

## The Concerto: style, form, and context in its first century

### A course for OLLI

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Meets on zoom, on Wednesdays, from 1 pm to 2:30 pm PST.

**Course description:** The concerto: its origins, history, structure(s), and social function. This course explores the concerto, this genre we know especially from the classical and romantic periods, from its baroque origins in vocal music to its "codified" classical structure, and also investigates its cultural and social aspects and functions. Examples for study are drawn from the baroque and classical repertoire. Composers will include Gabrieli, Vivaldi, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, and early Beethoven.

**Course objectives:** The course seeks to explain and illustrate the concerto as a musical genre, which mimics a social interaction, and, through the study of representative repertoire, to show its evolution through its first century or two. The course will end with the end of the classical era.

#### Course schedule:

	Topics to be presented	Repertoire to be discussed
1	The origins of the concerto as a vocal/instrumental genre in Venice, <i>cori spezzati</i> . Issues of style and form. Evolution in the baroque era and emancipation from the voices. From the church to the parlor. Form: ritornello form.	Giovanni Gabrieli: "In ecclesiis" a14 Antonio Vivaldi: "Spring" from <i>Le quattro stagioni</i> , all three movements
2	The later Baroque concerto—from "Vivaldi's 400" to Bach's and Handel's mature concerti. The various types of concerto: genres: <i>concerto grosso</i> , <i>concerto solo</i> , <i>concerto ripieno</i> . The birth of the orchestra and the musician in society. Historically informed performance. The concerto as a vehicle for virtuosity. Collaboration between the orchestra and the solo (or not).	G. F. Handel: Organ concerto Op. 4 No. 1 J.S. Bach: Brandenburg concerti No. 1, 5, and 6 (excerpts), Harpsichord Concerto in D minor BWV 1052
3	The concerto grows up: the classical era. The concerto as a homage. Composers in society in the Austro-Hungarian Empire II: as a member [servant] of the noble household—Eszterháza and Haydn.	Joseph Haydn: Concerto for cello in D No. 2 Op. 101, Hob. VIIb:2
4	The concerto as a teaching tool and as an instrument for personal growth and fundraising. Composers in society in the Austro-Hungarian Empire II: Mozart tries emancipation. The mature classical solo concerto and the piano as the chief vehicle. Improvisation and record writing. Cadenzas.	W. A. Mozart: Concerti for piano and orchestra No. 9 in E flat major K. 271 "Jeunehomme," and No. 20 in D minor K. 466

Date	Topics	Repertoire
5	The later classical concerto, pre-romanticism in music. The composer as a peer in society: Beethoven	Ludwig van Beethoven: Concerti for piano No. 2 in B flat major Op. 19 and No. 5 in E flat major Op. 73 "Emperor"
6	The concerto for wind and string instruments: the flute and the violin, and more. The concerto as a mirror of society.	Mozart: Concerto for violin No. 3 in G major K. 216 Beethoven: Concerto for piano, violin, and cello, "triple concerto" Op. 56

Recordings and some ancillary readings will be posted on the OLLI site. All the pieces are available freely on line, in multiple versions. Some recommendations for what performances to listen to will be provided also in class.

#### Partial list of suggested additional readings:

- "Mozart's Jenamy Concerto." *New York Times*, 15 March 2004. And other communications.
- Berlioz, Hector. "The Orchestra." *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 9 (1860), pp. 327- 335.
- Plantinga, Leon. *Beethoven's Concertos*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999. Excerpts
- Ratner, Leonard G. "Concerto," in *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. Schirmer, 1980.
- Solomon, Maynard. "The Creative Periods," from *Beethoven Essays*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Spitzer, John, and Neal Zaslaw. "The Birth of Orchestration," "The Classical Orchestra," "The Life and Times of an Eighteenth-Century Orchestra Musician," and "The Meaning of the Orchestra," in *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Spitzer, John. "Metaphors of the Orchestra--The Orchestra as a Metaphor," *The Musical Quarterly* 80 (1996), pp. 234-264.
- Stevens, Jane R. "An 18th-Century Description of Concerto First-Movement Form," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 24 (1971), pp. 85-95.
- Zaslaw, Neal. "One More Time: Mozart and his Cadenzas," in *The Century of Bach and Mozart*, eds. Rhomas Forrest Kelly and Sean Gallagher. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Readings from the work of Lewis Lockwood, Charles Rosen, Joseph Kerman, and others.

**Alexandra Amati** is an Italian musicologist, who, after earning a degree in Slavic Studies from Italy, received her MA and PhD in Musicology from Harvard University. She created the music program and taught at the University of San Francisco for 27 years and is now Professor Emerita. She is currently at Harvard University, teaching and doing her research. Her research focuses on a feminist critique of opera and she has just finished a book on misogyny in opera.