

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	CASS
Programme:	COM
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	Gender and Sexuality in Italian Opera
Course Code:	COM 5850
Course Leader:	Monica Giovannini (Florence)
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall/Spring/Summer
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

ITALIAN STUDY CENTRES ONLY. This course explores representations of gender and sexuality within the broad context of Italian opera. The characteristically ambiguous gender roles present in many operas are studied, including the *castrato* male, the cross-dressing female and male singers in *travesti* roles, and the contemporary, high-voiced male counter-tenor. Through an interdisciplinary approach, which brings together both music and gender studies, students are given the opportunity to consider gender identity in Italian opera and how gender roles and voices have changed over time. No prior musical background or historical knowledge of music is required. Live operatic performances are included.

****course fee**

Prerequisites: GEP 4180 Research and Writing II

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of the course is to familiarize students with the musical genre of opera, to enable them to understand the historical and cultural contexts in which Italian opera

has developed with a specific emphasis on the changing gender roles and historical attitudes to gender and sexuality on the Italian stage.

Programme Outcomes:

A5(ii), B5(i), C5(ii, iii), D5(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/admitted-students/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the evolution of Italian opera, from its origins in the 16th century to romanticism and *verismo* in the early 20th century.
- Demonstrate detailed knowledge of the characteristics of Italian opera, with reference to specific works of the most important composers
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of gender roles in Italian opera, with reference to specific works of the relevant composers
- Demonstrate detailed knowledge of how gender identities and voices have changed over time

Indicative Content:

- The birth and evolution of Italian opera
- *Opera seria* and *opera buffa*
- The voices of opera
- Voice and gender
- Gender subversions and dualities
- *I Castrati*: their origins and recruitment
- The evolution and transformation of the *travesti* role
- From *castrato* to counter-tenor

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board (formerly Learning & Teaching Policy Committee) and located at: <http://www.richmond.ac.uk/admitted-students/>

Teaching Methodology:

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on music and gender studies. Classes consist of lectures, discussions and student-led presentations. The classes will include extracts from audio and visual recordings.

