

# PATHS OF GLORY, VISIONS OF HORROR

## The Music and Art of World War I

Tuesday, October 29, 2019  
Newman Recital Hall  
University of Southern California

Umberto Boccioni,  
*Simultaneous Visions*, 1912

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- This event commemorates the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles by exploring music and art of the years 1914 to 1922 (the years of, and immediately following, World War I).
- USC history professor emeritus Elinor Accampo will illuminate the ways this shattering military conflict affected the social fabric and artistic sensibilities of Europe and America during this period. Accampo is a modern Europeanist with a specialization in French social and cultural history.
- The event has been organized by Elinor Accampo and Ralph Kirshbaum, the chair of the Strings Department at the USC Thornton School of Music. Kirshbaum has performed with many of the world's great orchestras, including the Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras; the San Francisco, Pittsburgh, BBC, and London symphonies; the Cleveland Orchestra; the Los Angeles Philharmonic; London Philharmonia; Zurich Tonhalle; Orchestre de Paris; and Israel Philharmonic.
- Musical selections will be performed by artists from the USC Thornton School of Music.

### WORLD WAR I

From 1914 to 1918, World War I embroiled Europe, Russia, the United States, the Middle East, and other regions in brutal military conflict. One of the watershed moments of twentieth-century history, the war led to the fall of four imperial dynasties (in Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey); the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia; and the destabilization of Europe.

The scope of death and destruction caused by World War I was vast and unprecedented, in part because of the introduction of machine guns to battle. About 8.5 million soldiers, and 13 million civilians, died as a result of the conflict. Another 50 million people died from a flu epidemic in 1918–19 that spread in part because of the mass movement of troops and refugees during and after the war.

The Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919, was the most important of several peace treaties that brought the war to an end.

## FUTURISM

Futurism was an early-twentieth-century artistic movement that celebrated the power of machines and the dynamism of modern life. The movement was founded in 1909 when the Italian poet and editor Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876–1944) published a manifesto that exalted violence as a cleansing agent that would sweep away traditional values and institutions.

## OFFICIAL WAR ARTISTS

British official war artists were employed and commissioned by the government to produce specific works documenting World War I, World War II, and specific military actions during the postwar period.

## SELECTED ARTISTS

The artists featured in this program include

**George Bellows** (1882–1925)—American realist painter best known for his depictions of New York City life. He also painted graphic depictions of the German invasion of Belgium during World War I. Some criticized him for depicting events he had not witnessed firsthand.

**Claude Debussy** (1862–1918)—French composer and one of the most important forces in twentieth-century music. His system of harmony and structure expressed many of the ideals of the Impressionist and Symbolist painters of his time. No public funeral was held at the time of his death in 1918 because Paris was being bombed.

**Otto Dix** (1891–1969)—painter and engraver who was part of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity), a group of German artists who turned to realism as a rejection of expressionism after World War I.

**Sir Edward Elgar** (1857–1934)—the first English composer to achieve international stature since the seventeenth century. During World War I, he composed occasional patriotic pieces.

**Gabriel Fauré** (1845–1924)—French composer whose style influenced many twentieth-century composers. Amid the bitter international conflict of World War I, he spoke against the idea of musical nationalism, saying music is “a language belonging to a country so far above all others that it is dragged down when it has to express feelings or individual traits that belong to any particular nation.”

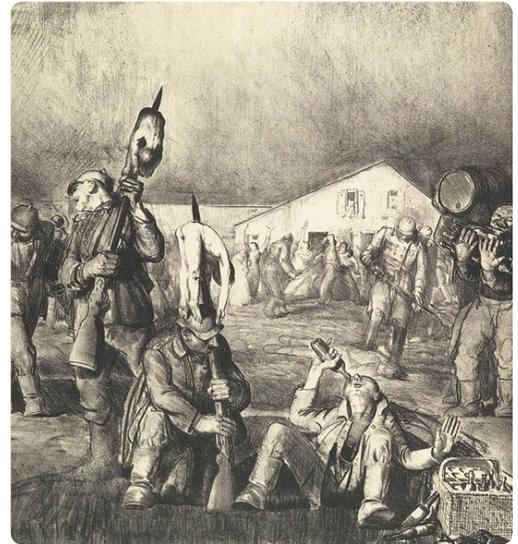
**George Grosz** (1893–1959)—German artist known for caricatures and for paintings of Berlin life during the 1920s. He was part of Berlin Dada and the New Objectivity.

**Percy Wyndham Lewis** (1882–1957)—English artist who founded the Vorticist movement, which extolled the virtues of machines, opposed sentimentality, and aimed to connect art to industrialism. The movement flourished in England circa 1912–15.

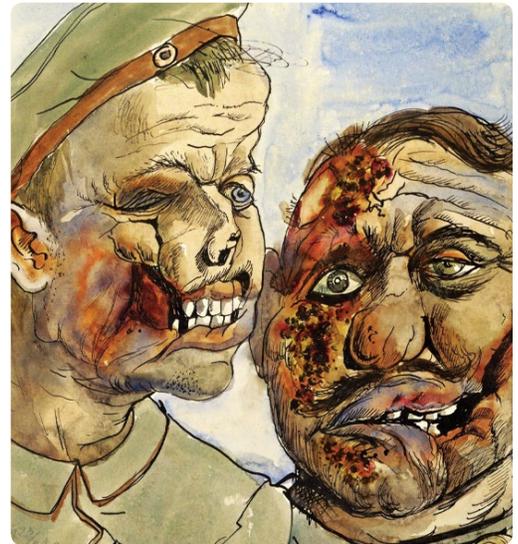
**Paul Nash** (1889–1946)—British surrealist and an official war artist known for lyrical landscapes that were informed by modernism and an awareness of the horrors of war.

**C.R.W. Nevinson** (1889–1946)—English visual artist; one of the most famous war artists of World War I.

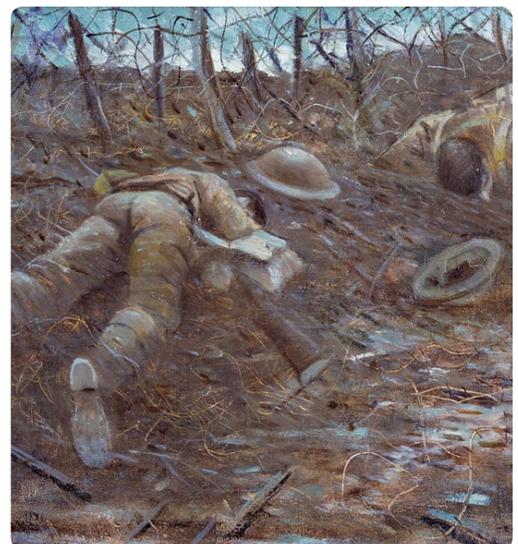
**Sir William Orpen** (1878–1931)—Irish painter known for his portraits who also worked as an official British war artist during World War I.



George Bellows, *The Bacchanale*, 1918



Otto Dix, *In Memory of the Glorious Time*, 1924



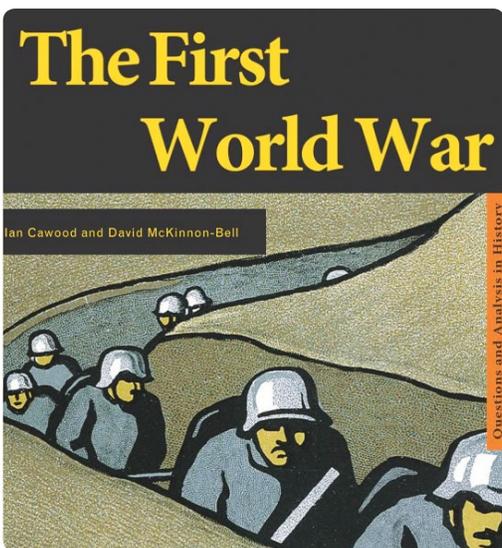
C.R.W. Nevinson, *Paths of Glory*, 1917



Maurice Ravel



John Singer Sargent, *Gassed*, 1919



**Maurice Ravel** (1875–1937)—French composer of Swiss-Basque descent. Associated with Impressionism, he famously collaborated with artists such as the Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev and the writer Colette. Ravel briefly served in World War I as a truck driver at the front. During the war, when a French group campaigned to ban the performance of German music, Ravel insisted, “It would be dangerous for French composers to ignore systematically the productions of their foreign colleagues, and thus form themselves into a sort of national coterie: our musical art, which is so rich at the present time, would soon degenerate, becoming isolated in banal formulas.”

**John Singer Sargent** (1856–1925)—Italian-born American expatriate artist known as the leading portraitist of the Edwardian generation. In May 1918, he was commissioned by the British War Memorials Committee to create a large painting for a planned Hall of Remembrance (a plan that was later abandoned and incorporated into the Imperial War Museum).

### FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ◉ In depicting or illuminating an event or experience, are there things music can express that visual art cannot? And vice versa?
- ◉ Do you notice present-day examples of trends or movements in art that are shaped by current events?
- ◉ What do you think of the idea of nationalism in music, as opposed to Fauré’s contention that music is “a language belonging to a country so far above all others that it is dragged down when it has to express feelings or individual traits that belong to any particular nation”?

### IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

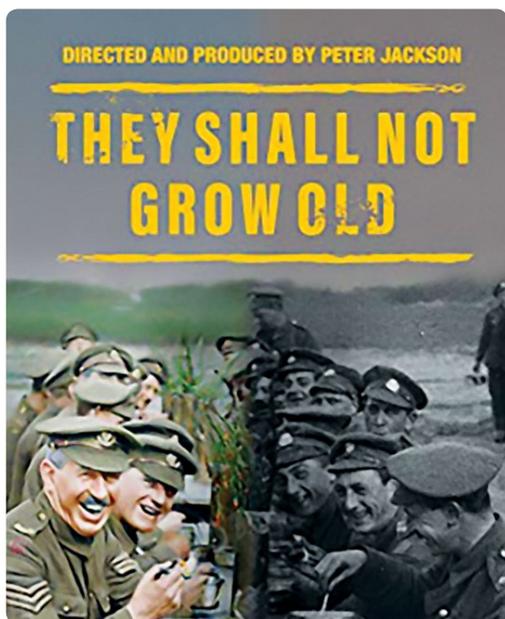
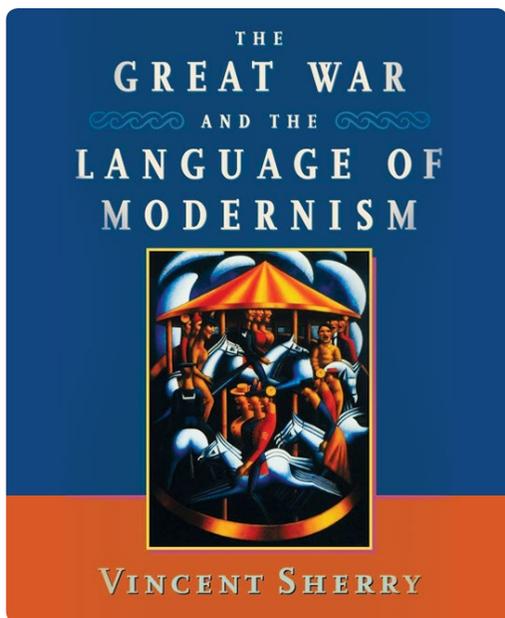
- ◉ The Piatigorsky International Cello Festival: [piatigorskyfestival.usc.edu](http://piatigorskyfestival.usc.edu)
- ◉ The USC Thornton School of Music: [music.usc.edu](http://music.usc.edu)
- ◉ LA Phil: [laphil.com](http://laphil.com)

### DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**ANTHONY ANDERSON** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about World War I and its effects on music and literature. Those with a call number (e.g., books, CDs, and DVDs) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. journal articles and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](http://libraries.usc.edu).

#### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- ◉ Bergonzi, Bernard. *Heroes’ Twilight: A Study of the Literature of the Great War*. 3rd ed. Manchester: Carcanet, 1996.  
**DOHENY LIBRARY: PR478.E8 B4 1996**
- ◉ Cawood, Ian and David McKinnon-Bell. *The First World War*. London: Routledge, 2001.  
**DOHENY LIBRARY: DS521.C437 2001**



- Foreman, Lewis. *Oh, My Horses! Elgar and the Great War*. Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions, 2001.  
**MUSIC LIBRARY: ML410.E41 O32 2001**
- Sherry, Vincent B. *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the First World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.  
**DOHENY LIBRARY: PN771.C27 2005**
- Sherry, Vincent B. *The Great War and the Language of Modernism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.  
**DOHENY LIBRARY: PR478.W65 S47 2003**
- Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Cello*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.  
**MUSIC LIBRARY: ML910.C36 1999**

#### AUDIO VISUAL

- Carruthers, Bob. *The Great War Poets*. Ramsey, Isle of Man: Beckmann Visual Publishing, 2014.  
**LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 10314**
- Elgar, Edward, et al. *Cello Concerto / Sea Pictures*. New York, NY: EMI Classics, 1997.  
**MUSIC LIBRARY: CD-AUDIO 24608MUS**
- Ives, Stephen, et al. *The Great War*. Arlington, VA: PBS Distribution, 2017.  
**LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 11408**
- Jackson, Peter, et al. *They Shall Not Grow Old*. Blu-ray + DVD [combo pack]. Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Home Entertainment, 2019.  
**LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 13007**

#### SELECTED DATABASES

- **JSTOR:** A growing full text collection of core social science, humanities, and science journals.
- **Oxford Music Online:** Begin your music research here! This is the access point for Grove Music Online, the Encyclopedia of Popular Music, the Oxford Dictionary of Music, and the Oxford Companion to Music.
- **ProQuest:** Databases of resources for arts, business, humanities, social sciences, science and newspaper resources.