

## ITALIAN THROUGH THE LANGUAGE & MUSIC OF OPERA

Autumn Term 2017

Wednesdays 14.15 - 15.45

This course is a rare opportunity to learn Italian entirely through the medium of opera both for the seasoned aficionado or recent convert, whether you know some Italian or none. It aims to be an experience of language learning enhanced by the aesthetic and emotional power of song. If you can follow and appreciate the original words to which the music is set, you're likely to enjoy opera much more than having to rely on a synopsis of the plot or a translation. Although you may encounter poetic or archaic words in some libretti, you will still acquire a grounding in standard modern Italian for use in other contexts.

Look at these two examples, then marvel how they sound when set to music:

**1. Grammar:** take an indefinite pronoun and the present subjunctive of a third conjugation verb, add some articulated prepositions and possessive adjectives, throw in a few imperatives, then conclude with the first person singular of the future tense repeated twice. So what do you get?...  
that soaring, breathtaking aria **Nessun dorma** from Puccini's Turandot.

**2. Vocabulary:** take a heated quarrel between four characters: an arrogant male chauvinist predator who thinks he's God's gift to women, the latest girl he's out to seduce but who says she'll have none of his cheap talk, the broken-hearted lass who fell for his charms whom he's now cheating on, then her father sworn on getting his revenge - all venting their feelings simultaneously. The result: language of dramatic intensity set to the sublime, interweaving harmonies of **Bella figlia dell'amore** the famous quartet in Verdi's Rigoletto.

If you like the idea, then come and learn the language of tragedy and comedy, of euphoric and visceral passions as you listen to the glorious music of Verdi, Puccini, Mozart, Donizetti, Rossini, Bellini and many more.

For further enquiries you are welcome to contact the tutor Adrian Hilton at:

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