Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University

AN IDENTITY CRISIS? IN SEARCH OF THE UNIQUELY “CANADIAN” IN MUSIC

MUSIC 3760B: TOPICS IN CANADIAN MUSIC
Winter 2017
Course Syllabus

Course meetings: Wednesdays, 1:30–3:30 p.m. / Fridays, 1:30–2:30 p.m., TC-202
Instructor: Dr. Eva Branda
Office hours: Wednesdays, 4:00–6:00 p.m. or by appointment (TC-321)
Email: ebranda@uwo.ca
Website: https://owl.uwo.ca/portal

Prerequisites:
Music 1710F/G and Music 2710F/G. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description:
What is Canadian identity? How can it be expressed in music? In what ways are the musical traditions of Canada unique and distinct from those of other nations? Is national identity still relevant in twenty-first-century Canada or has this become an essentially out-dated concept?

Using these and other questions to guide our discussions, we will explore the many types of music that have been cultivated on Canadian soil. We will consider several case studies taken from the realms of both popular and art music. These examples, studied in conjunction with a variety of primary and secondary sources, will reveal some of the ways in which Canadian composers and performing artists have grappled with issues of identity. Although recent scholarly work causes us to view nationalism in general with an increasing skepticism, questions about national identity continue to be asked and the Canadian sesquicentennial provides an excellent opportunity for deeper reflection on this topic as it relates specifically to music.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify some of the key problems and issues one faces when attempting to define Canadian musical identity
2. Describe with precision the musical features of the works covered in class and explain how they fit into a uniquely Canadian historical narrative
3. Engage critically with a variety of scholarly sources and communicate ideas effectively both verbally (in presentations and class discussions) and in prose (on exams and written assignments)

* It is hoped that this course will also encourage students to take more of an interest in Canadian music.
Required Materials:
None. Readings have been posted to the course website as PDFs and some are on reserve in the library in hardcopy. (Many of the articles that we will examine may also be accessed electronically on JSTOR.) Recordings are available on the course playlist in Naxos Music Library.

Evaluation:
Attendance and Participation 10%
Weekly Responses 10% (due on select Fridays; see course schedule)
In-Class Presentation 10% (scheduled individually throughout the semester)
Film Review 5% (February 3)
Midterm Exam 15% (February 15)
Paper Proposal 5% (March 10)
Final Essay 20% (April 7)
Final Exam 25% (TBA)

Evaluation in Detail

Preparation:
This course is conducted as a seminar. Each week, we will investigate a particular topic relating to our course theme. Wednesday classes are intended to give you some background on the week’s topic and to in-class presentations. You will need to study and become very familiar with the required reading and listening. Friday classes will be devoted to the discussion of a variety of articles. On select Fridays, you will also be required to hand in a written response to the reading.

Attendance and Participation:
The success of this seminar will depend in large part on your contributions to class discussions. Make sure that you attend every class and that you come prepared, having completed the required readings and listening. While doing the readings, you should be thinking about the ways in which the author’s ideas relate to the course theme. Keep track of any aspects of the readings that you found to be particularly thought-provoking, intriguing, or insightful. Likewise, make note of anything that you considered to be confusing/difficult to understand and/or anything with which you disagreed. Take the same approach when listening to the assigned musical examples for each week. In class, you need to be willing to offer your thoughts/opinions and to ask questions of others. We should all strive to create an environment in class where everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas. Regular attendance and a curiosity for the topics at hand are essential in order for you to be successful in this course.

Weekly Responses:
On five Fridays (listed in the course schedule below), you will be required to submit a short written response to the day’s reading. Your response should be between 250 and 350 words in length and should develop some aspect of the assigned article(s) in a bit of detail. Avoid simply reiterating or summarizing the author’s main points. Strive, instead, to make meaningful connections to some of the topics discussed in the course and to communicate your opinion on the author’s position. These weekly responses are designed to ensure that you have read/thought
about the readings before coming to class and to give quieter students the opportunity to share their ideas with me.

**In-Class Presentation:**
At the start of the semester, you must schedule an in-class presentation to be delivered at one of the Wednesday classes. The presentation should be approximately 15 minutes in length. You will be required to provide an in-depth look at an excerpt from one of the musical examples included on the syllabus, drawing attention to the ways in which it relates to the week’s topic. This will involve some additional research beyond the assigned readings. You may use any kind of audio and visual aid that you think will make your presentation more engaging, including CDs, DVDs, PowerPoint, handouts, live performances, etc. The presentation also has a written component (a handout or PowerPoint presentation) that will be submitted to me and made available to the other students in the class.

**Film Review:**
For this assignment, you will need to write a review of *Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould* (1993), written and directed by François Girard. Why do you think that Glenn Gould has become such a Canadian icon? What specifically does the film reveal about the contexts that shaped Gould and about his Canadian identity? In your view, does the film provide a fair portrayal of Gould? In a short paper (ca. 750 words in length), you will be required to comment on the film’s effectiveness and the ways in which it relates to the main themes of the course. The Film Review is worth 5% of your course grade and is due on Friday February 3 (1:30 p.m.).

**Midterm Exam and Final Exam:**
It is your responsibility to arrive on time and prepared (with a writing utensil and a student ID card) for your midterm exam and final exam. Electronic devices are NOT permitted during exams. If you have a disability that needs to be accommodated, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. Make-up exams will be administered only in cases of illness, when a medical certificate is provided or under extenuating circumstances. The midterm exam will be written in week 7 (on February 15) and constitutes 15% of your course grade. The final exam, which is worth 25% of your overall grade, will be scheduled during the examination period at the end of the semester (April 9–30). Either plan to travel after April 30 or wait until the exam schedule has been posted before making your travel arrangements.

Both the midterm and the final exam will contain a series of short and long answer questions to which you will be required to write thoughtful responses. These questions will draw upon some of the main themes and ideas that were explored in the readings and during in-class discussions. The exams will also have a listening component to test your familiarity with the required musical examples.

**Paper Proposal:**
You will be required to submit an essay proposal, due on Friday March 10 (1:30 p.m.) and worth 5% of your course grade. The proposal will include a 350-word abstract of your paper and a properly-formatted working bibliography with a minimum of eight scholarly sources on it.
**Final Essay:**
The final essay should be approximately 8 to 10 pages in length and it should relate closely to some aspect of the course. Many essay topics will suggest themselves as you complete the weekly readings/listening and engage in class discussions. You are strongly encouraged to choose a topic that interests you and one for which there are sufficient scholarly materials. If you are stuck, please come see me with at least a rough idea of what you would like to do/where your main interests lie. Avoid selecting a piece/topic that was discussed in detail in class.

**Plagiarism and Turnitin:**
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf). If you are unsure of whether or not you are committing a Scholastic Offence, please contact me immediately.

Turnitin.com will be used in this course for both of the required papers (the short assignment and the final essay). All papers submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([http://www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**Religious accommodation:**
When scheduling of course requirements conflicts with religious holidays that require absence from the university, the student must inform me at the start of the term, so that alternate arrangements can be made. For religious holidays recognized by the university, please see the multi-faith calendar on the Registrar’s website.

**Accommodation for disabilities:**
If you need accommodation for a disability, please discuss this with me and contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

**Accommodation for medical illness:**
The University has a new policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness; [www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeal/accommodations_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeal/accommodations_medical.pdf) states that in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean’s office (i.e. Associate Dean, Undergraduate). In this course, documentation for medical illness will be required even for work worth less than 10% of the total course grade.
**Mental health:**
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1 (January 6)**
Introduction: Issues and problems in defining Canadian Identity

**Read:** None.

**Listen:** No required listening.

**Week 2 (January 11 and 13) / (Response due on Friday)**
Taking nationalism to task


**Listen:** Alexander Muir’s “The Maple Leaf Forever” (1867); Calixa Lavallée’s “O Canada” (1880); Godfrey Ridout’s *Fall Fair* (1961)

**Week 3 (January 18 and 20) / (No response due this week)**
The Mosaic Trope: A comingling of indigenous and folk traditions


**Listen:** “She’s Like the Swallow” (arr. by Benjamin Britten, 1976); “À la Claire fontaine” (collected by Ernest Gagnon, 1865, arr. by John Beckwith, 1999); Pierre Gallant’s *Six Variations on “Land of the Silver Birch”* (1974); Claude Champagne’s *Danse villageoise* (1929); Malcom Forsythe’s *Three Métis Songs from Saskatchewan* (1975, rev. 1978)

**Presentation Topics:** None.
Week 4 (January 25 and 27) / (Response due on Friday)

The Landscape Trope: Musical representations of “the great white north”


Excerpts from R. Murray Schafer, Music in the Cold (Toronto, 1977) (For Wednesday)


Listen: Louis Applebaum’s Legend of the North (1957); Harry Somers’s North Country (1948); R. Murray Schafer’s Music for Wilderness Lake (1979)

Presentation Topics: None.

Week 5 (February 1 and 3) / (No response due this week)

Investigating a Canadian icon: The uniqueness of Glenn Gould


Watch: Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould, directed by François Girard, 1993. (For Friday)

Listen: Glenn Gould’s So You Want to Write a Fugue? (1963)

Presentation Topics: Sophie-Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté’s 10 Caprices for solo violin (1924–34); André Mathieu’s Saisons canadiennes for piano (1939); Oscar Peterson’s Canadiana Suite for piano (1964)

Film review due on Friday February 3

Week 6 (February 8 and 10) / (No response due this week)

A conservative strain in Canadian music


Listen: Healey Willan’s *Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue* for organ (1916); Ernest MacMillan’s *England* Overture (1918); Léo-Pol Morin’s *Suite Canadienne* (1929)

Presentation Topics: Healey Willan’s *An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Hosts* for acapella double choir (1921); Ernest MacMillan’s *Two Sketches for String Quartet* (1927)

* Optional make-up response (Diamond’s “What’s the Difference?” from Week 3)

Week 7 (February 15 and 17) / (Response due Friday)

Gender intersects with national identity


Listen: Jean Coulthard’s *Canada Mosaic* (1974); Violet Archer’s *Prairie Profiles* for baritone, horn, and piano (1980)

Midterm exam in class on Wednesday February 15

READING WEEK – No Classes (February 20–24)

Week 8 (March 1 and 3) / (Response due on Friday)

Enter John Weinzweig: Modernism on the Canadian scene


Listen: John Weinzweig’s *Violin Concerto* (1951–54); Hugh Le Caine’s *Drispsody* (1955); Barbara Pentland’s *Symphony for Ten Parts* (1957)

Presentations Topics: John Weinzweig’s *Red Ear of Corn* ballet suite (1949); John Beckwith’s *The Trumpets of Summer* for chorus (1964); Barbara Pentland’s *Disasters of the Sun* (song cycle) (1976)
Week 9 (March 8 and 10) / (No response due this week)

Beyond the Canadian borders: Commemorating world events with music

**Read:** Friedemann Sallis, “Deconstructing the Local: The Aesthetic Space and Geographical Place of Oskar Morawetz’s String Quartet No. 5 A tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1991),” *Canadian University Music Review* 24, no. 1 (2003): 7–29. (For Wednesday/No reading for Friday)

**Listen:** Excerpts from Oskar Morawetz’s *From the Diary of Anne Frank* (1970) for mezzo soprano and orchestra; Leonard Cohen’s “Dance Me to the End of Love” (1984); Morawetz’s String Quartet No. 5 A tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1991); Larysa Kuzmenko’s *In memoriam to the Victims of Chernobyl* for piano (2009)

**Presentation Topics:** Colin McPhee’s *Tabuh-Tabuhan* for two pianos and orchestra (1936); Oscar Morawetz’s *Memorial to Martin Luther King* for solo cello and orchestra (1968); Srul Irving Glick’s *I Never Saw another Butterfly* (song cycle) (1968)

**Paper proposal due on Friday March 10**

Week 10 (March 15 and 17) / (Response due on Friday)

What’s on at the COC? Opera takes centre stage

**Read:** Colleen Renihan, “The politics of genre: Exposing historical tensions in Harry Somers’s *Louis Riel,*” in *Opera indigene: Re/presenting first nations and indigenous cultures,* eds. Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 259–276. (For Wednesday)


**Listen:** Excerpts from Harry Somers’s *Louis Riel* (1967); excerpts from Barbara Monk Feldman’s *Pyramus and Thisbe* (2010)

**Presentations Topics:** Istvan Anhalt’s *La Tourangelle* (1975); Harry Somers’s *Serinette* (1991); John Estacio’s *Filumena* (2005)

Week 11 (March 22 and 24) / (Response due on Friday)

A Canadian Response to the “American” Musical?


**Listen:** Excerpts from Norman Campbell’s *Anne of Green Gables: The Musical* (1965); excerpts from Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison’s *The Drowsy Chaperone* (1998)

**Presentations Topics:** John MacLachlan Gray’s *Billy Bishop Goes to War* (1978); James Wax and Paul Taranto’s *Evangeline* (1999); Irene Sankoff and David Hein’s *Come From Away* (2015)

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**Week 12 (March 29 and 31) / (No response due this week)**

**Negotiating Canadian identity in the realm of popular music**


**Listen:** Selections from Gordon Lightfoot’s *Lightfoot!* (1966), Joni Mitchell’s *Clouds* (1969); McKenna Mendelson Mainline’s *Canada: Our Home and Native Land* (1971); Bryan Adams’s *Waking Up the Neighbours* (1991)

**Presentations Topics:** The Tragically Hip’s debut album (1987); The Barenaked Ladies’ *Gordon* (1992); Alanis Morisette’s *Jagged Little Pill* (1995)

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**Week 13 (April 5 and 7) / (No response due this week)**

**Conclusions:** Where do we go from here?


**Listen:** TBA

**Final essay due in class on Friday April 7**

**FINAL EXAM PERIOD (April 9–30)**

* The course syllabus may be subject to minor changes.