

Russ 2624-1020
Fall 2017
Monday 2:30-5:25pm
Cathedral of Learning G19B
University of Pittsburgh

Tony Lin
Slavic Languages & Literatures
tony.lin@pitt.edu
Office: CL 1229B
Office hours: T&W 1-2pm & by appt.

Russian Literature in Musical Adaptation

Course Description:

This course explores how music and literature interact or influence each other. As knowledge of music theory is not a prerequisite for this course, we will first build critical vocabulary to speak about music before studying examples of “transposition” – the retelling of a narrative in a different genre. We will consider the relationship from both directions: literature set to music and representations of music in literature. We will read, for example, plays and stories that are based on composers (such as Pushkin’s *Mozart and Salieri*). Additionally, we will explore the thematic use of music in short stories and novellas, such as the role of Beethoven’s *Kreutzer Sonata* in Tolstoy’s eponymous novella. We will consider the following overarching questions: what are the literary and artistic implications when a story gets retold in a different genre? Does the composer stay faithful to the text or change it significantly to better align with his artistic agenda? What is the effect of reading a literary text in comparison to seeing its musical counterpart?

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance and participation in discussion, short reports, and final paper.
*Those who read Russian should read the texts in the original.

Readings:

Primary

Aaron Copland: *What to Listen for in Music*
Nikolai Gogol: *Nose*
Nikolai Leskov: *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District*
Vladimir Odoevsky: *Beethoven’s Last Quartet* from *Russian Nights*
Alexander Pushkin: *Boris Godunov*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Queen of Spades*, *Mozart and Salieri*, *The Stone Guest*
Leo Tolstoy: *The Kreutzer Sonata*
Ivan Turgenev: *Home of the Gentry*
Selection of poetry by Pushkin, Lermontov, Blok, and others

Secondary

Alexander Burry, *Multi-mediated Dostoevsky* (Evanston, 2011)
Boris Gasparov, *Five Operas and a Symphony* (New Haven, 2005)
Caryl Emerson: *Boris Godunov: Transposition of a Russian Theme* (Bloomington, 1986)
Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (Oxford, 1977)

Schedule (subject to change):

August 28: Introduction

Hector Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe/Franz Schubert: *Erlkönig*

September 4

Labor Day - No Class

September 11: 19th-century Poetry/Music

Aaron Copland: *What to Listen for in Music*

Alexander Pushkin: “Ia pomniu chudnoe mgnovenie,” “Ia vas liubil”

Mikhail Lermontov: “Slyshu li golos tvoi”

Boris Gasparov, “Pushkin in music” in *The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin*, Andrew Kahn, ed.: pp. 159-173

Nina Vernadsky, “Lermontov in Music” in *The Slavonic and East European Review* (March 1943): pp. 6-30

September 18: Fidelity: Pros and Cons

Alexander Pushkin: *Mozart and Salieri, The Stone Guest*

Alexander Dargomyzhsky: *The Stone Guest* (1869)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov: *Mozart and Salieri* (1897)

Richard Taruskin, “Dargomizhsky and His Stone Guest.” From *On Russian Music*, pp. 70-75

Boris Katz and Caryl Emerson, “Pushkin and Music” in *The Pushkin Handbook*, David Bethea, ed.: pp. 591-608

September 25: Absurdism, Pornophony

Nikolai Gogol: *The Nose* (1836)

Nikolai Leskov: *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1865)

Dmitri Shostakovich: *The Nose* (1928), *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1934)

Pravda, “Сумбур вместо музыки” (“Chaos Instead of Music”)

Caryl Emerson, “Shostakovich and the Russian Literary Tradition” in *Shostakovich and His World*, ed. Laurel Fay

October 2: Tragedy in Literature/Music

Alexander Pushkin: *Boris Godunov* (1831)

Modest Mussorgsky: *Boris Godunov* (1869/1872)

Caryl Emerson, *Boris Godunov: Transposition of a Russian Theme*, pp. 142-206

October 10: Note different class meeting day

Alexander Pushkin: *The Queen of Spades* (1834)

Pyotr Tchaikovsky: *The Queen of Spades* (1891)

Richard Taruskin, “The Great Symbolist Opera”

Boris Gasparov, “Lost in a Symbolist City” from *Five Operas and a Symphony*, pp. 132-160

October 16: final paper proposal due (1-2 pages plus preliminary bibliography)

Alexander Pushkin: *Eugene Onegin* (1825-32), ch. 1-4

Pyotr Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin* (1879)

Richard Taruskin, "Chaikovsky and the Literary Folk"

Boris Gasparov, "Eugene Onegin in the Age of Realism" from *Five Operas and a Symphony*, pp. 58-94

October 23: Encyclopedia of Russian life

Pushkin: *Eugene Onegin*, Ch. 5-8

Emily Frey, "Nowhere Man: Evgeny Onegin and the Politics of Reflection in Nineteenth-Century Russia"

Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (Oxford, 1977)

October 30: Modernist Opera

Fyodor Dostoevsky: *The Gambler* (1867)

Sergei Prokofiev: *The Gambler* (1929)

Alexander Burry, "The Artist as Gambler: Prokofiev and Dostoevsky" from *Multi-mediated Dostoevsky*

Harlow Robinson, "Dostoevsky and Opera: Prokofiev's 'The Gambler'" from *The Musical Quarterly* (Winter 1984)

Richard Taruskin, "Prokofiev and the Might-Have-Beens" *The New York Times* (2001)

November 6: Literature inspired by music

Leo Tolstoy: *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1889)

Ludwig van Beethoven: *The Kreutzer Sonata*, Op. 47 (1803)

Janneke van de Stadt, "Narrative, Music, and Performance: Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* and the Example of Beethoven"

Ruth Rischin, "Allegro Tumultuosissimamente: Beethoven in Tolstoy's Fiction"

November 13: 20th-century poetry/music, "Künstlerroman"

Alexander Blok/Shostakovich: Seven Poems

Vladimir Odoevsky: *Beethoven's Last Quartet* from *Russian Nights*

Tim Langen and Jesse Langen, "Music and Poetry: The Case of Shostakovich and Blok" in Andrew Wachtel, ed. *Intersections and Transpositions*

Neil Cornwell, "The Musical-Artistic Story: Hoffmann, Odoevsky and Pasternak" in *Comparative Critical Studies* 5, I, pp. 35-55

November 20: "Musical Novel"

Ivan Turgenev: *Home of the Gentry* (1859)

Edgar L. Frost, "The Function of Music in Dvorjanskoe Gnezdo"

Edmund Heier "The Function of Music in I. S. Turgenev's Aesthetics"

November 27: Russian bards, “Encyclopedia of Soviet Life”

Bulat Okuzhava: “Грузинская песня,” “Песенка о Моцарте,” “Бумажный солдат”

Vladimir Vysotsky: “Охота на волков,” “Диалог у телевизора,” “Песня о друге”

Christopher Lazarski, “Vladimir Vysotsky and His Cult”

G. S. Smith, “Okudzhava Marches On”

December 4: Final Presentations (15 minutes with 5-10 minutes for Q & A)

December 14 by noon: Final Papers Due in my mailbox