

Graduate courses with a Renaissance / early modern focus offered in the spring of 2022

REN-R 501 The Culture of the Renaissance (4 cr.) will be taught by Kaya Şahin and will meet with HIST-H 699 – Thursdays 4:15-6:15pm in Ballantine Hall 219.

TOPIC: *Global Renaissances*

This graduate seminar has a number of interrelated objectives. First of all, by looking at multiple notions of the global and of a "renaissance" that circulated in the late medieval and early modern periods, it departs from the Eurocentric notion of a single Renaissance as a unit of analysis as well as cultural model. Second, it problematizes the representation of the Renaissance as an ideal moment of human creativity by focusing on the "dark side of the Renaissance," including new forms of violence that extended from enslavement to forced conversion. At the same time, it aims to preserve the importance of the late medieval and early modern periods; to do that, it focuses on both European and non-European societies to provide a fuller picture of what transpired during this critical moment of transition in global history. The themes to be studied and discussed include political agency and mobilization; class and social life; economy and consumer culture; warfare; new forms of writing about the self and the world; everyday life; selfhood, identity, difference; gender; and race. Course requirements include attendance and participation; classroom presentations; a bibliography; and a final paper.

ENGLISH

ENG-L 625 Shakespeare and Political Spectacle

Taught by Linda Charnes

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15-2:30pm, Synchronous Zoom

This course will explore how Shakespeare's plays dissect the uses of spectacle during eras when existing political systems are under severe stress or trauma. Shakespeare's culture operated less than one hundred years after the notorious War of the Roses. But the plays also preceded the English Civil War by less than forty years. How did England go from the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings (massively reinforced under Tudor and Jacobean Stuart rule) to the legal trial and execution of Charles I in 1649? How can a culture's relationship to belief and law change so quickly? We'll examine Shakespeare's political and history plays, including the two tetralogies and the Roman plays, to see how the staging of historical events, filtered through Shakespeare's creative lens, served as real-time critique during an era when direct opposition to sovereignty was life-risking. We'll use political psychologists such as Agamben, Elster, Agnew as well as Latour's work on Actor-Network-Theory, affect theory (starting with Raymond Williams' "structures of feeling") and Austin's speech-act theory to help us analyze how direct critique may seem "silent" while being modeled and enacted on the stage. The public playhouse and other early modern theaters really were the abstract chroniclers of their time—a time of surveillance, censorship, and domination by the wealthy and powerful. Any analogies with contemporary circumstances will be purely intentional.

Plays: *Richard II*, *I Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*.

Students will write two ten-twelve paged papers. Attendance and participation will be crucial.

FRENCH AND ITALIAN

FRIT-M 604 'High' and 'Low' in Italian Renaissance Literature

Taught by Massimo Scalabrini

Thursdays 4:45-6:45pm in LH 112

L'energia creativa del Rinascimento italiano è anche il frutto della sua inquietudine. La produzione artistica e letteraria del Rinascimento si iscrive in un contesto politico-militare di conflitto permanente e in un contesto culturale caratterizzato da scambi fruttuosi e da contrasti laceranti: fra mondo antico e moderno, sfera aristocratica e sfera popolare, dimensione locale e globale, centro e periferia, interno ed esterno, 'alto' e 'basso'. Alle forme e ai valori caratterizzanti del modello culturale canonico del classicismo (medietà, moderazione, convenienza, decoro, dialogo, conciliazione) rispondono così le forme e i valori di un modello alternativo che definiremo compendiosamente 'anticlassicistico' e che costituirà l'oggetto della nostra ricerca. Interrogheremo in particolare i generi dell'epica, della commedia, dell'egloga, della lirica e del dialogo e autori quali Pulci, Folengo, Ruzante, Berni e Aretino. Il corso si terrà in italiano. Tutti i materiali saranno disponibili su Canvas.

HISTORY

HIST-H 699 Global Renaissances

Taught by Kaya Şahin

Thursdays 4:15-6:15pm in Ballantine Hall 219

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HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE & MEDICINE

HPSC-X 705 Cabinets of Curiosities, Collections, and Museums From the Renaissance to Hans Sloane

Taught by Domenico Bertoloni Meli

Mondays 1:30-4:00pm in Ballantine Hall 344

Cabinets of curiosities, collections, and museums reflected and at the same time contributed to shaping through their material holdings the world of learning and the organization of knowledge of their time. They included *naturalia* and *artificialia*, marvels and rarities from both the old and the new worlds. The literature on early modern collections and museums is highly interdisciplinary and includes, but is not limited to, antiquarianism, the history of art, of several sciences (notably medicine and natural history), and, more broadly, of collecting and displaying. This class seeks to familiarize students from different backgrounds and with different interests with the relevant literature from the Renaissance to Hans Sloane, whose collections upon his death (1753) became the basis of the British Museum, and later of the British Library and Natural History Museum.

MUSIC

MUS-M 522 Early Notation/Edition Projects (2 cr.)

Taught by Dana Marsh

Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:20am-11:15am, in the Simon Music Center Library Classroom M 271

This course develops literacy in polyphonic music notation of the 14th to the 17th centuries, with related introductions to paleography, codicology, and editorial method. In addition to developing skills needed to perform/sing from earlier forms of notation, participants will learn to create modern performance editions from primary sources.

Students will learn rudiments of the hexachordal system and rules of counterpoint realization that were prerequisites to being able to perform from written polyphonic notation for Renaissance musicians. That is to say, earlier forms of notation presumed previous aural, memory-based training in essentials such as e.g., the Guidonian hand and basic counterpoint theory. This complementary relationship—drawing from fluency in reading written notation on the one hand and the memorized theoretical background that informs its realization on the other—provides the necessary background for historically informed performance from early music manuscript sources. Drawing from that work, students will create modern transcriptions and editions of Renaissance polyphony that take into account aspects of historical notation often “lost in translation” when dealing only with a modern performance edition.

MUSICOLOGY

MUS-M 652 Renaissance Music

Taught by Giovanni Zanovello

Mondays & Wednesdays 11:30am-12:45pm in M 267

In this class we will explore the repertoire, history, and musical practices of Western Europe, ca. 1380-1600. We will study many masterpieces that often became models in the following centuries.

More broadly, we will approach performance and compositional practices as well as a role of music in society that differ sometimes remarkably from practices today. The class is organized as a pro-seminar: the class time will involve a moderate amount of lecturing, in addition to class discussion and musical listening. Class attendance is mandatory.

Goals: Students will build a set of notes and annotated scores to help them:

- identify and describe a number of pre-1600 compositional techniques and musical styles
- trace the evolution of musical composition, performance, and reception from 1400 to 1600
- discuss issues related to the performance of early music
- investigate problems of authenticity and our relationship with the music of the past
- develop a basic knowledge of black void notation