesco Rosi-Music Media Center DVD 235
- WED. OCT. 5 Read Citron "Opera *al fresco*: Rosi's *Bizet's Carmen* and Losey's *Don Giovanni*"
- MON. OCT. 10 No class-Fall Break
- WED. OCT. 12 Watch *Aria*
Don Boyd (producer)-Lilly DVD 1671
Read Tambling, "Introduction: Opera in the Distraction Culture"

II. Operas Written for the Screen

- MON. OCT. 17 Watch *Amahl and the Night Visitors*
Gian Carlo Menotti-Music Media Center VC 321
*First essay due in class
- WED. OCT. 19 Read Barnes, "Television Opera: A Non History"

III. Films with Operatic Themes

- MON. OCT. 24 Watch *A Night at the Opera*
George S. Kaufmann and the Marx Brothers-Lilly DVD 3070
- WED. OCT. 26 Read Grover-Friedlander, "There Ain't No Sanity Claus"
Read Kramer, "The Singing Salami: Unsystematic Reflections on the Marx Brothers' *A Night at the Opera*"
- MON. OCT. 31 Watch *Diva*
Jean Jacques Beineix-Lilly DVD 1985
- WED. NOV. 2 Read Levin, "Is there a text in this libido?"

IV. Operatic Films

- MON. NOV. 7 Watch *Birth of a Nation*
D. W. Griffith-Lilly DVD 1778
- WED. NOV. 9 Read Schroeder, "Griffith as Wagnerian"
- MON. NOV. 14 Watch *Alexander Nevsky*
Sergei Eisenstein-Lilly DVD 2735
*Second essay due in class
- WED. NOV. 16 Read Schroeder, "Synesthesia: *Alexander Nevsky* as Opera"
- MON. NOV. 21 Watch *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Max Reinhardt-Lilly VC 7032
- WED. NOV. 23 Read Franklin, "Movies as Opera (Behind the great Divide)"
No class-Thanksgiving Break
- MON. NOV. 28 Watch *Vertigo*
Alfred Hitchcock-Lilly DVD 629
- WED. NOV. 30 Read Schroeder, "Dizzying Illusion: *Vertigo*"
- MON. DEC. 5 Watch *Apocalypse Now!*
Francis Ford Coppola-Lilly DVD 1079
- WED. DEC. 7 Read Schroeder, "Bombarding the Senses: *Apocalypse Now*"
*Third essay due in class