

## **GMLI 548: Romanticism in European Music and Culture**

**Professor: Dr. Benjamin Binder**

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**Office Location: Room 215, School of Music**

**Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4 pm or by appointment**

Location of Class Meetings: Room 107, School of Music

Time and Date of Class Meetings: Thursdays 5:15-7:05

Credits: Two

Prerequisites: Graduate Status, or MUSC I-VI

(Students who have only passed MUSC I-IV must obtain instructor approval)

### Course Description

The Romantics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century put the individual and their own subjective perspective at the center of the universe. As a consequence, music was now considered the greatest of all the arts, precisely for its ability to engage our emotions and imaginations without recourse to overly concrete concepts or representations of reality. Poetry, literature, the visual arts, criticism and even philosophy aspired to be like music in order to achieve their own Romantic aims. In this course, we will compare musical expressions of Romanticism with its other cultural manifestations, not only to better understand Romantic music, but also to discover how the legacy of Romanticism continues to impact cultural life today.

### Course Objectives

In 1781, the philosopher Immanuel Kant (in his *Critique of Pure Reason*) argued that the single human being only experiences the world through the filter of his or her own perception. The world as it truly is – what Kant called “things in themselves” – could never be directly apprehended. As a result, we all lived detached from one another in our own personal universes. This earth-shaking claim about the nature of reality and our place in existence gave birth to Romanticism, with its focus on individuality and subjectivity, and its longing for a world beyond our knowing. With extraordinary imagination and passion, early 19<sup>th</sup>-century art and culture responded to this rift between subject and object and even attempted to reconcile it. This single idea lies at the heart of many of the bewilderingly diverse expressions of Romanticism in this period, and one of our main objectives in this course is to discover how this is so.

For that reason, it’s also important for us to take a wide-ranging and interdisciplinary approach to the subject, even though our main focus is music. Indeed, despite their renewed valorization of music, the Romantics believed that *all* the arts were trying to bridge the gap between subjective and objective reality. Some figures, such as the philosopher Friedrich Schlegel and the composer Richard

Wagner, even maintained that the arts were most effective only when the boundaries between them were blurred. In that spirit, we will also set ourselves the goal of uncovering Romanticism not just in music, but in a wide range of artistic media and different aspects of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century culture in general.

### Learning Outcomes

Here are some of the things you will do or should be able to do by the end of the semester:

- Situate a variety of 19<sup>th</sup>-century musical works in the political, philosophical, aesthetic, and cultural context of Romanticism
- Recognize and understand the complex significance of some of the archetypal figures, tropes and symbols of Romanticism in 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature, art, and music
- Explain the concept of Romantic subjectivity; use the concept as a tool to understand the specifically Romantic nature of individual 19<sup>th</sup>-century artworks
- Describe and critique the Romantic view of the arts and of artists; compare and contrast this view with our own 21<sup>st</sup>-century perspective
- Analyze the relationships between music and poetry in Romantic song with sensitivity and sophistication
- Evaluate the literary qualities of Romantic music, including programmatic music, “poetic” music, and other musical interactions with literature
- Make creative and historically informed decisions about how to interpret the music of this era as a performer, historian, analyst, and/or educator, all with an eye to enhancing the music’s accessibility and relevance in 21<sup>st</sup>-century musical life

### Course Materials

You are required to obtain scores of the following four works, all of which are available on Amazon.com:

1. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9*.

[http://www.amazon.com/Symphonies-Nos-Score-Ludwig-Beethoven/dp/0486260356/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134415&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Symphonies-Nos-Score-Ludwig-Beethoven/dp/0486260356/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134415&sr=1-1)

2. Hector Berlioz, *Symphonie Fantastique*.

[http://www.amazon.com/Symphonie-Fantastique-Harold-Italy-Score/dp/0486246574/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134466&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Symphonie-Fantastique-Harold-Italy-Score/dp/0486246574/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134466&sr=1-1)

3. Franz Schubert, *Winterreise*.

[http://www.amazon.com/Complete-Song-Cycles-English-German/dp/0486226492/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134481&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Complete-Song-Cycles-English-German/dp/0486226492/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1281134481&sr=1-1)

All other materials (scores, recordings, readings, videos) will be distributed in class, posted online (through electronic reserve or on Blackboard), and/or held on reserve behind the circulation desk at Gumberg Library. Your weekly assignment sheet will always give precise information about the location of all necessary materials.

### Attendance

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class meeting. You are responsible for reminding me of your attendance if you are late; if you don't, you may be marked absent. Latecomers will be recorded as such; persistent or egregious lateness will be penalized at my discretion.

Absences from class are either excused or unexcused, and *only verified excuses will be accepted*. Valid excuses for missing class are limited to illness (verified by a note from a professional health-care provider), pre-existing commitments (e.g. performing ensemble tour or paid professional engagement, verified by a printed program), family emergencies (verified by Karen Kriss), mental health emergencies (verified by the Counseling Center or other health professional) and religious holidays not otherwise specified in the Duquesne calendar. You must inform me of pre-existing commitments and religious holidays as soon as possible. If you fail to do so, I may not accept the excuse. While I will hold to these guidelines, I reserve the right to determine whether or not an excuse is valid.

Our class only meets once a week for a total of 14 meetings. To get the most out of this course, it is therefore extremely important that you attend each class session! Moreover, since you will be evaluated quite substantially on your preparation and participation, any absence will necessarily put an unseemly dent in your grade. As a result, if you need to miss a class for an excusable reason, you must write a 1000-word essay (approx. 4 pages, double-spaced) summarizing and critiquing the entirety of that week's assignment and have it delivered to me 24 hours in advance of class. If you are absent for unforeseeable reasons, you must submit the same essay to me by the beginning of the following class. (You may not do a response paper during a week in which you are absent.) The essay will restore whatever points you would have lost if the absence were unexcused. There is no way to restore points for unexcused absences.

### Graded Assignments

1. By and large, this will be a discussion-based, workshop-style seminar course, supplemented by a few mini-lectures. Therefore, a large portion of your final grade will be determined by your **preparation and participation** for class. At the beginning of every class meeting, I will distribute an assignment sheet dictating what you are expected to read, listen to, analyze, study, think about, and generally do or be ready to do before our next meeting. Your preparation and participation

grade will be based largely on how well you are able to demonstrate during our discussion that you have done this assignment. I am also looking for active, engaged, creative, thoughtful and constructive participation in our discussions, both in terms of quantity and quality. Be aware that sparse, insubstantial and/or non-existent participation will likely result in a very low participation grade.

Shortly before the midpoint of the semester, I will send you a report to let you know how you are doing in the class. The report will focus principally on your preparation and participation, and I will give you a sense of what grade you would receive in that area if the class were already over. However, please keep in mind that this is only an approximate indication of where your grade currently stands, not an actual grade. Please see “Grading Scale” below for more information about your preparation and participation grade.

2. For 12 of our class meetings, you will have the opportunity to submit a **response paper** as part of that week’s assignment. Each week, I will indicate which part or parts of an assignment are eligible for a response paper. For the paper, you must write a document of at least 400 words (approx. 2 pages, double-spaced) in which you briefly summarize the material I’ve specified and offer your own critique and ideas in response to it (hence the name). Usually you will be responding to a particular reading assignment, but occasionally I may ask you a few targeted questions about a piece of music instead. These papers are intended to help you organize your thoughts before we meet, so that we can get right into the discussion with the questions, concerns and ideas that you’ve formulated.

You need to complete 6 response papers by the end of the semester, which means you can skip 6 weeks of papers. It is your responsibility to keep track of this, however, not mine. Papers will be graded largely on how well they demonstrate that you’ve read and/or studied the material. I also expect you to follow the instructions given in the assignment sheet about what you need to discuss in these papers. In addition, I will be looking for your own creative contribution; these are *response* papers, not just summary papers. Your prose need not be perfect, but it should be clear enough for me to understand what you’re trying to say.

Finally, if you like, you may submit extra response papers over and above the 6 required papers as extra support for your preparation and participation grade. Those of you who find it difficult to participate regularly in class because of linguistic or personal issues may want to exercise this option. If during class discussion you show me that you’ve done the work and thought creatively about it, there is probably no need to submit these extra papers. Extra papers will not be graded with points – I will simply read them and factor them in to my calculations when it comes to figuring out your preparation and participation grade. Extra papers should be e-mailed to me, not posted on Blackboard.

3. Our final class meeting and examination period will be devoted to **presentations**. In your presentation, you’ll have the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills

that you've learned in this course to a musical work of your choosing. For this project, you will have two options:

(a) Choose a piece from the 19<sup>th</sup> century (one movement in length) that relates to Romanticism in some way and that you can perform on your own or with a few other people. You can team up with people in our class, ask me to accompany you, or bring in friends from outside of class to make this work. You can also make a transcription of a piece that isn't originally for your instrument if you like. You'll have 15 minutes of class time to offer a tiny lecture recital in which you introduce your piece with a small lecture and then perform it for us. Your goal is to give a presentation based upon sound scholarly research that will truly illuminate the Romantic qualities of your piece for your audience and make the performance you are about to give as meaningful, accessible, and engaging as possible. In particular, you will be required to do this by making a connection between the music you've chosen and another cultural expression of Romanticism in a different medium (e.g. poetry, literature, visual art, philosophy).

(b) This is the same as the first option, except that you can choose any Romantic piece of any length, and you would not perform the piece in its entirety. Instead, you would play brief snippets of recordings and/or perform short excerpts of the piece as part of your presentation.

Further information about the presentations will be distributed separately.

4. As an extension of the presentation project, you will write an **annotated bibliography** related to your chosen piece. This will give you the chance to explore your piece in depth from a different angle. The bibliography will consist of (1) a brief introduction (minimum 500 words, approx. 2 pages) that outlines a central issue, question, or problem concerning your piece, (2) summaries and critiques of 3 scholarly sources relevant to your piece, including a discussion of how each one would be useful in resolving the central issue or question (minimum 300 words each, approx. 3 pages total), and (3) a brief conclusion that articulates your final thoughts on the issue in light of the information contained in your sources and your own analysis of the piece (minimum 500 words, approx. 2 pages). Further information about the annotated bibliography will be distributed separately.

4. On Thursday 12/6, I will hand out the **take-home final exam**. This is an open-book exam covering all the material from the entire semester. You will be given two detailed essay questions to answer, including specific requirements about what pieces and readings to discuss. The exam is designed to take 4 hours (2 hours for each essay), and my expectations will be set accordingly. However, you will have about a week to prepare for the exam with questions in hand. The due date and time for the exam will be determined later.

Other Information About Graded Assignments

I will not accept any late assignments in this course. All late/missed assignments receive a grade of 0. I will allow you *one extension* during the term, provided it is justified. The earlier you request an extension, the more likely I am to authorize it. An extension may be used on any response paper or the annotated bibliography; however, it may not be used for the final exam or the presentations.

Please note that all written assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx) on Blackboard.

### Grading Scheme

Preparation and participation:	280 <sup>1</sup>
Response papers:	180 (6 X 30)
Presentation:	200
Annotated bibliography:	150
Take-home final exam:	200
Total:	1000

### Scale For Final Grades

At the end of the semester, you can add up all the points you've earned to determine your final grade:

A 933-1000	A- 900-932	B+ 866-899	B 833-865	B- 800-832	C+ 766-799
C 700-765	D 600-699	F Below 600			

### Academic Integrity

It has often been said that the more you know, the more you discover how much you don't know. To a certain extent, then, education is a process of managing your ignorance. But this is not a bad thing. To the intellectually curious, this state of affairs instigates our curiosity all the more, pushing us to explore new realms of knowledge, understanding and critical engagement.

To benefit from this mindset, it is crucial that one be honest about one's limited perspective at every stage of the academic process. Cheating on an exam, plagiarizing in your written assignments, misleading your instructor or fellow

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<sup>1</sup> Note: small written assignments or brief class presentations may be assigned from week to week that will be graded separately and taken from this total. For example, I might ask you to present a summary of an article to the class worth 20 points. I would grade your summary out of the 20 points, and the remainder of your preparation and participation grade (260 points) would be calculated proportionally based on the rest of your overall performance throughout the semester.

classmates for personal advantage: all these things deprive you of an accurate assessment of your work, because they result in a false account of the state of your knowledge. You gain nothing by being academically dishonest, and so I advise you, sheerly as a teacher concerned about the quality of your education, to avoid it. Don't waste this opportunity to manage your ignorance to the best of your ability.

Having said that, let me express in no uncertain terms that all violations of the Duquesne University Academic Integrity Policy (located in your Student Handbook – [http://www.studentlife.duq.edu/studenthandbook/05\\_academicintegrity.html](http://www.studentlife.duq.edu/studenthandbook/05_academicintegrity.html)) will be handled with the utmost severity, according to the procedures explained in the policy. Please review the policy in detail. If you witness an integrity violation, you must inform me about it immediately. If you are an accomplice to an integrity violation, you will be prosecuted along with the principal perpetrators. I will be on the lookout at all times for integrity offenses, and I encourage you to do the same. Our classroom is not a police state, of course, but it should be a place of the highest ethical standards, where respect and concern for the academic process and for one's colleagues is paramount.

Please understand that you can work together on each week's assignment, and in general you can help one another outside of class in getting a better handle on course material. However, when it comes to the actual specific execution of any graded assignment – the response papers, the final exam, the presentation, and the annotated bibliography – you must do all your own work. (In addition, for the final exam, you may *only* consult with me for help.) I strongly encourage you to contact me at once if you have any questions or concerns about a possible academic integrity issue, so that we can maximize your ability to help one another and minimize the chances of an unintended violation.

### Students With Documented Disabilities

All students who have documented disabilities must meet with me during the first two weeks of class to arrange for appropriate accommodations. This must be handled through the Office of Special Student Services. For more information, please see the office website at <http://www.duq.edu/special-students>.

### Office Hours and Extra Help

My office hours are listed at the top of page 1 of the syllabus. Please take advantage of them if you would like my help with anything whatsoever relating to the course. I can also make an appointment with you to meet outside of office hours if it is impossible for you to see me during that designated period; just send me an e-mail or ask me in class.

### Course Schedule:

**Please note:** This schedule is a general guide to the semester; topics may change depending on our progress and preferences. Look to the schedule for a general idea of what's coming next, but refer to the weekly assignment sheet for your specific assignment. If any changes are made to the assignment after the sheet has been distributed, I will let you know via e-mail and the Blackboard announcements page. (NB: All Blackboard announcements are duplicated as e-mails, so if you lose track of your e-mail for some reason, you can always check Blackboard for any updates you may have missed.)

Class No. 1: Preliminaries

Thursday 8/30

The post-Kantian subject

Figures of Romanticism: a survey

Class No. 2: Literary accounts of Romantic art and Romantic artists

Thursday 9/6

E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Kreiseriana*

Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's *Joseph Berglinger*

Auguste Balzac's *The Unknown Masterpiece*

Class No. 3: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony I

Thursday 9/13

Close study of 4<sup>th</sup> movement text and music

Class No. 4: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony II

Thursday 9/20

Philosophical and critical reactions to Beethoven's Ninth

The political message of the *Ode to Joy*: Enlightened or Romantic?

Class No. 5: Schubert's *Winterreise* I

Thursday 9/27

Caspar David Friedrich and German Romantic painting

The wanderer trope in Romantic and Biedermeier culture: Büchner's *Lenz*

Class No. 6: Schubert's *Winterreise* II

Thursday 10/4

Analysis of poetry and music – the Romantic relationship with nature

Class No. 7: Schubert's *Winterreise* III

Thursday 10/11

Analysis of poetry and music – Romantic madness

The *Nightwatches of Bonaventura*

Class No. 8: Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* I

Thursday 10/18

Berlioz's *Memoirs* and the French Romantic self



The literary influences: Chateaubriand  
Monomania – genius, madness, and desire

Class No. 9: Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique II*

Thursday 10/25

The literary influences: Quincey, Hugo  
Grotesquerie and the supernatural

**NO CLASS Thursday 11/1: All Saints Day**

Class No. 10: Schumann and "poetic music"

Thursday 11/8

Schumann and Jean Paul: is *Papillons* a programmatic piece?  
Unlocking the imagination with Schumann's piano music

Class No. 11: The Romantic Fragment

Thursday 11/15

Theorists of the fragment  
"Small" pieces by Chopin and Schumann

\*\*\*Annotated bibliography due Tuesday 11/20 by 5 pm on Blackboard

**NO CLASS Thursday 11/22: Thanksgiving break**

Class No. 12: Wild Card

Thursday 11/29

Possible topics: Liszt the demonic virtuoso; Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*; Romantic spirituality in the mass (Berlioz, Brahms, Verdi) and symphony (Mahler)

Class No. 13: Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*

Thursday 12/6

Music in Schopenhauer's philosophy  
Love, death, and music in *Tristan*: the apotheosis of Romanticism

\*\*\*Final exam handed out

Class No. 14: Presentations

\*\*\***Tuesday 12/11**

\*\*\*Final exam due by 5 pm on a date to be determined during final exam week (Dec. 12-18)

Final exam period: Presentations

Date and time TBD