

Don Wright Faculty of Music
Western University
Department of Music Research and Composition

9556a. Studies in Contemporary Repertoire.

Fall term, 2020-21

Time: Tuesdays, 9:30-12:20

Location: real-time Zoom format (synchronous)

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TC338 x85369

Studies in compositional techniques of the late 20th and early 21st century.

Students from all disciplines are invited to enroll in this class. The course has an emphasis on musical analysis, but will branch off into discussions surrounding historical and cultural issues, performance practice, etc. As such, students from all disciplines are welcome, but they should have undergraduate experience reading and interpreting scores. The discussion methodology and choice of repertoire is, to a certain degree, dependent on the constituency of the class. As such, the repertoire that the class discusses evolves on an ongoing basis. Generally, the instructor chooses the repertoire for the first three or four classes, and then offers several ways to proceed, requesting input from the students.

In past years, this course has included works by:

Arvo Pärt, György Ligeti, Sofia Gubaidulina, Galina Ustvolskaya, Steve Reich, Alfred Schnittke, Chris Paul Harman, Magnus Lindberg, Ann Southam, Krystof Penderecki, György Kurtág, Gérard Grisey, Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Karin Rehnqvist, Valentin Silvestrov, James MacMillan, Helmut Lachenmann, Radiohead, Leo Brouwer, Alberto Ginastera, Julia Wolfe, Peter Maxwell Davies, Nicole Lizée, Linda C. Smith, David Lang, Ana Sokolovic, Ann Southam and others.

The class will meet every week for 2.5 hours via Zoom. The instructor will send students an invitation five minutes before the class starts. 100% attendance is expected. The seminar will not be recorded archivally, so all students must attend the seminar in real time.

Evaluation

Evaluation for the course will be based on three components:

- 1) Preparation and in-class discussion. Students will be required to familiarize themselves with selected repertoire on an ongoing basis, attend all seminars, and participate in class discussions (25% of final grade).
- 2) Presentation. Each student will be required to give an in-class fifty-minute presentation on a topic of her/his choice (25% of final grade).
- 3) Final essay. Each student will be required to write a substantial paper on a topic of her/his choice (50% of final grade).

Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students will have:

- an increased knowledge of significant 20th and 21st century composers, methodologies and compositions.

- additional experience participating in discussions relating to analysis, history, cultural issues, performance practice, notation, etc. (see Evaluation).
- additional experience in presenting ideas in a lecture/presentation format (see Evaluation).
- additional experience writing a major essay (see Evaluation).

Materials

There is no textbook for this course. Reading and repertoire study will be assigned on an ongoing basis. The OWL platform will be the main communication platform outside of the Zoom seminars. The instructor will regularly refer to the resources folder, where repertoire, power point presentations and other information will be accessible. It is a good idea to get familiar with Zoom and OWL before our first meeting on September 15th, 2020.

Use of Electronic Devices

You should use a computer or laptop for the seminars. A phone is simply not big enough to view the information that will be presented. Additionally, having a printed version of any score under discussion is the best way to manage the seminars. PDF scans of pertinent repertoire excerpts will be available to you, but you are encouraged to print out hard copies if at all possible. You will be viewing the instructor and other students on Zoom, as well as any screen sharing information provided by the instructor (and it will be substantial). Negotiating and annotating a virtual score can be quite cumbersome under these circumstances. The alternative to a hard copy would be a second monitor where the score can be viewed and annotated. Regardless of how you approach this, having a pencil, ruler, notebook and score paper on hand is a good idea.

Online Etiquette

A student should approach an online seminar in the same fashion as an ‘in person’ seminar. Please be courteous and attentive to your colleagues and instructor: imagine that you are all sitting in the same room.

Statement on academic prerequisite

“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.”

Statement on accommodation for medical illness

The Graduate Program in Music recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by physical or mental illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The Graduate Program in Music further recognizes that physical or mental illness situations are deeply personal, and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. 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.

University policy regarding medical illness can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

Statement on academic offences

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 here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Statement on health and wellness

The statement: “As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing a graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding, such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Campus mental health resources may be found at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/crisis.html>.”