

HIS 239-01 Tyrants and Tunesmiths: Opera, Politics, and Society in Modern Europe
Fall Semester 2016 Tuesday / Thursday, 1:00---2:20 p.m.
Mears 115

COURSE INFORMATION

Dr. Kelly J. Maynard, Grinnell College Department of History

Office: Mears #305

Office Phone: (641) 269---4465

Office Hours: T 10---11 a.m. + W 11 a.m.---1 p.m. Mears 305, Th 10---11 a.m. at the Grill, and by appt

Email: maynardk@grinnell.edu



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the complex relationship between music production and political power in the nineteenth centuries in three national contexts: France, Italy, and Germany. We consider specific relationships among composers, politicians, and institutions and seek to understand how such relationships helped to shape both the works themselves and the political and social realities around them in the processes of inception, performance, and reception. In class we analyze a range of sources from personal letters to staging sketches, newspaper articles, aesthetic treatises, political rants, musical scores, costumes, libretti, and poetry. The course also includes DVD viewings of several works and course---embedded travel to San Francisco over fall break.

Course requirements include regular, active, REactive, and thoughtful participation during discussions; two case study analysis papers; and short writing journal entries based on our experiences in San Francisco. Please note that no particular training or expertise in music is required for this class. Curiosity is a great place to start.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Jane Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1987/2002) ISBN: 0521529433 --- paperback

Claudio Benzecry, *The Opera Fanatic: Ethnography of an Obsession* (University of Chicago Press, 2012) ISBN: 0---226---04342---8 --- paperback

Christopher McIntosh, *The Swan King: Ludwig II of Bavaria* (Tauris Parke, 1982/2003) ISBN: 1860648924 --- paperback

Additional readings will be available on P---Web or handed out in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Although introductory lectures provide the broad historical context for each of the units which we explore, this class otherwise is conducted like a seminar. Our meetings center around discussion of assigned readings and viewings, and it is through the free and open exchange of ideas that we all benefit the most from the class.

Class Discussion

You are expected to attend class regularly – except in case of dire emergency – with the reading materials in hand. Please note that by definition every absence from class has a negative impact upon the overall quality of our conversations. Your grade will be impacted accordingly. After two uncommunicated absences you will receive an F for the participation portion of the course grade. After three uncommunicated absences you will fail the course entirely.

This is a writing intensive course, and there are two basic assignments requiring different kinds of skills. We emphasize both drafting and revising in the course of these assignments.

Case Study Analysis Paper

At the end of the first case study in our class, Meyerbeer and post---revolutionary France, I will circulate essay topics. You choose one of these topics and write a carefully---crafted case study analysis paper of roughly seven pages incorporating the material which we have covered in readings, discussions, and viewing for that unit. Following the deadline for the first draft of this paper, you will receive extensive comments for revision. The revised paper is due two weeks after you received the first paper back from me OR at another mutually agreed upon time.

San Francisco Journal

During our fall break San Francisco visit, we will encounter a number of professionals and institutions that are contemporary analogs to the historical agents whom we study over the course of the semester. You will be required to reflect upon these visits, sometimes analytically and sometimes personally, and to draw comparisons between past and present at several junctures during the week. I will provide explicit questions and parameters for your reflections and collect your journals after the trip. We will meet individually to discuss them, and you will have the opportunity to revise some of the pieces for final submission as a **portfolio of roughly seven to eight pages**.

End of Semester Roundtables

In lieu of a final exam, our class will close with panel---discussion---style sessions based upon the central themes that have emerged over the course of the semester. Drawing up students' backgrounds and interests and San Francisco Journal responses, each discussion will be led by three five members of the class with deep audience participation.

COURSE GRADING

Your overall grade will be calculated according to the following formula:

course participation	30%
case study analysis paper	10%
analysis revision	15%
San Francisco journal draft	10%
final journal portfolio	15%
end of semester roundtables	20%

COURSE SCHEDULE

please prepare all readings (•) for class on the day they are listed on the syllabus

R Aug 25 **Introduction**

PART I: MEYERBEER AND POST---REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE

T Aug 30 **LECTURE: The French Revolution and Its Echoes**

R Sept 1 **The Rise of French Grand Opera**

- Fulcher *The Nation's Image* Introduction and Chapter 1 + 2 (pp. 1---121)

T Sept 6 **The Fall of French Grand Opera**

- Fulcher *The Nation's Image* Chapters 3 + 4 and Conclusion (pp. 122---204)

R Sept 8 **Staging *Les Huguenots*: Behind the Scenes**

- Description of the Opera House in Galignani *New Paris Guide* (1839)
- Meyerbeer/Veron Contract (1834) with amendments
- *Mise---en---scène* documents (1835---6)
 all in *First Nights at the Opera*, pp. 201---206 + 222---226
- Meyerbeer letters to Minna (1834---6)

VIEWING **Meyerbeer *Les Huguenots* (1836)**

Sept XX tba • **Synopsis of *Les Huguenots* (Fulcher pp. 247---251)**

T Sept 13 **Discussion of *Les Huguenots***
Responding to *Les Huguenots*: Reception
• Press reviews of *Les Huguenots* (1836)
Le Monde Dramatique, *Le Ménestrel*, *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*
Hector Berlioz, George Sand, Charles De Boigne, Henry Chorley
all in *First Nights at the Opera*, pp. 212---222

R Sept 15 **Responding to *Les Huguenots*: Analysis**
• Newark "Metaphors for Meyerbeer" in *Journal of the Royal Music Association* 127/1
(2002) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3840478>
CASE STUDY #1 PAPER PROMPT HANDED OUT IN CLASS

PART II: DONIZETTI, GENRE, and NATIONALISM v. COSMOPOLITANISM

T Sept 20 **LECTURETTE: Italian Risorgimento, Donizetti, and *opere buffa e seria***
• Izzo, "Introduction" in *Laughter between Two Revolutions: Opera Buffa in Italy, 1831---1848* (2013), pp. 1---20
ebook: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt4cg6rk>

R Sept 22 **Contextualizing *Don Pasquale***
• Abbate and Parker, eds. "The Tenor Comes of Age" in *A History of Opera* (2012), pp. 215---232
• Weinstock, "Autumn 1842---1843" in *Donizetti and the World of Opera in Italy, Paris, and Vienna in the First Half of the Nineteenth C* (1963), pp. 187---190, 193---200, 362---364
• Donizetti letters 1826---1847 in Hans Gal, ed., *The Musician's World: Letters of the Great Composers* (1965/1978), pp. 241---247

VIEWING **Donizetti *Don Pasquale* (1843)**
Sept XX tba • **Synopsis of *Don Pasquale***

T Sept 27 **Discussion of *Don Pasquale***
Toward Reception: Institutions in Paris
• Huebner, "Opera Audiences in Paris, 1830---1870" in *National Traditions in Nineteenth---C Opera: Italy, France, England, and the Americas* (2010), pp. 163---182

R Sept 29 **National(ism) v. Cosmopolitan(ism)?**
• Gossett, "Music at the Théâtre---Italien" [excerpts] in Peter Bloom, ed., *Music in Paris in the Eighteen---Thirties* (1987)
• Arblaster, note on Donizetti in *Viva la Libertà!: Politics in Opera* (1992), pp. 88---9

F Sept 30 **CASE STUDY ANALYSIS PAPER DUE**
9:00 p.m. by electronic submission

PART III: GETTING AT AUDIENCE – A SOCIOLOGICAL ANGLE

T Oct 4 • Claudio Benzecry, *The Opera Fanatic: Ethnography of an Obsession* preface, introduction, chapters 1 + 2 (pp. xi---60)

R Oct 6 • Benzecry, chapters 3 + 4 + 5 (pp. 63---144)

SAT

8 Oct

NY Met Live in HD Broadcast – Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*

T Oct 11 • Discussion of Met broadcast and *Tristan*
• Benzecry, chapters 6 + 7 + conclusion (pp. 147---194)

R Oct 13 Class preparation for travel

**Fri Oct 14 –
Sat Oct 22**

FALL BREAK COURSE---EMBEDDED TRAVEL TO SAN FRANCISCO

T Oct 25 San Francisco debrief, Journal discussion

PART IV: WAGNER, LUDWIG II, AND GERMAN UNIFICATION

R Oct 27 **LECTURE: German unification, 1815---1871**
• Applegate + Potter "Germans as the "People of Music": Genealogy of an Identity"
in *Music and German National Identity*

T Nov 1 **Ludwig II + Wagner**
• McIntosh *The Swan King* Preface and Chaps 1---10 "Wagnerian Strains"

R Nov 3 **Ludwig II + Wagner to the Bitter End**
• McIntosh *The Swan King* Chaps 11---19 and epilogue

F Nov 4 **San Francisco Journal first drafts due**
9:00 p.m. by electronic submission

T Nov 8 **Wagner the Revolutionary**
• Wagner "Man and Established Society" and "The Revolution" (1849)
• Wagner *Opera and Drama* (1851), excerpts (pp. 91---102)
• Krohn "The Revolutionary of 1848---1849"

R Nov 10 **Wagner the Conservative**
• Wagner Preface to the *Ring* libretto (1863)
• Wagner "To the Kingly Friend" and "On State and Religion" (1864)
• Wagner diary entries (1865)

VIEWING **Wagner, *Das Rheingold* (1876)**
Nov XX tba • **Wapnewski synopsis of *Rheingold***

T Nov 15 **Discussion of *Rheingold***
Preparing for the *Rheingold* Premiere
• Eyewitness rehearsal accounts (1876) all in *First Nights at the Opera*, pp. 284---292
• Press releases from the Bayreuth Festival (1876)

R Nov 17 **Responding to the *Rheingold* Premiere**
• Memoires and press reviews of *Das Rheingold* (1876)
Daily Telegraph, Manchester Guardian, Musikalisches Wochenblatt,
Neue Freie Presse, Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, New York Tribune
all in *First Nights at the Opera*, pp. 293---296 + 300---313
• Other responses (1876) – Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Saint---Saëns

T Nov 22 **Individual meetings re: San Francisco Journal drafts**

R Nov 24 THANKSGIVING BREAK

T Nov 29 Course Roundtable I

R Dec 1 Course Roundtable II

T Dec 6 Course Roundtable III

R Dec 8 Course Roundtable IV

FINAL EXAM WEEK

T Dec 13 FINAL SAN FRANCISCO JOURNAL DUE
Mears #305 at 5:00 p.m.