

Ticket to the Opera
Fall, 2018

SYLLABUS

All of us, opera connoisseurs, amateurs and newbies alike, are here to savor great music, learn about an art form, share perceptions and opinions, and enjoy each other's company.

Participation in class discussion is highly encouraged. Presentations are also encouraged and are meant to be an interesting learning experience, shared with interested learners. ALL contributions are welcome and valued.

Class #1: Thursday, September 13

- Introduction to the class—ice breaker
- Introduction to the co-coordinators
- Preview of the performances

Second hour

- Overview/Syllabus
- A quick history of opera
- *First Listening Challenge*

Class #2: Thursday, September 20 AIDA

- **Discuss** Listening Challenge
- Verdi biography Tom Backman
- The story/libretto/librettist Janice Raftery

Second hour

- [The Italian legacy in Opera \(from the Baroque to the Modern\)](#)
- Arias to look forward to, what to listen for
- *Listening Challenge*: Which tenor do you prefer? Which soprano?

Class #3 Thursday, September 27 AIDA

- Discuss Listening Challenge
- **Cast: Spotlight on the performers:**
 - Anna Netrebko + Anita Rachvelishvili Judy Robbins
 - Aleksandrs Antonenko + Quinn Kelsey
 - Dmitry Belosselskiy + Ryan Speedo Green

Second hour

- [Stories from the class: Aida's you have seen](#)
- Past performances of Aida: Comparing different staging/interpretations
- Listening challenge for Aida—one aria by several tenors (Celeste Aida), one by several sopranos (Ritorna Vincitor)

- **Class #4 Thursday, October 4 SAMSON ET DALILA**
- Listening challenge discussion
- The story/libretto/librettist
- Samson et Dalila: Music highlights—arias to listen for

Second hour

- **Guest Speaker:** Mary Pat Denci: The journey to become an opera singer; what to listen for

Saturday, October 6, Wednesday, Oct. 10 MET IN HD: AIDA

Class #5 Thursday, October 11 POST-OPERA DISCUSSION: AIDA SAMSON ET DALILA

- Post-Opera Discussion: Aida (20 minutes)
- Cast: Spotlight on the performers: (15 minutes)
 - Roberto Alagna
 - Elina Garanca
 - Laurent Naouri & Elchin Azizov
- The French opera tradition—role of dance: Penny B. (15 minutes)

Second hour

- Saint-Saens biography (15 minutes)
- Past performances—compare staging and interpretations: Penney (45 minutes)
- Listening Challenge?

Class #6 Thursday, October 18 LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

- Listening Challenge Discussion
- Puccini biography
- The story/libretto/librettist
- Puccini and “verismo”/the Exoticism of the American West
- SOMETHING ELSE? THIS CLASS SEEMS THIN TO ME—Different Productions?
- Listening challenge?

Saturday, October 20 MET IN HD: SAMSON ET DALILA

Class #7 Thursday, October 25 Post-Opera Discussion: Samson & Dalila LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

- Post-opera discussion: Samson et Dalila (20 minutes)
- Cast: Spotlight on the performers: (30 minutes)
 - Jonas Kaufmann
 - Eva-Marie Westbroek
 - Carlo Bosi & Zeljko Lucic
 - Michael Todd Simpson, Matthew Rose & Oren Gradus

- Guest Speaker: Ron DeLellis—arias to listen for

Saturday, October 27 MET IN HD: LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

Class #8 Thursday, November 1 MARNIE

- Post-opera discussion: La Fanciulla del West (20 minutes)
- Composer: Nico Muhly (15 minutes)
- Story/Libretto/Librettist (15 minutes)
- Guest Speaker: Edward Markward--20th century/21st century opera
- Listening Challenge?

Class #9 Thursday, November 8 MARNIE

- Arias to listen for
- The cast: Spotlight on the performers:
 - Isabel Leonard
 - Christopher Maltman
 - Janis Kelly & Denyce Graves
 - Iestyn Davies (counter-tenor)

Saturday, November 10 MET IN HD: MARNIE

Class #10 Thursday, November 15

- Post-opera discussion: Marnie
- Course evaluation
- End-of-semester party