

Compositional Practices 1955-80

Music Composition 213, 413

(2017, Spring Term)

Instructor, Robert Morris

Time: Tuesday, Thursday; 10:00-11:15 am

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-March. Please note that wherever we are in the schedule, the dates for the projects and listening quizzes will remain inviolable.

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 will be short homework 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.

There are two listening quizzes and two compositional projects. Each student will also present a report on a contemporary composer during the last days of the class. See below for a description of these requirements.

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

Thur Jan 26 rehearsals for my concert

Thur Feb 9 I am out of town

Thur Feb 23 I am out of town

Tues Mar 14 Spring break

Thur Mar 16 Spring break

Thur Mar 30 I am out of town

Tues Apr 25 Jury week

Thur Apr 27 Jury week

Schedule

date	day	topic	Special deadlines
1/17	T	Generalized Combinatoriality. Babbitt <i>String Quartet 2</i> and <i>String Quartet 3</i> .	
1/19	Th	Generalized isomorphism of pitch and time; time point system. Babbitt <i>String Quartet 3</i> .	
1/24	T	Stockhausen, <i>Gruppen</i>	
1/31	T	Early Concrete/Electronic Music. Varèse, <i>Poem Electronique</i> , Cage, <i>Williams Mix</i> , Stockhausen, <i>Study I</i> , <i>Study II</i> .	
2/2	Th	continued	
2/7	T	Stockhausen, <i>Gesang der Jünglinge</i> , <i>Kontakte</i> .	
2/14	T	continued	
2/16	Th	Davidowsky, <i>Synchronisms 6</i> .	LISTENING QUIZ I
2/21	T	Cage, <i>String Quartet</i> , <i>Lecture on Nothing</i> , <i>Concert for Piano and Orchestra</i> , <i>HSPCHD</i> , late works.	
2/28	T	continued	
3/2	Th	continued	PROJECT I DUE
3/7	T	Browne, <i>Available Forms I</i>	
3/9	Th	Feldman, graph pieces, <i>Last Pieces</i> , <i>Madam Press Died Last Week at 90</i> , <i>Palais de Mari</i> .	
3/21	T	Continued	
3/23	Th	Xenakis, <i>Pithoprakta</i> , <i>Herma</i> .	
3/28	T	Continued	
4/4	T	Ligeti, <i>Atmospheres</i> , <i>Aventures</i> , <i>Chamber Concerto</i> .	
4/6	Th	Notational Innovations: Karkoschka, <i>Das Schriftbild der Neuen Musik</i> , <i>PNM (21/1 & 2)</i> , Stone, K., <i>Music Notation in the Twentieth Century: A Practical Guide Book</i> .	
4/11	T	New Instrumental Resources. Crumb, <i>Vox Balaenae</i> .	LISTENING QUIZ II
4/13	Th	Glass, <i>Music in Twelve Parts</i> ; Reich, <i>Violin Phase</i> , <i>Piano Phase</i>	
4/18	T	Reich, <i>Music for 18 Musicians</i> , Frederic Rzewski <i>Les Moutons de Panurge</i> .	
4/20	Th	student reports.	
5/2	T		
5/4	Th	Reading of Project II pieces	PROJECT II
5-9-12		FINAL EXAM (three hours) TBA during Exam Period	

Sibley Library

Please check the reserve list for this course at the library on which I have placed the scores for the works covered in class.

Compositional Projects

Description of Project I: A short composition where rhythm, and possibly other temporal dimensions are subject to formal procedures. Due 3/2

Description of Project II: A work for at least three players exploring new forms of notation, indeterminate procedures, and new instrumental resources). Due 5/4.

We will have reading/performances of the projects in the evening on some mutually agreeable date shortly after the deadline. For each project write a short piece (about 1-3 minutes long) for players in the class, and/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 two quizzes, you will be asked to identify items from one of the two listening lists (see below) by ear alone (no notes, scores, or other aids). Approximately 7 to 10 musical examples on CD or tape will be played up to four 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. Below is a list of the items on the listening list with call numbers of the scores and recordings at Sibley as well as addresses for each piece on YouTube.

Quiz 1. Held on 2/16.

Quiz 2. Held on 4/11.

Student Reports

Each student chooses a current composer not presently associated with the Eastman School and provides an overview of his/her contributions to new music; the composer must be approved by the instructor. Scores and recordings of (portions of) significant works should form the backbone of the report. Place the composer in his/her life and times, but avoid (or criticize) PR hype. Provide a reference-list of works, recordings, and writings about the composer. Do some musical analysis on passages from representative works. Assume your audience is a group of interested and sophisticated composers. Your talk should be organized well—use handouts and have any recordings ready to play, cued—and last just about 30 minutes, no more or less

Listening list. YouTube sources (SS = scrolled score)

Composer	Piece	Link to recording on WWW
Adams	Harmonielehre	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmDBO-T9nio
Andriessen	Da Staat	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-0bhCswWfs
Babbitt	Reflections for Piano and Tape	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4p0TfJ1R6o
Berio	Visage	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4eIjTqp_zc
Brown	Available Forms I	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KF_5kS_1cT0
Cage	String Quartet	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGMVqix_w4w
Cage	Concert for Piano and Orchestra	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NE6n2VBo2cM
Carter	String Quartet III	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9fIcBxp7-c
Carter	Piano Concerto	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAu8dNxORJ0
Crumb	Vox balaenae	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OEY27n2HUM
Davidowsky	Synchronism 6	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1asXsfEmE0
Feldman	Madam Press died last week at ninety.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rORvNjWchnw
Ligeti	Atmospheres	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XfefKJR0SA
Ligeti	Chamber Concerto	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pg7VKAaxn1s
Penderecki	Tren	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSer6k-4zj0
Reich	Music for Eighteen Musicians	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5U9577N-dQ
Reich	Octet (Eight Lines) (SS)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Np9yApXD94
Rzewski	Les Moutons de Panurge	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osl2dbpQ62Q
Schuller	Seven sketches on themes by Paul Klee	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUmYkbCchWg
Stockhausen	Gruppen	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34_SfP7ZCXA
Stockhausen	Kontakte (with and without instruments)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwtAMGXyTI4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Qhy-Lpf6d4
Stockhausen	Gesang der Jünglinge	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1Psx24n3rM
Subotnick	Sidewinder	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaOjKFTmAY8 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJ6EbvW5-mg
Wolpe	String Quartet	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ufD45eB530
Wuorinen:	String Quartet	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0ahowM11Zk
Varèse	Poeme Electronique	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuDzS0EYixQ
Xenakis	Herma	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1U2ZHQeaAZc
Xenakis	Pithoprakta	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwPpqYyLGBA
Xenakis	Mycenae-Alpha	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yztoaNakKok
Xenakis	Shaar	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdRLLuhojrk

Listening Test I (with Sibley recording and Score call numbers)

Babbitt	Reflections for Piano and Tape	CD 5250	
Berio	Visage	CD 7631	
Cage	Concert for Piano and Orchestra	FAC 6787 CD 6016	M1010 C15 C6 1960
Carter	String Quartet III	CD 3030	M452.C323 no.3
Carter	Piano Concerto	CD 445	M1010.C323
Crumb	Black Angels	CD 19,889	M452 .C956B Folio
Davidowsky	Synchronism 6	CD 5250	M25.D2498 S9 No.6
Ligeti	Chamber Concerto	CD 5505	M947.L723 K15 1974
Stockhausen	Kontakte (with and without instruments)	CD 7655 CD 17152	M342 . S864K Folio M175E4 .S864K Folio
Stockhausen	Gesang der Jünglinge	CD 17152	ML96.5 .S864 no.1
Subotnick	Sidewinder	CD 16359	
Wolpe	String Quartet	CD 1658	M452.W866
Wuorinen:	String Quartet	LP 20128	
Varèse	Poeme Electronique	CD 2115	
Xenakis	Mycenae-Alpha	CD 2115	
Xenakis	Shaar	CD 27,795	

Listening test II (with Sibley recording and Score call numbers)

Adams	Harmonielehre	CD 2992	M1045.A214 H28
Andriessen	Da Staat	CD 4115	M1528.A573 S77 Folio
Brown	Available Forms I	LP 9427	M1045 .B877A No.1, Folio
Crumb	Vox balaenae	CD 13,337	M322.C956 V974 1972
Feldman	Madam Press died last week at ninety.	CD 2334	M985.F3125 M1
Ligeti	Atmospheres	CD 1866	M1045.L723 A8 H63 Folio
Penderecki	Tren	CD 1848	M1145.P397T Folio
Reich	Music for Eighteen Musicians	CD 2953	M1528.R347 M98 2000
Reich	Octet (Eight Lines)	CD 4145	M1185.R347 O21 1979
Rzewski	Les Moutons de Panurge	CD 16,200	M1470.R999 M934
Schuller	Seven sketches on themes by Paul Klee	LP 25,658	M1045 .S386st
Stockhausen	Gruppen	CD 19,480	M1045.S864 G
Xenakis:	Herma	CD 4635	M25.X5H
Xenakis:	Pithoprakta	CD 249	M1045.X5P6 Folio