

## MU2112

### Opera from Handel to Mozart

Initial Course Document:

#### **1. Timetable of sessions**

#### **2. Assignments (with a first list of essay titles) and due dates**

#### **3. General Course Discography and Bibliography**

This module covers the development of opera in the eighteenth century from Handel's *Rinaldo* (1711) to Mozart's *Magic Flute* (1791). As well as the operas of Handel from both periods (First and Second Academy) and the major operas of Mozart, the course will also look at the development of French opera under Rameau and the operatic reforms of Gluck. More popular forms such as *opera buffa*, ballad opera and *singspiel* will be touched upon. The emphasis will not only be opera as music and drama, but as a reflection of the themes and concerns of eighteenth century Europe as it gradually abandoned the precepts of the *ancient regime* and took on the concerns of the Enlightenment. As part of the course there will an opportunity to view a performance and write a critical review.

Matthew Spring (Sept 2003)

## 1. Timetable of lectures/sessions

Week 1

Thurs 2 October:

Opera at the close of the seventeenth-century: National traditions in Italy, France, Germany and England

Week 2

Thurs 9 October:

Handel in London I: The first Academy

Agrippina (1709) and Rinaldo (1711)

Week 3

Thurs 16 October:

Handel in London II: The Second Academy

Orlando (1733) and Ariodante (1734)

Week 4 – Alkamaar Week – we are away in Holland

Week 5

Thursday 30 October:

Popular Forms – ballad opera, opera buffa and singspiel

The Beggar's Opera (1729)

Week 6

Thursday 6 November:

Rameau and French opera

Les Indes Galantes (1736) and Hippolyte & Aricie (1733) and Nais (1749/64)

Week 7 – Reading Week:

Week 8

Thursday 20 November:

Gluck and Operatic Reform

Orfeo (1762) and Armide (1777)

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> Trip to see Handel's Ariodante at Theatre Royal Bath**

Week 9

Thursday 27 November:

Mozart I

Early Operas and Idomeneo (1781)

Week 10

Thursday 4 December:

Mozart II

The Marriage of Figaro (1786)

Week 11

Thursday 11 December

Mozart III

Don Giovanni (1787)

Week 12

Thursday 8 January:

The Magic Flute (1789)

## **2. Assignments and due dates**

2 Essays (2000 words x 2) 40% and 40%

Critical review of an opera performance (1000 words) 20%

### **Due Date for essay 1**

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November at 11.00

Cut off date (Max 40%) 24<sup>th</sup> Nov

### **Due date for critical review**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2003 at 11.00

Cut off date (Max 40%) 5<sup>th</sup> Jan

### **Due date for essay 2**

11.00 am Monday January 19th

Cut Off date (max 40%): January 26th

## **Essay Titles:**

### **Essay 1 (2,000)**

1. What were the problems Handel faced bringing Italian Opera to London and how did he solve them?

Give musical examples.

2. Trace the rise and fall of Handel as an opera composer in London. Account for his success and failure.

3. What are the constituent elements of a Handel opera? Illustrate your with musical examples from at least two Handel operas.

4. How does French opera from Lully to Rameau differ from Italian opera of the same period? Give musical examples.

5. Why was Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* so successful and what was so new about it?

6. What did the Lullists object to in Rameau's operas? Illustrate your essay with examples from his operas.

### **Critical Review (1,000)**

Write a critical review of the performance of Handel's *Ariodante* at the Theatre Royal Bath.

**Essay 2 (2,000)**

1. What were the operatic reforms of Gluck? Illustrate your answer with musical examples.
2. Account for the *Querelle des bouffons*? What was at issue and what were the results?
3. How does Mozart use opera as a vehicle for political and social statement? Illustrate your answer with music musical examples.
4. In what way was Mozart an operatic innovator? Illustrate your answer with reference to at least two operas.
5. In *The Magic Flute* Mozart weaves many of the threads of eighteenth-century musical ideas into new designs. Discuss.
6. Compare and contrast the three Da Ponte Italian operas by Mozart, (Figaro, Don Giovanni and Cosi). Do they form an entity and is there a common message?

**3. Discography and Bibliography:**

The following operas are on CD or DVD/Video in the library:

**Handel:**

Agrippina 1024/5/6  
 Rinaldo 1030/1/2  
 Orlando 1027/8/9/  
 Ariodante 1033/4/5

**Gay:**

Beggar's Opera 1001/2

**Rameau:**

Dardanus 1010/21  
 Naïs 1012/13  
 Castor & Pollux 1014/5/6  
 Les Indes Galantes 1004/5/6  
 Hippolyte & Aricie 1007/8/9

**Gluck:**

Iphigenie en Tauride 1006/7  
 Les Peleris 1001/2  
 Armide 1003/4  
 Orfeo (?)

**Mozart:**

Idemeneo 1009/10/11 also 1020/21/22  
 Die Entführung aus dem Serail 1043/44  
 La Clemenza de Tito 1056/7  
 Le Nozze de Figaro 1001/2/3  
 Don Giovanni 1005/6/7 and 1053/54/55  
 Cosi fan Tutti 1017/8/9 and 1056/57  
 Die Zauberflöte 1039/40 (There are scores – either full, miniature or vocal - for most but now quite all of these in the library)

## **Bibliography:**

### **General:**

- The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (Macmillan, 1992)  
 Robinson, Michael, *Opera Before Mozart* (Morrow, 1967)  
 Sadie, Stanley, ed. *The History of Opera, New Grove Handbooks in Music* (Macmillan, 1980)

### **Handel:**

- Burrow, Donald ed., *Cambridge Companion to Handel* (Cambridge, 1997)  
 Dean and Knapp, *Handel's Opera (1704-26)*, (Oxford, 1987)  
 Diack Johnstone and Fiske, Roger (ed.): *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain* (Oxford, 1990)  
 Harris, Ellen, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition* (OUP, 1980)  
 Hogwood, Christopher, *Handel* (Thames and Hudson, 1984)  
 Diack Johnstone and Fiske, Roger (ed.): *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain* (Oxford, 1990)  
 Strohm, Reinhardt, *Essays on Handel and Italian Opera* (Cambridge, 1985)

### **Rameau and French Opera:**

- Anthony, James, *French Baroque Music* (Amadeus, 1997)  
 Verba, Cynthia, *Music and the French Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1993)  
 Wood, Caroline and Sadler, Graham, *French Baroque Opera* (Ashgate, 2000)

### **Ballad Opera:**

- Kidson, Frank *The Beggar's Opera* (Greenwood, 1971)

### **Gluck:**

- Howard, Patricia C. W. *von Gluck: Orfeo* (Cambridge, 1981)

### **Mozart:**

- Albert, F. *Mozart's Don Giovanni* (Eulenberg, 1976)  
 Allenbrook, Wye James, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart* (Chicago, 1985)  
 Batley, E.M, *A Preface to The Marriage of Figaro* (Dobson, 1969)  
 Bronscombe, Peter, *Die Zauberflote* (Cambridge, 1991)#  
 Carter, Tim, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Cambridge, 1987)  
 Dent, Edward, *Mozart's Operas, A Critical Guide* (Oxford, rep 1991)  
 Gionurco, Carolyn, *Mozart's Early Operas* (Batsford, 1981)  
 Hertz, Daniel, *Mozart's Operas* (California, 1981)  
 Mann, William, *The Opera's of Mozart* (London, rep 1986)  
 Miller, Johnathan ed., *The Don Giovanni Book* (Faber, 1990)  
 Osborne Charles *The Complete Operas of Mozart* (Gallanz, 1986)  
 Rice, John A *La Clemenza di Tito* (Cambridge 1981)  
 Rushron, Julian *Don Giovanni* (Cambridge, 1988)  
 Steptoe, Andrew, *The Mozart Da Ponte Operas* (Oxford, 1988)  
 Till, Nicholas *Mozart and the Enlightenment* (Faber and Faber, 1992)  
 Albert, F. *Mozart's Don Giovanni* (Eulenberg, 1976)  
 Allenbrook, Wye James, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart* (Chicago, 1985)