

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
MUSIC 9596y
LYRIC DICTION FOR PERFORMERS OF VOCAL MUSIC:
ITALIAN DICTION

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MEETING TIME: T 1:30-3:00pm, TC100

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

Montgomery, Cheri. *Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3rd edition*. Nashville, TN: S.T.M. Publishers, 2014
ISBN: 978-0-9894385-2-0

An Italian Dictionary containing indication of open and closed “e” and “o” for stressed syllables (and other IPA helps if desired)

SUGGESTED MATERIALS:

- 3 Ring binder for notes, handouts, and assignments
- Hand-held mirror
- Original scores of music for class performance
- Personal recording device for study

OBJECTIVES:

1. Gaining a basic working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as it relates to the Italian language
2. Learning the rules of pronunciation and syllabification for Italian
3. Transcribing Italian words and texts into IPA, including word for word translations from Italian into English
4. Incorporating the rules of pronunciation into spoken and musical contexts
5. Developing critical listening skills in regard to authenticity of pronunciation

PROCEDURES:

1. Attending class periods, prepared for quizzes and scheduled examinations
2. Completing readings and homework assignments for the assigned class periods
3. Singing **two art songs/arias and one recitative** in Italian
4. Completing **one listening assignment and presenting your findings for the class**
5. Possible responsibilities in working with undergrad students in study groups

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS:

Attendance to each class period is expected. The professor should be informed of absences for medical reasons prior to the class period. These absences must be cleared with a medical note by the following class period to be accepted. Academic absences will be accepted when documented in accordance with university policy.

Tardiness to class sessions is strongly discouraged. Students who arrive tardy but less than fifteen minutes late will receive partial attendance credit for the day. Two partially attended classes will result in one unexcused absence. Students who arrive more than fifteen minutes after the beginning of a class session shall receive an unexcused absence for the day.

GRADING AND GRADING SCALE:

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-----|------------|----------|
| Attendance/participation: | 20% | A+=100-90% | D=59-50% |
| Listenings and Assignments | 20% | A=89-80% | F=<49% |
| Singing #1, #2, and Recit: | 30% | B=79-70% | |
| Final (written and oral): | 30% | C=69-60% | |

GRADING STANDARDS:

1. You will be graded on accuracy of transcription of Italian into IPA, the accuracy of pronunciation of IPA symbols, and the accuracy of the sung representation of Italian. This includes participation, willingness, and attitude during class sessions.
2. Assignments will be given during the class period, either on the syllabus or verbally. If you are absent from a class period, you are responsible for getting your assignments from the professor through e-mail or individual appointment.
3. **Assignments must be completed by the beginning of class time to receive full credit.** Appropriate partial credit will be given for assignments that are incomplete or late. Students who are absent for reasons stated above should contact the professor to make arrangements for assignments at the earliest reasonable opportunity
4. **Songs prepared for class performance must be memorized**, with a sheet containing the song's text, IPA transcription, and a word-for-word translation of the text. **Students will be permitted to use scores for recit. projects.** Performing additional background research will also add to your comprehension of the piece and potentially add to your performance
5. If you are unable to sing on your assigned day due to medical reasons, you must contact the professor the morning prior to the class period. If you are not seriously ill and contagious, you will recite your text and present your IPA transcription. Performance of the piece will be done at the next class period. Failure to perform the piece or to make appropriate arrangements with the professor will result in a failing grade for the performance
6. **Oral examinations** will be scheduled and administered during the final exam preparation period. The exam will take no more than five minutes and be comprised of reading a text in Italian. You will be given appropriate time during the oral exam to analyze the text for accurate pronunciation.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

September

15- Course Syllabus, IPA introduction, syllabification

22-In-class exercises

29-In-class exercises

October

6-In-class exercises

13- Singing Assignment #1

20- Singing Assignment #1

27 Review of Singing Assignments; in-class exercises

November

3- Graduate Listening Assignments; in-class exercises

10- In-class exercises

17- Singing Assignment #2

24- Singing Assignment #2

December

1-Final/Recit preparation

8- Recit. Performances

ORAL EXAM: Scheduled at a mutually agreeable time in December.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Scholastic Offense Policy in regard to plagiarism states, "Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Western University uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking." This directly implies that all IPA work be done without the use of other aids beyond the assigned textbook.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing a graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding, such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Adams, Andrew. "Unstressed E's and O's in Italian Lyric Diction: A Comparison of Diction Texts." *Journal of Singing* 59, no. 4 (March/April 2003): 333-39.
- Adams, David. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers: Italian, German, French, 2nd ed.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- _____. "Aspects of Consonant Articulation in Italian Diction." *Journal of Singing* 59, no. 3 (January/February 2—3): 247-52.
- _____. "On Teaching an Italian Diction Class." *Journal of Singing* 61, no. 2 (November/December 2004): 177-183.
- Colorni, Evelina. *Singers' Italian: A Manual of Diction and Phonetics.* New York: Schirmer Books, 1996.
- De' Ath, Leslie. "Dittongo and Iato in Italian." *Journal of Singing*, March/April 2005, Volume 61, No. 4, pp. 393-400.
- _____. "Materials for Teaching a Lyric Diction Class, Part I." *Journal of Singing*, September/October 2005, Volume 62, No. 1, pp. _____.
- _____. "Materials for Teaching a Lyric Diction Class, Part II." *Journal of Singing*, November/December 2005, Volume 62, No. 2, pp. 179-198.
- _____. "Phonemics and Lyric Diction." *Journal of Singing*, May/June 2006, Volume 62, No. 5, pp. 549-561.
- _____. "Perspectives on Italian Lyric Diction." *Journal of Singing*, May/June 2005, Volume 61, No. 5, pp. 503-515.
- Montgomery, Cheri. *Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3rd edition.* Nashville, TN: S.M.T. Publishers, 2014.
- Moriarty, John. *Diction.* Boston: E. C. Schirmer: 1975.
- Wall, Joan and Robert Caldwell, eds. *Diction for Singers.* Dallas, TX: Pst. . Inc., 1990.

Song/Recit. Assignment Instructions-

Song #1—October 13 and 30

Song #2—November 17 and 24

Recit.—December 8

For each assignment, prepare your text in the following manner:

IPA

Original text

Translation

Your assignment will be graded on the following: IPA transcription, translation of the text, spoken accuracy according to the written IPA, and sung accuracy according to the written IPA. Please provide at least 1.5 line spacing between lines of the three lined grouping (IPA, Original Text, and Translation).

Listening Assignment Instructions-

Date— November 3

You will complete two listening assignments in groups on two different songs or arias. After selecting pieces for the assignment, your group will make sure the library has a recording of it being performed by a native Italian and a non-native singer. Your group will transcribe the text according to the rules of transcription discussed in class. After transcribing, you should listen to the recordings, indicating the discrepancies between what you transcribed and what was sung. The class presentation will be the combined efforts of your transcription, and comparative listenings of each of the recordings.

Ex.

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| | Ombra mai fu |
| Transcription: | [ˈom bra ma:i fu] |
| Singer 1 | [u bre I v] |
| Singer 2 | [mai:] |

You need not transcribe the entirety of each recording's diction, only the deviation from the rules discussed in the Adams text and in class.