



Attendance/Reading Quiz!

Mu 101: Introduction to Music

Queensborough Community College

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Fall 2018

Sections F2 (T 12:10-3) and J2 (3:10-6)



Reading quiz

Leopold Mozart wrote a pedagogical treatise on playing the piano.

- a) True
- b) False

Reading quiz

Mozart's older sister was an even more famous musician than he was.

- a) True
- b) False

Reading quiz

All opera is serious.

- a) True
- b) False

Reading quiz

Which of the following activities did Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart do in his professional career? Circle all that apply.

- a) Compose music, including operas, string quartets, sonatas, concertos, and symphonies
- b) Perform on the piano
- c) Teach piano lessons
- d) Publish a treatise on violin playing

Reading quiz

What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned from the reading(s) this week?

Recap

- 20th century art: experimentation
 - Minimalism – John Cage (1912-90), Philip Glass (b. 1937), Alvin Lucier (b. 1931), Steve Reich (b. 1938)
 - Other minimalist composers we've come across: Meredith Monk, Julius Eastman
 - Other 20th century composers we've come across: R. Murray Schafer (soundscapes), Aaron Copland, Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky
- Topics covered so far in class:
 - Music and dance
 - Music and religion
 - Music as Art – provoking thought, experimentation, escape from the real world, intellectual or aesthetic contemplation
- Remainder of term: Music as entertainment – Opera, concerto

Opera



Margrave's Opera Theater,
Bayreuth 1879

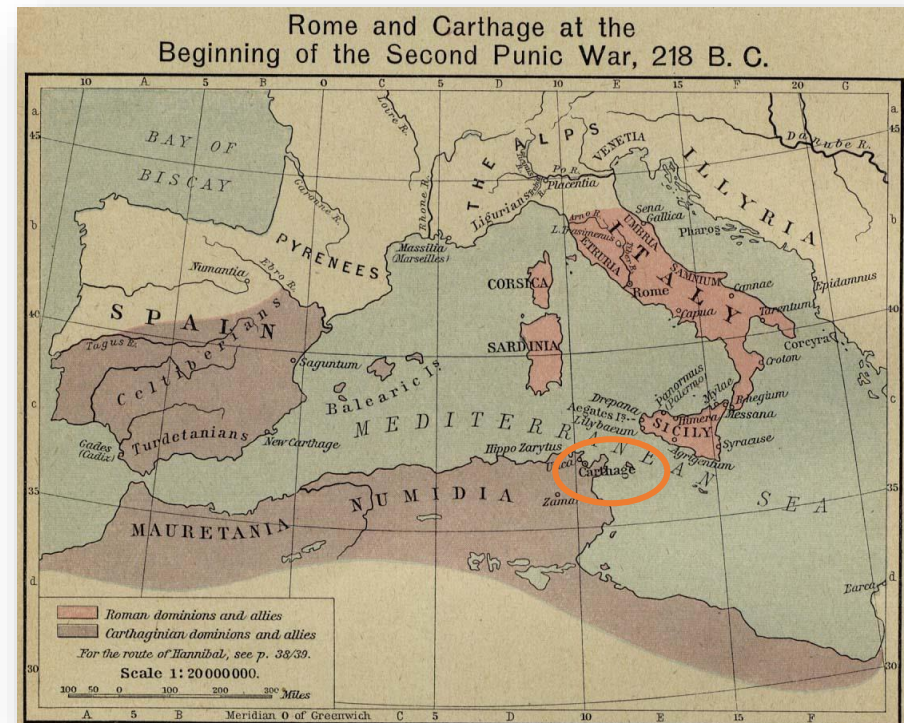
- Secular
- Originated during the 17th century as a way to add magnificence to royal and noble events
 - Adding music to plays (example: masques in England)
 - Singing is dramatic and takes great skill
 - The first opera theater open to paying customers appeared in Venice, Italy, in 1637
- Social event: 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*



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

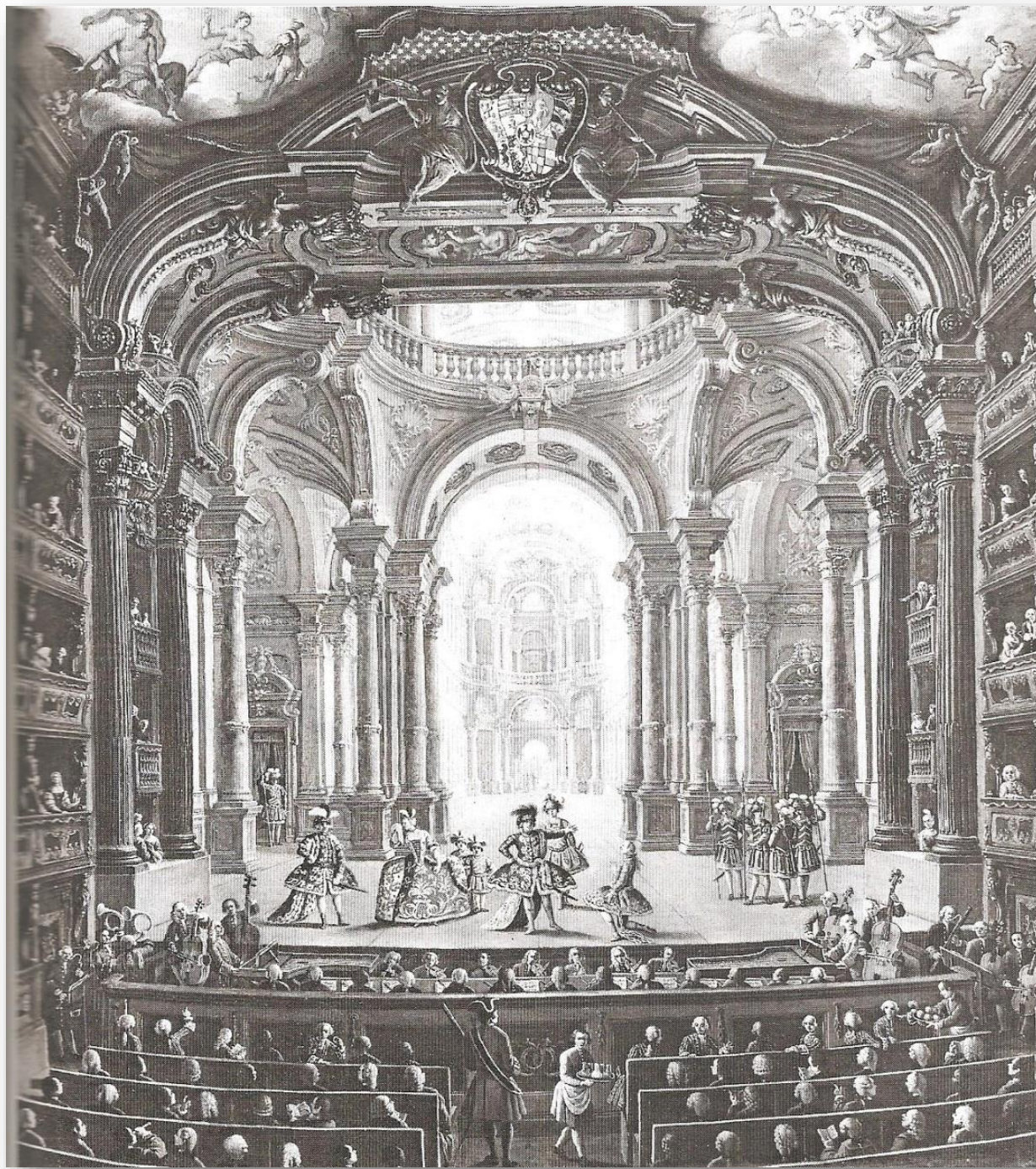
Singing styles and purposes

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



Teatro Regio in Turin,
Italy (1740)

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)

Character and meaning

1) Describe how their voices sound different.

2) 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.

3) How does the sound of the singer's voice add to the drama of the character they're playing?

- Age

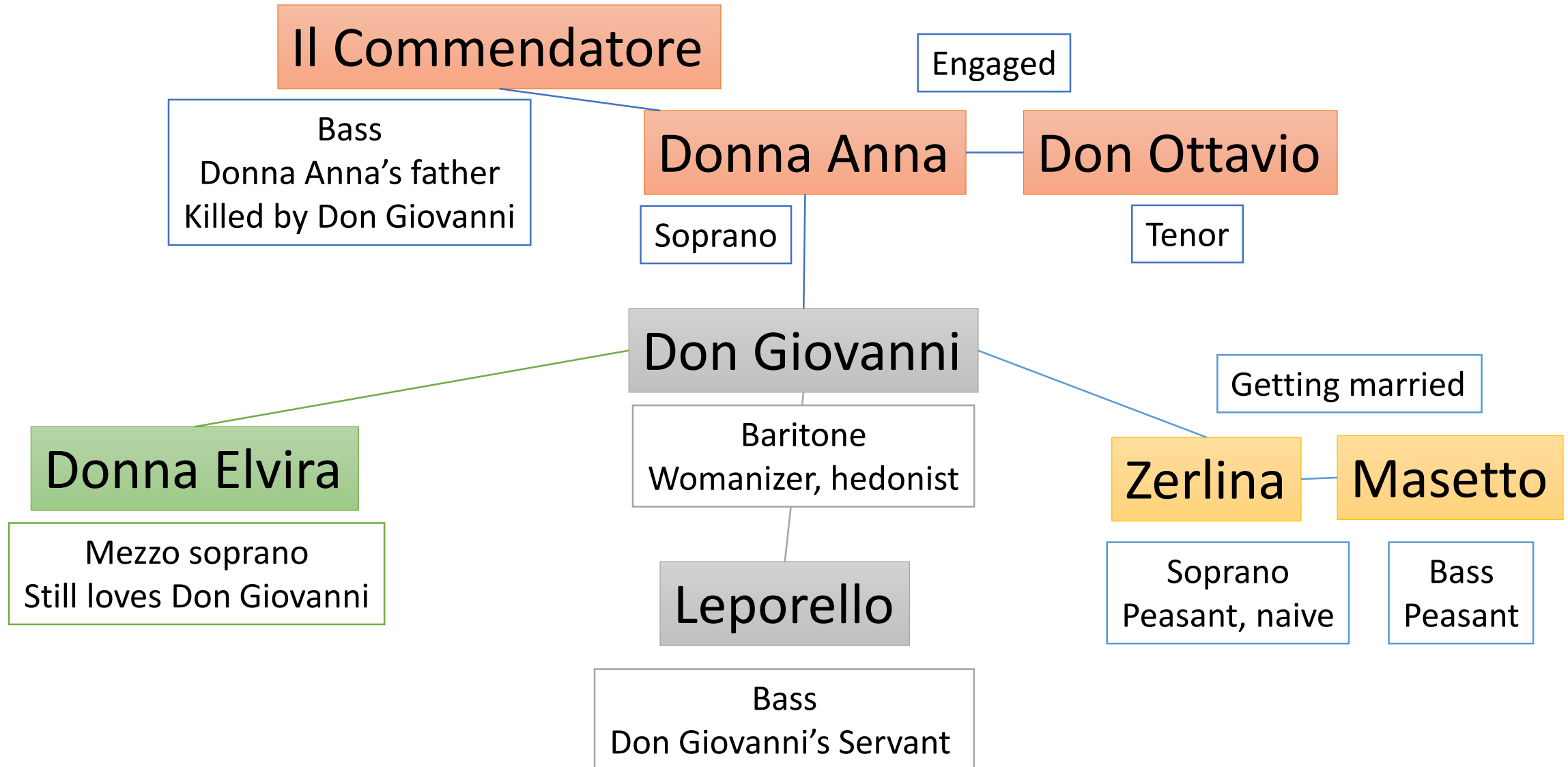
- The first version is sung by a young man in his 20s. The second version is sung by an old man at the end of his life in his 70s.

- Gender

- The first version is sung by a group of women. The second version is sung by a man.



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



Reminders

- Student Blog Posts – comment/discuss online through December 9
- December 4:
 - The concerto – assigned reading is available online
 - Analysis 2 (string quartet) – I will send a link to a video I recommend you watch as prep
- December 11: Impressionism and Expressionism
- Concert Response Essay due at the final exam (December 18)
 - F2: 12:15-2:15
 - J2: 2:30-4:30

End write

What do you think makes opera entertaining?