

M 510
THE ITALIAN MADRIGAL

PROF. MASSIMO OSSI
SPRING 2018

TR 11:15AM-12:30PM, M 267

From Arcadelt to Marenzio, Wert, and Monteverdi, the Italian madrigal was one of the most popular genres of the Early Modern era. Over the course of its roughly 100-year history, it was the mainstay of amateurs and professionals alike, and being closely associated with the development of the market for printed music, it helped to establish musical literacy among a wide sector of Italian society, from craftsmen and merchants to courtiers. It reflected and participated in the spread of humanistic culture, setting poetry by Italy's greatest poets from Petrarch to Torquato Tasso, Battista Guarini, and Giambattista Marino. The madrigal's highly rhetorical musical language provided the foundation for the solo songs of the Florentine Camerata and their followers, as well as for soloistic duets and trios in the early seventeenth century.

This seminar-style course will explore both the madrigal repertory through analysis and discussion of individual works, as well as its cultural context, from literary theory to rhetoric, affect, court culture, and private patronage. Class sessions will consist of discussions interspersed with occasional lectures; there will be a final project, most likely focusing on some aspect of public musicology (program notes, preparation of performance programs, wikipedia articles, etc.).