

Music in the Czech Lands

Music has played a uniquely central role in the history of the Czech lands, and this course is designed to explain why this is so by following the development of music here since the Middle Ages. It begins with a survey of Czech history aimed at analysing the broad social and cultural changes affecting Bohemia and Moravia over the centuries. It goes on to deal with the country's unusually rich folk music tradition, which has been of great importance in the development of its musical life and has had a profound influence on many of its leading composers. The history of music from the Middle Ages on then follows, with the emphasis on the many links between musical life and musicians here and the rest of Central Europe, the role of national feeling in the development of the musical tradition, and the place of ethnic and other minorities.

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Syllabus:

1. (20-09-11) History of Czech lands and Brno - its architecture and institutions
2. (04-10-11) Early music: from the Middle Ages to ca 1550
3. (11-10-11) Early music: the musical chapel of Emperor Rudolf II. (1576-1612)
4. (18-10-11) Music of the 17th Century: Michna, Vejvanovský, Biber
5. (25-10-11) Music of the 18th Century: Zelenka, Vivaldi and others
6. (01-11-11) The Classical Era, Mozart in Prague
6. (08-11-11) The Czech lands 1800-1860, Early reflections of the Folk music
7. (15-11-11) Bedřich Smetana
8. (22-11-11) Antonín Dvořák
9. (29-11-11) Leoš Janáček
10. (06-12-11) Martinů, Haas, Hába, Schulhoff
11. (13-12-11) After 1945: Novák, Husa, Eben

Before each seminar, students are required to read the assigned readings, which provide background information and serve as the basis for class discussion. In addition, the following books are essential reading for those interested in the particular subjects.

Two essays of 1000-2000 words each are to be submitted by e-mail to the teacher. The particular topic should be discussed in advance.

- (1) Deadline 31 October 2011. Subject matter: History and music of the Czech lands before 1848, folk music.
 - (2) Deadline 15 December 2011. Subject matter: Any concerning Czech music, targeted or comparative. Specialized themes are preferred to those more general.
- Lecturer can be reached preferably by e-mail or during his office hours (Wednesdays 11-12, building N, 6th floor), by appointment at any other times.

The lessons will take place on Tuesday from 6.20 p.m. to 7.55 p.m. in room N21 of the Faculty of Arts, building Janáčkovo náměstí 2a. Teaching starts on 20 September 2011, last lecture is on 13 December 2011. Attention: There is no lecture on Tuesdays 27 September.

Other course activities: Possible visits to the National Theatres in Prague, Brno, Bratislava and Staatsoper in Vienna. See googlecalendar Music in Czech lands

Additional reading:

Related articles in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. London, 2001 (available for MU IP-adresses at www.grovemusic.com).

Related articles in Lebrecht, Norman: The Companion to 20th Century Music. London 1992.

Černý, Jaromír (ed.): Historical Anthology of Music in the Bohemian Lands (up to ca 1530). Prague 2005

Mihule, Jaroslav: A concise guide to the life and work of Bohuslav Martinů. Polička 2008.

Newmarch, R. The Music of Czechoslovakia. Oxford, 1942, 1969.

Sehnal, Jiří: Pavel Vejvanovský and the Kroměříž music collection. Perspectives of seventeenth-century music in Moravia. Olomouc 2008.

Štěpánek, V. and Karásek, B. An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music. Prague, 1964.

Tyrrell, J. Czech Opera. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Tyrrell, J. Janáček: Years of a Life, I (1864-1914), II (1914-1928). London, 2006, 2007.