MUS 24: An Introduction to Opera

Syllabus

This course combines a general discussion of operatic history from 1600 to the mid-19th century with detailed examination/listening of key repertory works. Registered students will have access to an online library of basic scholarly literature and video recordings. Each session will start with a review of themes covered in previous classes. The class setting is informal and student feedback is welcome during the session. For student evaluations of the course, see http://ichriss.ccarh.org/teaching_evaluations.htm

The following are some representative themes I intend to cover.

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Early Opera
Why did opera emerge around 1600? Social conditions and intellectual currents in late 16th-century Italy. Early opera. Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo (1607).

Week 3: Baroque Opera

Week 4: The Classical Era

Week 5: Between two ages
French revolution and political unrest. Beethoven’s Fidelio (1814).

Week 6: Romantic Opera