

PERFORMANCE & ANALYSIS
Experimental Music in Practice
Music Department MUSIC-UA 206
Spring 2018

COURSE

Instructor: Prof. Alice Teyssier
Instructor Email: teyssier@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Monday 11:30PM-12:30PM and by appointment
Meeting: M 4:00-6:30PM in Silver 220

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Equally welcoming to trained and untrained musicians, this ensemble/course focuses on the interpretation of graphic and text-based scores as well as situation works, emphasizing the spirit of fun, spontaneity, and collaborative decision-making. As a basis for interpretive learning, we will study and perform scores by Victor Adan, Mark Applebaum, Earle Brown, John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Carolyn Chen, Julius Eastman, Roman Haubenstock-Ramati, Miya Masaoka and Pauline Oliveros. The mid-term concert will feature performances with projections of the score and engaged discussion about the composers' idiosyncratic approaches and the ensemble's interpretations. The second part of the term will focus on the composition and elaboration of experimental ensemble works, which will focus on personal style and the sonic resources available from within the ensemble. The final concert will feature performances by members of the ensemble of their colleagues' work, similarly projected and described for the benefit of the audience.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The required text is Jennie Gottschalk's wonderful book, "Experimental Music Since 1970" (Bloomsbury, 2016). I will provide additional reading materials, scores and listening samples on the course Classes page, under the "Resources" tab, so please keep abreast of these. An ongoing document will be available for compiling additional resources, welcoming every participant in the course to contribute their ideas and impact class discussions.

This course will be treated as an ensemble: we will practice all kinds of instrumental techniques, perform works, and create and invent instruments. Please come with any instrument you are interested in playing, and mostly with an open and non-judgmental attitude, ready to have fun and try new things!

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

This class is an ensemble, so attendance to all class meetings is crucial and mandatory. An absence will bring down your attendance score by 2% unless you provide appropriate reasons for your inability to attend (i.e. a note from your doctor).

Participation and openness in this course is not only part of your grade, but it also allows you to contribute to our progress towards the performances. We all benefit from everyone's complete involvement!

Each Monday evening, I will post a sound sample or video that you should compose a brief response to; responses are due by noon on Monday of the following week. The prompt will be posted on Classes.

SCHEDULE

The class will be broken down into two segments. The first 60-90 minutes will constitute the listening/discussion component of the class, engaging with Gottschalk's text and finding current musical examples. After a short break, the class will reconvene to rehearse a work of the experimental music repertoire. After the mid-term performance, the first part of the class will be reserved for study and development of our own original scores, and the second part will constitute the rehearsal.

1.22 | Introduction: What is experimental music?

Listening: John Cage "Seven"

Learn: Pauline Oliveros "Arctic Air" and "The Earthworm Also Sings"

1.29 | Indeterminacy, Change, Non-Subjectivity

Read: Gottschalk 1-34

Listening: Iancu Dumitrescu/Ana Maria Avram *Guided Improvisations*

Learn: George Lewis "Artificial Life"

2.5 | Scientific Approaches

Read: Gottschalk 41-71

Listening: Xenakis "Tetras"

Learn: Victor Adán "Tractus"

2.12 | Physicalities

Read: Gottschalk 77-102

Listening: Mark Applebaum "Aphasia"

Learn: Alison Knowles "Performance Piece #8" and "For Any Number of Vocalists"

[2.19 | NO CLASS]

2.26 | Perception

Read: Gottschalk 107-147

Listening: Maryanne Amacher "Head Rhythm" and "Plaything"

In-class listening experience: Alcin Lucier "I am sitting in a room"

3.5 | Information, Language, Interaction

Read: Gottschalk 155-217

Listening: Duo *The*; Natacha Diels "Words to Sleep by"

Learn: Carolyn Chen "Declaration"

3.19 | Place and Time

Read: Gottschalk 227-282 (written responses)

Viewing: Chance Conversations: An Interview with Merce Cunningham and John Cage

In-class: Recap Program for Mid-term Concert

3.26 | Dress Rehearsal for Mid-Term Concert

3.27 | MIDTERM PERFORMANCE AT BOBST IMMERSION ROOM

4.2 | Creating and Building Instruments: with guest Jaime Oliver

4.9 | Student Compositions: Learning and Rehearsing

[4.16 NO CLASS]

4.23 | Student Compositions: Learning and Rehearsing

4.30 | Student Compositions: Learning and Rehearsing

5.4 | 7:30PM FINAL PERFORMANCE IN SILVER 220

5.7 | In-class wrap up discussion

GRADE BREAKDOWN

30% | Attendance and Class Participation

25% | Weekly Responses

15% | Midterm Performance

15% | Final Composition

15% | Final Performance

ETIQUETTE

I expect my classroom to be the site of vibrant and respectful discourse. Please refrain from distracting behaviors during class (ie: private conversations, excessive breaks...); this also holds for when video and audio examples are being played. The issues being discussed are complex and embodied, requiring your full concentration and awareness. Each student's individual behavior goes a long way in setting a positive tone for the class. Your questions, comments and insights are more than welcome during lectures; just raise your hand and make your comments available to the entire class. In recitation sections, of course, all are expected to contribute regularly to discussions.

Cell phones should be silenced and put away during all class times. While computers may be used for note-taking or as resources, frivolous personal use (read: Facebook, iMessaging...) will not be tolerated.

DISCLAIMER ON THE SYLLABUS

This syllabus is a *working document*. As the semester progresses, we will make changes to reflect the needs of the group, your input, holidays and the schedules of guest lecturers. Updates to the syllabus will be posted on the NYU Classes site and announced in class.