

Attendance/Reading Quiz!

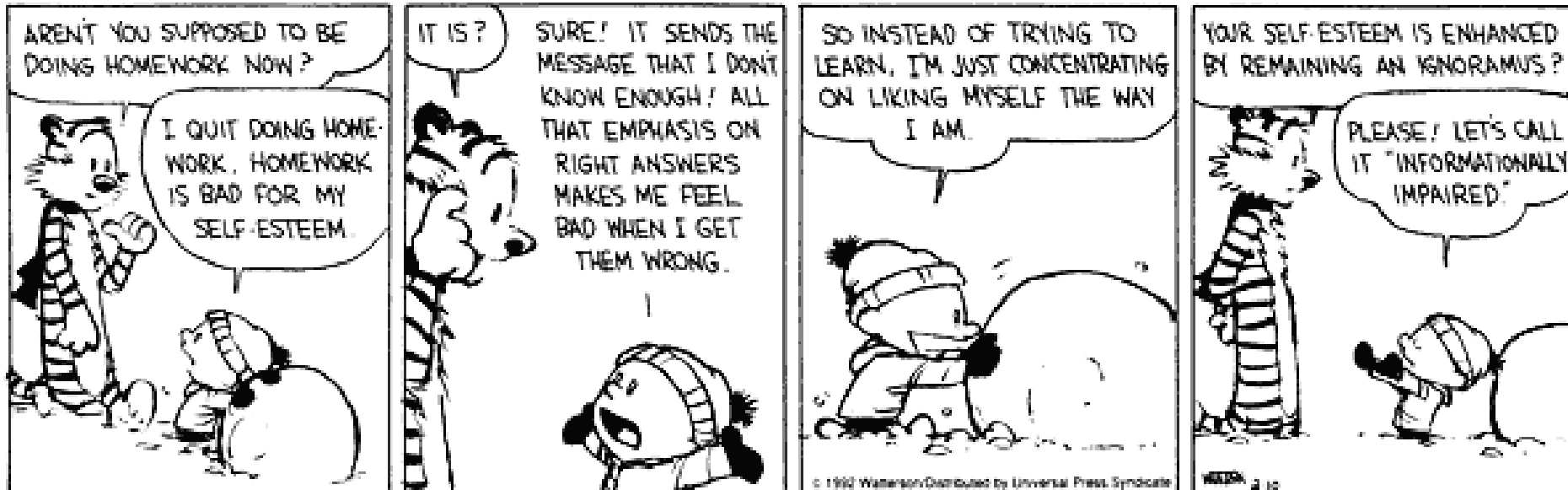
Mu 110: Introduction to Music

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Queensborough Community College

Sections F1 (Mondays 12:10-3) and Thursdays (12:10-3)

Spring 2017



Recap

- Thank you for welcoming my colleagues into our classroom
- Great job asking insightful, interesting, and attentive questions of the musicians who visited us last week!

Opera



Margrave's Opera Theater,
Bayreuth 1879

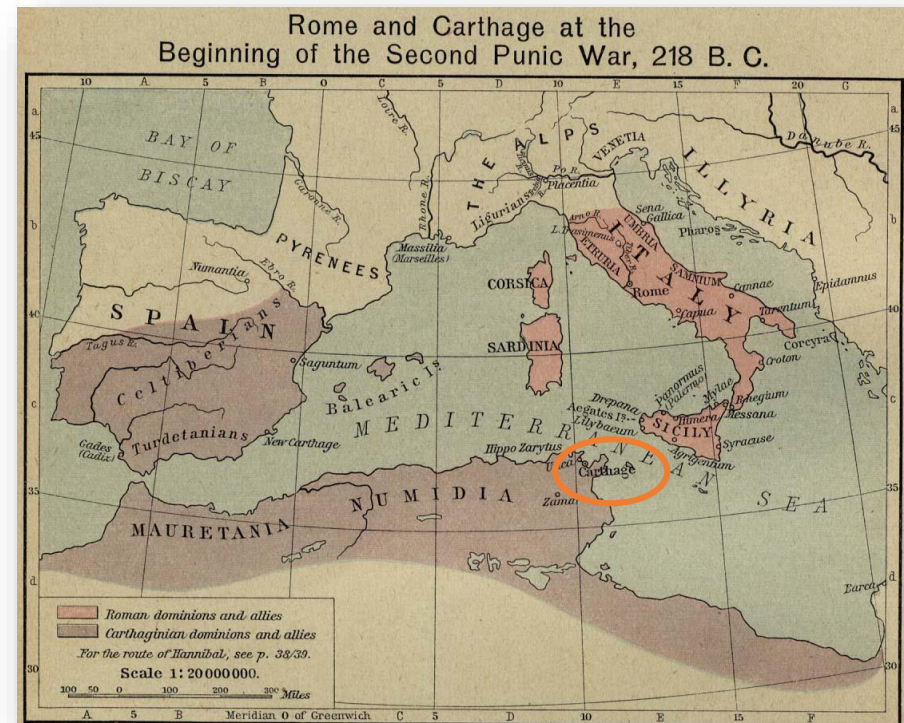
- Secular
- Originated during the 17th century as a way to add magnificence to royal and noble events
 - Adding music to plays (example: masques in England)
 - Singing is dramatic and takes great skill
 - The first opera theater open to the public (paying customers) appeared in Venice, Italy, in 1637
- Social event: eating, talking, drinking, visiting
- Singing and orchestral accompaniment together imitate spoken language, sensations, and emotions
- A staged genre: acting, costumes, props, set design
 - Librettist – writes the words of the opera
 - Composer – writes the music

Henry Purcell (1659-1695), *Dido and Aeneas* (1689)

- Based on Virgil's *The Aeneid* (29-19 BC)



Giovanni Barbieri (1591-1666), *The Death of Dido*



Henry Purcell (1659-95), *Dido and Aeneas*, Act III opening (1689)

Come away fellow
sailors, come away,
Your anchors be
weighing;
Time and tide will admit
no delaying;
Take a boozy short leave
of your nymphs on the
shore,
And silence their
mourning with vows of
returning,
Tho' never intending to
visit them more.



Royal Opera House, May 15, 2009 – Christopher Hogwood, (conductor), Ji-Min Park (sailor), Wayne McGregor (choreographer)

Opera: dramatic stories and human emotions

- Operas take small moments and blow them up to large proportions
- It takes longer to sing words than speak them, so the music physically takes a long time to be heard
- Repeating melodies and adding dancing can make a scene even longer, which means that the emotional mood persists

Singing styles and purposes

Aria

- Emotional outpouring
- Repetitive text and melody
- Singer's vocal technique and ability are put on display
- Many harmony changes (demonstrating the nuances of the singer's emotion)
- Full orchestra accompaniment

Recitative

- Depicts characters' thoughts, plans, and dialogue
- Advances the plot
- Little to no text repetition
- Unpredictable and forgettable melody
- Few harmony changes
- Minimal instrumental accompaniment

Henry Purcell (1659-95), *Dido and Aeneas* “Dido’s Lament” (1689)

A

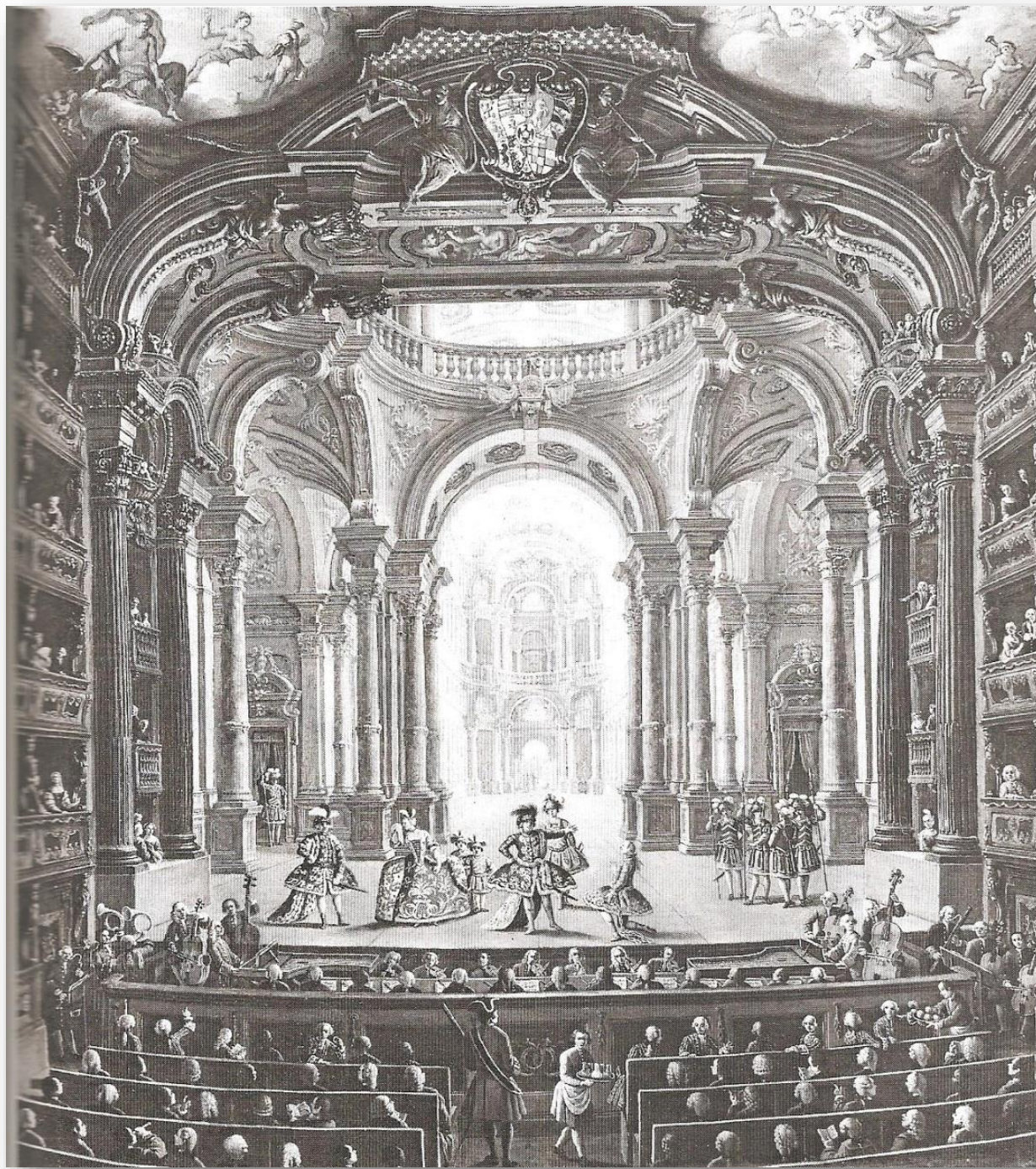
When I am laid, am laid in
Earth
May my wrongs create no
trouble, no trouble in thy
breast

B

Remember me
Remember me
But ah, forget my fate!



Royal Opera House, May 15, 2009 – Christopher Hogwood,
(conductor), Sarah Connolly (Dido)



Teatro Regio in Turin,
Italy (1740)

In-class writing: Character and meaning

The first version is sung by a young man in his late 20s. The second version is sung by an old man at the end of his life in his 70s.

Describe how their voices sound different.

What kind of situation do you imagine each character would be expressing these words?

- Where are they, what have they experienced that's led them to this moment, what do they care about, who are they talking to, what kind of person are they, etc.

Vocal ranges

Female

- Soprano
- Mezzo-soprano
- Alto

Male

- Tenor
- Bass

Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, K.620 (1791), “*Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*”

Soprano



Diana Damrau (b. 1971), soprano (The Queen of the Night)

The vengeance of hell boils in my heart;
Death and despair blaze around me!
If not by thee Sarastro feels the pains of death
Then you will be my daughter nevermore.

Outcast be forever,
Forsaken be forever,
Shattered be forever
All the bonds of nature

If not by thee Sarastro turns pale [in death]!
Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye, gods of vengeance, hear the mother's oath!

Georges Bizet, *Carmen* (1875), “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle”

Mezzo-
soprano



Elīna Garanča (b. 1976), mezzo-soprano (Carmen)

Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, K.620 (1791),
“Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön”

Tenor



Paul Groves (b. 1964), tenor (Tamino)

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), *Rigoletto* (1851), “La donna è mobile”

Tenor

The man's always wretched who believes in her, who recklessly entrusts his heart to her! And yet one who never drinks love on that breast never feels entirely happy!

Bel canto (style of singing), means “well sung” and was the standard style in 19th century Italian opera. The ideal vocal timbre is round and smooth at all times.



Luciano Pavarotti (1935-2007), tenor (Duke of Mantua)

Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II, *Show Boat* (1927), “Ol’ Man River”

Bass

Ol’ man river
Dat ol’ man river
He mus’ know sumpin’
But don’t say nuthin’
He just keeps rollin’
He keeps on rollin’ along

You an’ me, we sweat an’ strain
Body all achin’ an’ racked wid pain.
Tote dat barge!
Lift that bale!
Ya get a little drunk
An’ ya lands in jail.

He don’ plant taters,
He don’ plant cotton,
An’ dem dat plants ‘em
Is soon forgotten,
But ol’ man river,
He just keeps rollin’ along.

I get weary
An’ sick of tryin’
I’m tired of livin’
And scared of dyin’
But ol’ man river,
He jus keeps rollin’ along.



Paul Robeson (1898-1976), bass

Castrati

- European boys with promising voices were castrated before the onset of puberty to preserve the high range starting in the mid-16th century
 - No women allowed in Catholic Church singing – soprano roles were sung by boys and castrati
 - Potential way out of poverty
- Powerful sonority in the upper register – could match a trumpet in volume
- Often grew very large and tall; broad chests; beardless
- Opera roles: heroes in Baroque operas, female roles where women weren't allowed on stage



Pier Leone Ghezzi (1674-1755), Portrait of Antonio Maria Bernacchi, 1731

Castrati

- Senesino (1686-1758)
- Farinelli (1705-82)
- Cusanino (c.1704-c.1760)



Pier Leone Ghezzi (1674-1755), Caricature of Farinelli in a female role, 1724

William Hogarth (1697-1764), Francesca Cuzzoni, Gustavo Berenstadt and Senesino in Handel's *Flavio* (c.1728)

Castrati

“What singing! Imagine a voice that combines the sweetness of the flute and the animated suavity of the human larynx — a voice which leaps and leaps, lightly and spontaneously, like a lark that flies through the air and is intoxicated with its own flight; and when it seems that the voice has reached the loftiest peaks of altitude it starts off again, leaping and leaping, still with equal highness and equal spontaneity, without the slightest sign of forcing or the faintest indication of artifice or effort; in a word, a voice that gives the immediate idea of sentiment transmuted into sound, and of the soul into the infinite on the wings of that sentiment.”

—Enrico Panzacchi (1840-1904),
music historian describing castrati at the Vatican

Alessandro Moreschi (1858-1922)

- Singer at the Sistine Chapel
- Recorded albums in 1902 (at the Vatican) and in 1904 (in Rome)



Trouser roles

- Also known as “breeches roles” or “pants roles”
- Women dressed as men
 - Roles originally for castrati
 - Continued preference for leading roles sung as high voices until c.1850 (even as castrati were no longer used)
 - Playing children and adolescent boys



A trouser role at the Penn State Opera, 2010

Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, K.492 (1786), “Non so più cosa son”

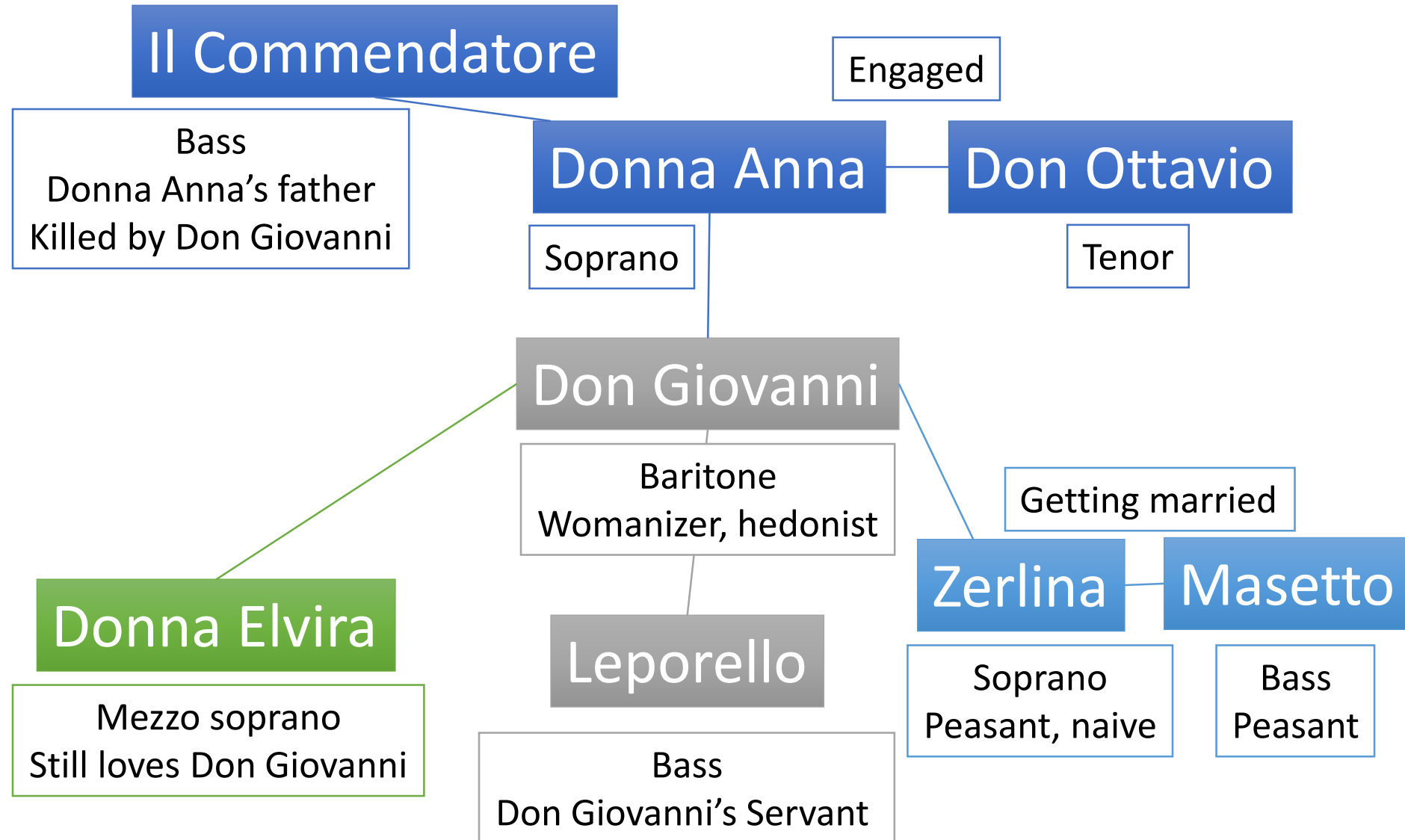
Mezzo-
soprano



- Male character played by a woman (transvestite)
- Lovesick boy going through puberty

Marina Comparato, mezzo-soprano (Cherubino)

W. A. Mozart, *Don Giovanni*, K.527 (1787)



Distaste for opera

**“Would you know what an opera is? I’ll tell you,
that it is an odd medley of poetry and music,
wherein the poet and musician, equally confined
one by the other, take a world of pains to compose
a wretched performance.”**

– Charles St. Évremond (1613-1703)

**Opera is “an exotick and irrational
entertainment.”**

–Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

Homework and reminders

- Reading for next week is available online
 - Music as an escape: exoticism, Impressionism, Expressionism
- This week's student blog posts are available until Sunday
- SBP set #4 begins Monday, May 1
- Blog response essay due May 15
- Concert response essay due May 22

End quiz

1. Arrange the four main vocal ranges in order from highest to lowest:

Alto

Bass

Soprano

Tenor

2. Which two vocal ranges are sung by women? Which two vocal ranges are sung by men?

3. Name one instrument that plays in the same range as each of the 4 vocal ranges.