

SINGER'S DICTION
SPRING 2018
FRENCH
MUS 2221

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Course Description

Singer's Diction is a course for singers and choral conductors, intended to improve their capacity to respond with ease, accuracy and expression in foreign languages. French diction presumes an understanding of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Through poetic readings, culture study, musical performances, phonetic drills and grammar/vocabulary practice, students develop skill in presenting French texts set to music. Each student will be expected to perform regularly in class and complete all quizzes, homework and notebook assignments and a final take home examination. Grading for the course is based upon attendance, initiative and progress.

Student Learning Outcomes

Using the International Phonetic Alphabet as a source, students will learn to pronounce poetic texts in French with accuracy. Students will become familiar with the historical and cultural events that influence the interpretation of French poetry. This knowledge will facilitate expressive interpretations of art song, operatic and oratorio repertoire in the French language. These skills will be evaluated in the presentations given at the conclusion of the course. The singer's notebook will serve as a resource for future reference and learning.

Textbook and Materials

The textbook for the course is *Singing in French* by Thomas Grubb (New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1979). Each student must own a French-English dictionary. *The Interpretation of French Song* by Pierre Bernac (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1970) is recommended. Supplementary material will be distributed regularly in class. Each student should have a notebook dedicated to diction materials. The singer's notebook forms a significant portion of the semester grade.

Measurement Tools

Attendance, initiative and progress are the criteria for grading. Prompt attendance insures the maximum learning opportunity for the entire class. Please notify the instructor in advance of anticipated lateness or absence. Cell phones and laptops are not appropriate for use in class. In emergency, please inform the instructor that equipment has been set in the 'vibrate' mode. Participation in class activities is required. All students must be present for all quizzes and dictations. No late work will be accepted.

Class Presentation

Each student will be expected to present one French text in spoken and sung form for the final grade. The presentation will include appropriate program notes, IPA transcriptions, word-by-word translations and poetic equivalents. The final presentation will be evaluated for the depth of preparation, accuracy of the diction and poetic analysis. Sources should be cited. An accompanist is available to assist in the preparation and presentation of the selection. Please dress respectfully when performing for the class.

Singer's Notebook

The singer's notebook is intended for the assembly and organization of material used in the study of lyric diction in French. The notebook should contain handouts, class notes, phonetic readings, word-by-word and poetic translations for all texts studied in the course. Historical information regarding each composer, poet, literary and musical period should be included.

Grading

The measurement tools will be calculated in the following way:

Attendance/Quizzes and Homework	15%
Class Presentation	25%
Singer's Notebook	35%
Final Exercise and Dictation	25%

Please consult the instructor at any time regarding expectations, progress and evaluation.

Office Hours

Office hours are posted on the door of MUB 302. Consultations at other times are available upon request. Feel free to communicate by e-mail or phone, if needed.

