

Music 9540a: Mozart and Modernity

Fall 2017
Edmund J. Goehring
Office hours: Wed. 3:30–5pm and by appointment

Tues. 1:30–4:20pm, TC 310
egoehrin@uwo.ca
Office: 224 Talbot

Surveying the artistic scene of his time, the cultural historian Jacques Barzun found himself “reconciled to sing a Requiem for high art” out of the conviction “that the grand Renaissance conception of high art [was] no longer alive.” Barzun delivered his eulogy decades ago, but the circumstance he noted then persists into the present, including in how we think of a (putatively) pre-modernist composer like Mozart. The purpose of this seminar is to look at that modernist influence on thought about Mozart’s music and to assess its implications. Do modernist values, which, as T. J. Clark has noted, “turn on the impossibility of transcendence,” illuminate rather than obscure his music? What possibilities, if any, are there for seeing Mozart’s music as part of a living, vital present, rather than only as a curio for the antiquarian?

Although this seminar is oriented around the analysis and criticism of eighteenth-century music, students are welcome to pursue any area that helps elucidate modernism, and some readings will turn to film, art, poetry, and philosophy for guidance.

This seminar will overlap with the conference “Mozart and Modernity,” which will run from 20–22 October at UWO. Some of the reading for the seminar will dovetail with presentations at the conference, and students will have various opportunities to participate in the conference.

Requirements will include, along with weekly reading and participation, class presentations, an analytical essay, and a term paper.

Please set aside, if you can, Friday and Saturday 19–20 October, for attending the conference.

Schedule

12 Sept. Introduction.

Reading: Robert Pippin, *After the Beautiful*, introduction, 1–26; James Currie, *Music and the Politics of Negation*, chapter 1, Veils, 1–33.

Listening: Mozart, Piano Concerto in F K. 459:III

19 Sept. Jacques Barzun, *The Use and Abuse of Art*.

26 Sept, 3 Oct.. A postmodern Mozart?

Reading: Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *The Secular Commedia: Comic Mimesis in Late Eighteenth-Century Music*, chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1–83) (for 26 Sept), chapters 3 and 4 (84–176) for 3 Oct.

Listening: Mozart Sonata in F K. 332:I; for 3 October: Mozart, String Quartet in G K. 387:IV; “Jupiter” Symphony, K. 551:IV

10 Oct. Fall break

17 Oct. Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. (In advance of Robert Pippin's talk on the film) **19 Oct. 5pm, analytical assignment due**

Reading: Antony John, "'The Moment That I Dreaded and Hoped for': Ambivalence and Order in Bernard Herrmann's Score for *Vertigo*," *The Musical Quarterly* 85/3 (2001): 516–44; Dan Blim, "Musical and Dramatic Design in Bernard Herrmann's Prelude to *Vertigo* (1958)," *Music and the Moving Image* 6/2 (2013): 21–31.

24 Oct. Modernism and the visual arts. **26 Oct, 5pm: Working thesis and bibliography due.**

Readings: Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*, Introduction and Chapter 1; T. J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism*, Introduction, Conclusion.

31 Oct. Locating modernism in music

Reading: Julian Johnson, *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity*, Introduction, chapter 1, chapter 5.

Listening: Mozart, "Soave sia il vento," from *Così fan tutte*

7 Nov. Modernism and authorship

Reading: Stanley Cavell, "Music Discomposed," from *Must We Mean What We Say?*; Marjorie Grene, *The Knower and the Known*, chapter 5, "Facts and Values," pp. 157–82; Oren Izenberg, *Being Numerous: Poetry and the Ground of Social Life*, Introduction, 1–39.

14 Nov. Modernism and Beauty

Reading: Scott Burnham, *Mozart's Grace*, "Invitation," 1–6; "Beauty and Grace," 7–36; "Knowing Innocence," 165–70; Pippin, "The Force of Felt Necessity": Literature, Ethical Knowledge, and Law," in *The Persistence of Subjectivity: On the Kantian Aftermath*, 261–78.

Listening: Mozart, Clarinet Concerto:II; Serenade for Twelve Winds and String Bass, K. 361:iii.

21 Nov. No class.

28 Nov. Presentations

5 Dec. Presentations.

	Requirements	
Analytical paper (ca. 1,000 wds)		20%
Presentation of a reading for one class		10%
Report on term paper		5%
Participation		10%
Term paper		55%

The term paper will have the following components: 1) an in-class oral presentation based on your research; 2) a working thesis and bibliography, due 26 Oct.; 3) the completed paper, due the last day of the semester.

Materials

All materials will be available on reserve. Please note that many of the texts (like the Barzun and Grene) can be purchased quite cheaply if you give yourself enough time to order them via a website like abebooks.com.

N.B. “Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf Academic Handbook, Exam, Course Outlines Page 4 Issued: 2011 02

No computers or cell phones may be used in class.

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