

Sherborn Lifetime Learning Series – Council on Aging

Opera for Everyone!

Instructor: Erika Reitshamer

“Five Great Jewish Composers”

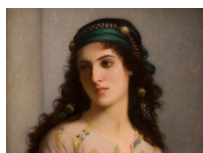
All 90-minute classes take place on Tuesdays and start at 1:30 pm
from October 22 – November 19, 2024 **via Zoom**

In this course, we’re going to look at five great Jewish composers
and explore their lives and work in opera.



Jacques Offenbach – **The Tales of Hoffmann** – October 22, 2024

The opera is a genuine French *grand opéra fantastique* with a large-scale cast, spectacular design and stage effects. It is Offenbach’s only **serious** opera. The work deals with three of Hoffmann’s stories depicting a great love of his life. DVD cast: Vittorio Grigólo, Sonya Yoncheva.



Fromental Halévy – **La Juive** – The Jewess – October 29, 2024

The French *grand opéra* *La Juive* deals with an impossible love between a Christian man and a Jewish woman. When the affair is discovered, Rachel faces two impossible choices. Deny her love and save her lover. Deny her God, and save herself. DVD cast: Neil Shicoff, Kassimira Stoyanova.



Giacomo Meyerbeer – **L’Africaine** – The African Woman – November 5, 2024

The French *grand opéra* revolves around the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama’s voyage to India. He meets a beautiful African princess named Sélíka who is captured and enslaved. She falls in love with Vasco, but realizes that he still loves Inès. Sélíka takes her life. DVD cast: Shirley Verrett, Plácido Domingo.



Erich Korngold – **Die Tote Stadt** – The Dead City – November 12, 2024

The opera tells the story of a young man torn between fidelity to the memory of his deceased wife and a growing attraction to her living look-alike. He enters a series of disturbing visions. The plot takes on the subtleties of a psychological thriller. DVD cast: Marlis Petersen, Jonas Kaufmann.



George Gershwin – **Porgy and Bess** – November 19, 2024

Porgy and Bess tells the story of the unshakeable love between Porgy, a crippled beggar, and Bess, a beautiful woman haunted by the demons of her past. It was George Gershwin’s final stage work and is a combination of opera, jazz, folk, and spirituals. DVD cast: Eric Owens, Laquita Mitchell.

Instructor: **Erika Reitshamer** is returning to Sherborn COA. She was born and educated in Germany and is a passionate and life-long fan of opera. She is a noted lecturer in the greater Boston area and teaches at Regis College for their Lifelong Learning Programs as well as at various libraries, town halls and retirement communities. Erika was active in the formation of the Boston Lyric Opera Company more than 45 years ago. She led opera tours to Europe and served as vice president of the Boston Wagner Society for many years. She is a member of the Sudbury Opera Lovers Organization.