

Musical Analysis (A005310)

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)

Credits 5.0

Study time 150 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2025-2026

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

seminar

independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Driesen, Pauline

LW17

staff member

Maes, Francis

LW17

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

[Bachelor of Arts in Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies](#)

crdts

5

offering

A

[Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies](#)

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Musicology

Position of the course

Continuity with "Music History until 1750" and "Music History 1750-1900" and preparation for the research seminar on music in the master.

Contents

Musical analysis represents an alternative approach to music history. The emphasis is no longer on the chronological story, but on the meaning of specific works. The focus of the approach is on the ways in which music makes meaning in its specific cultural context.

The narrative is constructed on the basis of the analysis proposed by philosopher Charles Taylor on the relationship of art and music to the cultural history of European secularism. The theory is part of his two major works, *A Secular Age* and *Cosmic Connections: Poetry in the Age of Disenchantment*. The major stages are "music as intensified action", "music as representation" and "absolute music". The theory is tested against concrete musical works and nuanced on the basis of music history.

The discussion focuses on iconic works, which best represent the stages that Taylor mentions. Examples include Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, Pergolesi's *Stabat mater* and *La Serva Padrona*, Mozart's *Ave verum*, Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Die Hebriden*, Mahler's *Third Symphony*, Debussy's *La Mer*, and Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* and *The Rake's Progress*.

The approach does not so much emphasize technical and stylistic analysis, which makes the course accessible to students without prior musical technical knowledge. For students who need analytical skills for their follow-up trajectory in bachelor's and master's theses, additional analytical exercises can be provided.

Initial competences

- To have successfully completed the course "Research skills II" or to have acquired its targeted skills through other ways.
- To have successfully completed the course "Music History until 1750" or to have

acquired its targeted skills through other ways.

Final competences

- 1 Critical attitude towards research in music analysis and music history.
- 2 Insight in the processes through which music can create cultural meaning.
- 3 Development and refinement of musical listening en sense of style.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Seminar. Independent preparation and discussion in class.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Allanbrook, W.J. (2014). *The Secular Commedia. Comic Mimesis in Late Eighteenth-Century Music*. Oakland: The University of California Press.

Indicative price: € 50

Optional: no

Language : English

Author : Wye Jamison Allanbrook

ISBN : 978-0-52027-407-5

Number of Pages : 234

Oldest Usable Edition : 2014

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : regularly

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : regularly

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : regularly

Type: Reader

Name: Taylor, Ch. (2007). *A Secular Age*. Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Selectie

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Number of Pages : 25

Oldest Usable Edition : 2007

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : No

References

- Charles Taylor (2007). *A Secular Age*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Charles Taylor (2024). *Cosmic Connections: Poetry in the Age of Disenchantment*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wye Jamison Allanbrook (2014). *The Secular Commedia: Comic Mimesis in Late Eighteenth-Century Music*. Oakland: The University of California Press.
- Daniel K.L. Chua (1999). *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Course content-related study coaching

personal assistance by the lecturer on request

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodical: oral exam

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time.
2. Feedback can be given by e-mail or appointment.

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy