

Love Songs

D. Singing of Love

Two iconic love-songs-in-disguise that also touch many other bases as well: one from the Broadway stage, the other from grand opera.

Rodgers and Hammerstein: *Carousel* (1945), bench scene, first half (recording studio; Jessie Mueller, *Julie Jordan*; Joshua Henry, *Billy Bigelow*)

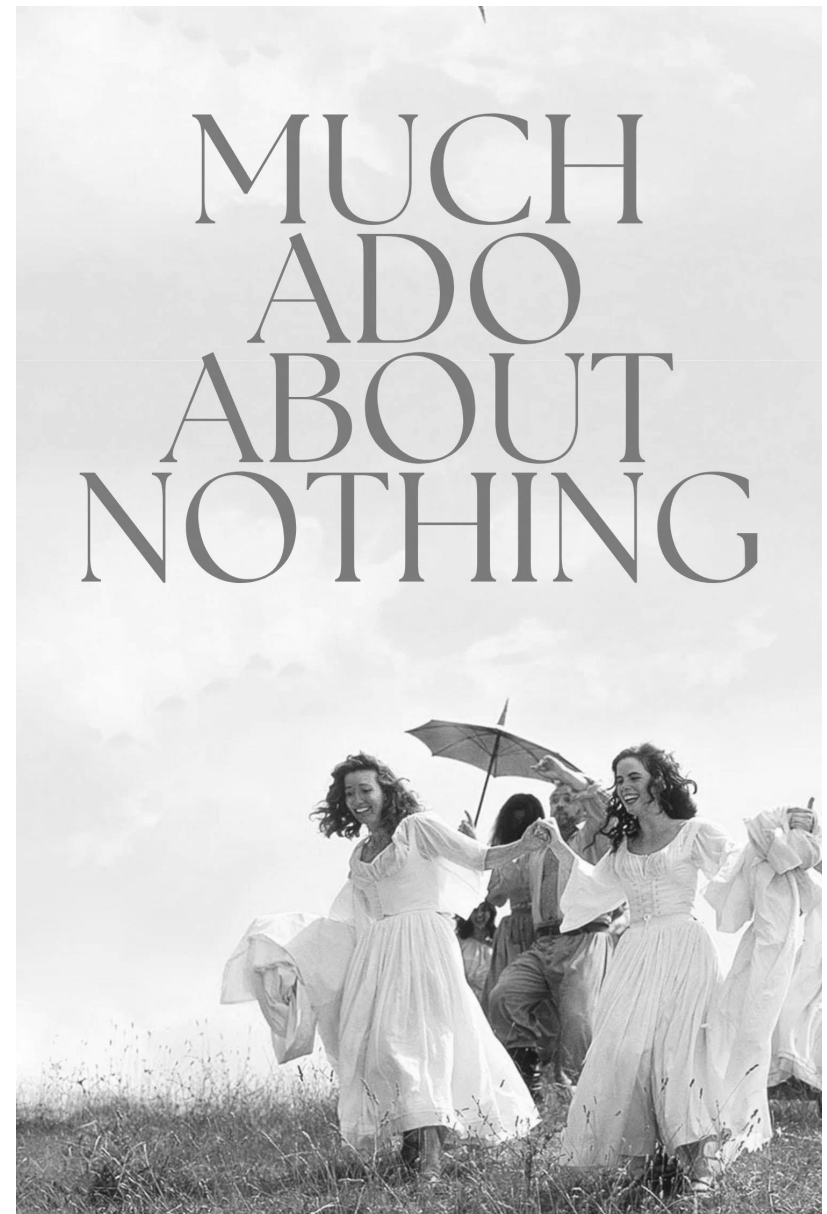
Puccini: *La bohème* (1896), end of Act III (Met Opera 2018; Franco Zeffirelli, *director*; Sonya Yoncheva, *Mimi*; Michael Fabiano, *Rodolfo*; Susanna Phillips, *Musetta*; Lucas Meachem, *Marcello*)

Frederick **Ashton** (1904–88, *British choreographer*), Hector **Berlioz** (1803–69, *French composer*), Alexander **Ekman** (1984–, *Swedish choreographer*), Sammy **Fain** (1902–89, *American composer*), Otto **Hammerstein II** (1895–1960, *American lyricist*), Jean-Christophe **Maillot** (1960–, *French choreographer*), Wayne **McGregor** (1970–, *British choreographer*), Alan **Menken** (1949–, *American composer*), John **Neumeier** (1939–, *American choreographer*), Cole **Porter** (1893–1964, *American composer*), Giacomo **Puccini** (1858–1924, *Italian composer*), Richard **Rodgers** (1902–79, *American composer*), William **Shakespeare** (1564–1616, *English poet and playwright*)

For more detail and lots of color, see the class website:

<http://www.brunyate.com/LoveSongs/>

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3. Saying it Slant

October 5, 2026

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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING—THE SHAKESPEARE COMEDY WHOSE protagonists, Beatrice and Benedick, spend so much time insulting one another that the only explanation can be that they are really in love. So yes, we are starting this class with Shakespeare once again, for he effectively set the standard for off-kilter expressions of love. In the first hour, we follow his idea of love-hate relationships from *The Taming of the Shrew* through Hollywood movies to contemporary rock.

The second hour looks at how such ambiguous relationships play out in ballet, which is an ambiguous medium anyhow. We end with two iconic examples of not-quite-love songs, from American musical theater and Italian opera. *rb*.

A. Shakespeare with a Twist

A sonnet that begins with insults, two plays where insult is the main currency, and two of their derivatives.

Shakespeare: *Sonnet CXXX* (Alan Rickman, David Bailie, Ben Smith, and “christine4771”)

Shakespeare: *Much Ado About Nothing*, first exchange (Branagh film 1993; Kenneth Branagh, Emma Thompson)

Berlioz: *Béatrice et Bénédicte* (1864), ending (Glyndebourne 2019; Laurent Pelly, *director*; Paul Appleby, Stéphanie d’Oustrac)

Shakespeare: *The Taming of the Shrew*, first meeting (Globe 2012; Simon Paisley Day, Samantha Spiro)

Porter: *Kiss Me, Kate*, “Were thine that special face” (London 1999; Brent Barrett, Rachel York)

B. From Hate to Love

A variety of works showing a couple progressing from dislike to love, or relationships based on the alternation of love and loathing.

Film: *Ten Things I Hate About You*, Kat’s poem (movie 1999; Gil Junger, *director*; Julia Stiles, Heath Ledger)

Puccini: *La bohème* (1896), Musetta’s Waltz (Met Opera 2018; Franco Zeffirelli, *director*; Susanna Phillips)

Fain: “I can do without you,” duet from *Calamity Jane* (movie 1953; David Butler, *dir*; Doris Day, *Jane*; Howard Keel, *Wild Bill Hickock*)

Menken: “Something there” from *Beauty and the Beast* (Disney 1992)

Hailee Steinfeld: “Rock bottom” (Malia James video 2016, with DNCE)

C. Wordless Passion

Lacking words, ballet is an intrinsically ambiguous medium, making it less suited to irony—but also opening the door to the possibility of amorous interpretations. Since it is so physical even in its chaster moments, choreographers cannot rely on contact to express love, but must rely on games and metaphor.

Maillot: [*subject withheld*] brief clip (Monte Carlo Ballet 2020; Matěj Urban and Ekaterina Petina)

Ashton: *La fille mal gardée* (1960), ribbon dance (Royal Ballet 2005; Carlos Acosta, *Colas*; Marianela Nuñez, *Lise*)

Ekman: *Play* (2017), “Girl on a cube” (Paris Opera Ballet 2017; Marion Barbeau, Simon Le Borgne)

McGregor: *Chroma* (2005), central *pas-de-deux* (Royal Ballet 2015; Eric Underwood, Mara Galeazzi)