

CURRENT PRACTICES

Music Composition 212, 412

(2006, Fall Term)

Instructor, Robert Morris

Time: Tuesday, Thursday; 8:35-9:55 am

Schedule

The following lists the topics and pieces we will cover during the term. Other pieces and composers may be added if necessary. I will try to keep to the following schedule, but I have found I get behind by mid-October. Please note that wherever we are in the schedule, the dates for the three projects and listening quizzes will remain inviolable.

Please be in class *on time*; I know getting up for an 8:30 class is not often a pleasant task, but having students stumble in late is disruptive and annoying.

There are two kinds of activities in this class: lectures and analysis. In lectures, I will hold forth; in analysis I may assign passages to members of the class to present. I will expect students to be prepared for the analysis no matter who is presenting. There may be home assignments from time to time. I have copies of some of the pieces to pass out to the class; to obtain scores of other pieces, please buy them or use the Sibley library.

Note: we will not hold class on the following days:

Thur. Sept. 21, Tues. Sept. 26 (I'm away)

Tues. Oct. 17 (Fall break)

Thur. Nov. 2, Tues. Nov. 7 (I'm away)

Thur. Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving)

9/7 Th. Introduction: trends in new music; bibliographic sources; thoughts on the relations between creativity and knowledge.

9/12, 9/14 T-Th.. Analysis: Bartók, *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*.

9/19 T Lecture: Lucas/Fibonacci series; duration schemes and hierarchies.

9/28, 10/3 Th-T. Analysis: Stravinsky, *Agon*.

10/5 Th. Lecture: Timbre, Register, and Articulation. **Listening Quiz 1**

10/10 T. Analysis: Varèse, *Ionization and Intégrales*.

Composition Project I (Based on Lucas/Fibonacci series) **Due Tues. Oct. 10.**

10/12, 10/19. Th-Th. Lecture: Introduction to Pitch-Class-Set Theory.

10/24 T. Analysis: Messaien, *Poemes pour Mi*.

10/26 Th. Lecture: Carter, *String Quartet II*.

10/31 T. Lecture: Twelve-tone technique: basic concepts and notations.

11/9 Th. Analysis: Berg *Violin Concerto*.

Composition Project II (a short piece based on one or more set-class(es) with emphasis on harmony and timbre) **Due Thur. Nov. 9.**

11/14 T. Analysis: Webern, *Symphony (I), opus 21*. **Listening Quiz 2**

11/16 Th. Lecture: Webern, *Variations for Piano, opus 27* and *Concerto for Nine Instruments, opus 24*.

11/21 T. Analysis: Dallapiccola, *Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera*, selected pieces.

11/28 T. Lecture: European serialism, Messaien and Boulez.

11/30 Th. Analysis: Boulez, *Structures, Livre 1a*.

12/5 T. Lecture: Twelve-tone combinatoriality (hexachordal-, trichordal-, general-, all-). **Listening Quiz 3**

12/7 Th. Analysis: Schoenberg, *Piano Concerto*, opening measures; *Violin Concerto*, opening measures; Lecture: Babbitt's *Du*

Composition Project III (a short but sophisticated twelve-tone or serial piece) **Due Thur. Dec. 7.**

12/12 T. Babbitt: *String Quartet II*; the time-point system: Babbitt *String Quartet III*.

Final Exam: within exam period, Dec 13-15 (W-F).

Other Matters

Sibley Library

Please check the reserve list for this course at the library on which I have placed many important books, pieces and recordings to supplement the class content.

Readings of Compositional Projects

We will have reading/performances of the projects in the evening on some mutually agreeable date shortly after the deadline. Please write a short piece (about 1-3 minutes long) for players in the class or get your own players to play your pieces. If you can, hold a brief preliminary rehearsal before the reading/ performance session. You will be asked to introduce your piece to the class and tell us something about it including how it satisfies the nature of the project.

Quizzes

In each of the three quizzes, you will be asked to identify items from one of the three listening lists (see below) by ear alone (no notes, scores, or other aids). Approximately 7 to 10 musical examples on tape will be played up to five times in the exam period, which will occupy a 20 minute period at the end of a class. There will be no "trick" questions. Experience has shown that "cramming" for this exam does not work, so stick to a schedule for listening—so many hours per week. The recordings of the items on the three listening list are on reserve at Sibley, also compiled on ten CDs. At the end of this document is a list of the content of the ten CDs.

Final Exam

The final examination lasts 2 hours and will be held sometime during the exam period (see schedule). In the exam, you will be asked to write brief essays on composers and compositional trends and identify terms and concepts covered during the term. You may also be asked to write brief musical examples to illustrate a compositional technique.

Your final grade: depends on class participation (10%), the grades of the three quizzes (10% each), the grades of your three projects (15% each) and the final exam (15%).

Second Term

Second term topics will include: electronic and computer music's influence on new music; new conceptions of musical space, form, and environment;

notational innovations; new instrumental resources; indeterminacy, stochastic and aleatoric composition; micro-polyphony and "mass orchestration;" theater and ritual music; process music; improvisation; neo-romanticism; minimalism; post-modernism.

Listening List for Quizzes

There is a set of CDs with all these pieces on it on reserve

(additional and interesting recordings are also on reserve)

Listening Quiz 1 (Oct. 5)

String Quartets and Violin Concertos

Babbitt	String Quartets II and III
Bartók	String Quartets III through VI
Berg	Lyric Suite
Berg	Violin Concerto
Carter	String Quartet II
Schoenberg	Violin Concerto

Listening Quiz 2 (Nov. 9)

Piano solos, Piano, Concertos, and other works with Piano

Boulez	Structures, Book I
Boulez	Marteau sans Maître
Dallapiccola	Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera
Messaien	"Mode de valeurs et d'intensités"
Schoenberg	Piano Pieces, opus 23
Schoenberg	Piano Concerto
Stockhausen	Piano Pieces, I through IV
Stravinsky	Movements
Webern	Variations for Piano, opus 27
Webern	Concerto, opus 24

Listening Quiz 3 (Dec 5)
Concerted Works and Song Cycles

Babbitt	Du (song cycle)
Bartók	Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta
Berg	Three Pieces for Orchestra
Messaien	Chronochromie
Schoenberg	Five Orchestra Pieces
Stockhausen	Kontrapunkt
Stravinsky	Agon
Stravinsky	Variations for Orchestra
Varèse	Ionization
Varèse	Intègrales
Varèse	Octandre
Webern	Sinfonie, opus 21
Webern	Songs, Opus 25

Content of the ten CDs with call letters for scores

CD I

Berg	Violin Concerto	M1012 .B493 min
Schoenberg	Violin Concerto	M1012 .S365 1939a
Schoenberg	Piano Concerto	M1011 .S365 Op.42

CD II

Bartók	Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta	M1140.B37 M8
Stravinsky	Agon	M1520 .S912 Ag Folio
Schoenberg	Piano Pieces, opus 23	M25 .S365 op.23

CD III

Bartók	String Quartet III	M452 .B29.3 min.
Bartók	String Quartet V	M452 .B29.5 min.
Babbitt	Du (song cycle)	M1621.4 .B112d

CD IV

Bartók	String Quartet IV	M452 .B29.6 min.
Bartók	String Quartet VI	M452 .B29.4 min.
Stockhausen	Piano Pieces, I through IV	M25 .S8645.2

CD V

Berg	Lyric Suite	M452.B493 L99 1955a, min.
Webern	Concerto, opus 24	M985 .W42
Schoenberg	Five Orchestra Pieces	M1045 .S365 op.16
Stravinsky	Movements	M1010 .S912M

CD VI

Berg	Three Pieces for Orchestra	M1045 .B493Om min
Messiaen	"Mode de valeurs et d'intensités"	M25 .M585Mo
Webern	Sinfonie, opus 21	M1001 .W376 op.21min.
Messaien	Chronochromie	M1045 .M585C

CD VII

Varèse	Ionization	M985.V37 I6
Varèse	Intégrales	M1045 .V292I
Varèse	Octandre	M862.V296 O21
Carter	String Quartet II	M452 .C323 no.2

CD VIII

Stravinsky	Variations for Orchestra	M1003.S912 V1min.
Boulez	Marteau sans Maitre	M1613.3 .B763M min
Webern	Variations for Piano, opus 27	M27 .W376 op.27
Webern	Songs, Opus 25	M1621 .W376L Op.25

CD IX/X (one CD)

Babbitt	String Quartet II	M452 .B112.2
Babbitt	String Quartet III	M452 .B112 no.3 1
Stockhausen	Kontrapunkt	M1045 .S864 K No.1 min
Boulez	Structures, Book I	M214.B75 S8
Dallapiccola	Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera	M24 .D144q