

Fall 2019
ITAL-GA 2192

Ariadne's Echo: Reception and Intertextuality Across Artistic Media

Prof. Eugenio Refini

Mondays, 3:30-6:10

Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, Library (Room 203)

Same as COLIT-GA 3918



Abandoned by Theseus, Ariadne lamenting on the shore of Naxos embodies one of the most powerful tropes in literature and the arts. The fate of the heroine who helped Theseus out of the labyrinth became itself a thread (indeed, an inexhaustible series of threads) running across the ages and populating the imagination of poets, painters, composers. After exploring in detail the classical sources that canonized Ariadne's myth (e.g., Catullus, Ovid, Philostratus), we will turn to the reception of Ariadne in literature and music (Ludovico Ariosto, Giambattista Marino, Ottavio Rinuccini and Claudio Monteverdi, Franz Joseph Haydn, Friedrich Nietzsche, Vernon Lee, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Richard Strauss and Hugo Von Hofmannsthal). The analysis of the various case studies will focus on the rhetorical and poetical devices used by poets and composers to reenact the vocal features of Ariadne's lament. More precisely, we will consider the ways in which the 'acoustic' image of the heroine's echo conveys intertextual discourses about the dynamics of reception across artistic mediums and genres. As such, the seminar aims to illustrate the pivotal role played by the poetical – and specifically operatic – Italian tradition as a particularly productive site for the modern reverberation of Ariadne's voice. Indeed, we will see how the Baroque appropriation of the myth in poetry and music remains active as a filter through which to cut through the layers of reception that separate modern audiences from the heroine's prototypical lament.