MUH 6635: Seminar in American Music (25681)
University of Florida, School of Music, Spring 2020
Monday, periods 9-11 (4:05-7:00 pm), online

Dr. Silvio dos Santos
E-mail: sjdossantos@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Monday, period 4 and by appointment (via zoom only in AY 2020-2021)

FOCUS
This course examines major composers, works, and trends in American art music up to the present time. The focus will be on styles and techniques as well as on aesthetic and ideological principles underlying representative works. Selected readings and musical works will provide the basis for critical analyses of topics such as music and national identity, music and gender identity, music and post-modern thought, and multiculturalism in music. The arrangement is loosely chronological, focusing on individual composers or broader aesthetic trends. Underlying the entire course is the exciting opportunity for students to engage a variety of methodologies, from structural analysis to the exploration of philosophy and cultural studies for the interpretation of music and its codes. The assessment will be based on in-class presentations on assigned readings and a research paper, which will also serve as the basis for a 20-minute presentation during the seminar.

Recommended text

Additional reading materials are available in ARES or electronically through various e-storages. For electronic access to recordings, visit the Naxus Music Library on the Music Library webpage (https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/music). The Music Library holds most of the recordings required for this class, but many others are available on Youtube.

ASSESSMENT
Each week one or two seminar participants will lead discussion on the assigned readings. All participants are required to complete all assigned reading and participate in discussion. We will establish a rotation of discussion leaders at the beginning of the semester. Leaders will be responsible for submitting two or three questions related to the readings to the seminar one week in advance of the pertinent class and providing a handout summarizing the most important points for discussion.

The Research Paper and in-class Presentations will give students an opportunity to explore topics related to the materials discussed within the semester. Students will provide a handout and present the results of their research to the seminar one week in advance of the pertinent class and providing a handout summarizing the most important points for discussion. The final version of the paper will be due a week later. A successful paper will follow the highest standards of the discipline and will address all comments and suggestions received during the presentation. I will provide further instructions as the semester progresses.

Make-ups for presentations and leading discussions are given only for excused absences. An excused absence is defined as 1) a medical issue accompanied by a signed statement from your doctor, 2) a serious family emergency with a signed statement from parent or guardian, 3) an official University of Florida activity accompanied by a signed statement from an appropriate faculty representative with a two-week prior notification to instructor, 4) a religious holiday observance with a two-week prior notification to instructor, 5) military service or court-imposed legal obligations accompanied by written proof two weeks prior to absence. Failure to appear for any of the assignments without prior arrangement will result in an E for that assignment.
Grades will be based on the following

- Attendance and Leading Discussions 40%
- Research Paper 40%
- Paper Presentation 20%

Grading scale

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* Please keep in mind that C- is not a passing grade. Information on the conversion of grades to the University of Florida’s grade point averages can be found at <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>.

ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is required of all students. Attendance is critical because much of the course material comes directly from in-class discussions and music analyses. Unexcused absences will lower your final grade by 3 points per absence. Examples of excused absences are listed above under “Makeups”.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Presentations: to be announced in the second class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The theft of intellectual property is taken very seriously in this class. All student work must be original. Plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with according to the policies outlined in the university bulletin and student handbook (see www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/studenthonorcode.php for more information). See the Chicago Manual of Style if you have any questions regarding proper citations in the humanities. A short guide is available at https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please visit the Disability Resources Program office for more information. It is located at P202 Peabody Hall, E-mail accessuf@dso.ufl.edu; Phone 392-1261; TDD 392-3008.

2. Students are encouraged to use the Campus Writing Center for extra help with the writing assignments. Students who use the Writing Center must submit all drafts of the paper, including the suggestions and revisions from the center. If you are asked to use the writing center, you will be expected to do so and to submit all drafts of your paper. Information about the center is available at www.at.ufl.edu/r&w/.

3. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems that affect academic performance or difficulty defining career and academic goals:
   - University Counseling Center for personal and career counseling; 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575.
   - Student Mental Health for personal counseling; Student Mental Health Care Center, 392-1171.
   - Center for Sexual Assault/Abuse Recovery Services, Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
   - Career Resource Center, career development assistance and counseling; Reitz Union, 392-1601.

4. Please do not hesitate to come by during office hours or contact me to schedule appointments. I am interested in your success and hope you will feel free to express any questions, ideas, or concerns you might have.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS (subject to change)

Note: You may need to establish a VPN in order to access the electronic resources listed below.

Week 1 (8/31): Introduction: Overview of course materials and discussion of possible topics
Reading: *Grove Online*, “United States of America”
https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.28794

Week 2 (9/7): Labor Day, observed

Week 2 (9/14): Forefathers
Reading: Gann, “Prelude” and Chapter 1 “Forefathers,” xiii-xvi and 1-26.
Joseph Horowitz, “Reclaiming the Past: Musical Boston Reconsidered,”
Adrienne Fried Block, “Why Amy Beach Succeeded as a Composer: The Early Years,”
*Current Musicology* 36 (1983): 41-59
Listening: Billings, *Creation*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpKHYe2gSU4
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cd6xnP5K7XI
Beach: Symphony in E Minor (Gaelic), Op. 32; and
Prelude and Fugue, Op 8, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7XJfyS6gxe

Week 3 (9/21): Charles Ives: Music and Aesthetics
Reading: Gann, “Prelude” and “Forefathers,” xiii-xvi and 1-26.
Ives, *Memos*, 131-42; and *Essays Before a Sonata*.
Listening: Ives, *Concord Sonata*
Ives, *Three Places in New England*
The Majority (Song)
Scherzo for String Quartet
String Quartet No. 2

Week 4 (9/28): Student Presentations and discussion
Topic: Music in America before WWI

Week 5 (10/5): Music and Modernism in the 1920s
Rao, Nancy Yunhwa, “Cowell’s Sliding Tone.”
Richard Crawford et al., 405-22.
Cowell: *New Musical Resources*, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511597329

Listening: Cowell, *The Banshee* and *Aeolian Harp*
Cowell, *Quartet Romantic*
Varése, *Ionisation*
Ruth Crawford, String Quartet (1931)
Antheil, Airplane Sonata and *Ballet Mechanique*
Week 6 (10/12): Musical Experiments in America before WWII
Reading: Gann, Chapter 4: “Experimentalism”
Listening: Partch: Barstow, The Letter, December 1942, and other relevant works.

Week 7 (10/19): Copland’s Music Styles
Reading: Gann, “Populism – the 1930s,” 49-75.
Copland: “The composer in Industrial America” in Music and Imagination, 96-111.
Listening: Piano Variations
Chamber Symphony
Appalachian Spring
Lincoln Portrait
Connotations
Statements

Week 8 (10/26): Student Presentations and discussion
Topic: Stylistic and Theoretical Experiments in America Before WWII

Week 9 (11/2): The European “Influence” II
Reading: Babbitt: “Who Cares if you Listen” in MWW, 529-34.
Mead, Andrew. “Still Being an American Composer.”
Lochhead, “Hearing Chaos.”
Listening: Babbitt, Philomel: Section I (Suppl. CD: also in Palisca, Norton Anthology of Western Music, and the Norton Recorded Anthology of Western Music, vol. 2)
Babbitt, Preludes, Interludes, and Postlude (1991)
Rochberg, Symphony No. 2
Rochberg, Oboe Concerto

Week 10 (11/9): John Cage’s Revolution
Reading: Gann, “John Cage and the New York School Revolution,” 127-52
Cage, “Experimental Music” in Silence, 7-12 (also in SR, 1300-1305).
Listening: Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano
Music of Changes
Litany for the Whale
Five
Aria (for Cathy Berberian)
Week 11 (11/16): Three Composers: Oliveros, Tower, Zwilich

Reading:
- Gann, “Post Cage Conceptualism,” 154-83.
- “Deep Listening” and interview with Marc Weidenbaum available at www.disquiet.com/oliveros.html
- “Joan Tower: The Composer in Conversation with Bruce Duffie,” at http://my.voyager.net/~duffie/tower.html
- Glahn, The Sounds of Place: Music and the American Cultural Landscape.
- Duncan, “Ellen Taaffe Zwilich: Emerging from Mythos.”

Listening:
- Oliveros, I to IV
- Oliveros, Sound Patterns
- Oliveros, Bye, Bye Butterfly!
- Tower, Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman Nos. 1-5
- Tower, Petroushskates
- Tower, Turning Points
- Zwilich, Chamber Symphony
- Zwilich, Symphony No. 1

Week 12 (11/23): Minimalism

Reading:
- Bernard, “The Minimalist Aesthetic in the Plastic Arts and in Music.”
- Steve Reich, Writings about Music, in SR, 1385-90.
- Bernard, “Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music.”
- Leydon, “Towards a Typology of Minimalist Tropes”

Listening:
- Riley, In C
- Reich, Piano Phase
- Reich, Come Out
- Reich, Music for 18 Musicians
- Reich, Different Trains
- Glass, Metamorphosis
- Glass, Einstein on the Beach
- Glass, Songs from Liquid Days
- Adams, Phrygian Gates

Week 13 (11/30): Student Research Presentations and discussion

Week 14 (12/7): Student Research Presentations and discussion
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Anthologies


2. Books and Articles


3. Web Resources

Interview with Joan Tower: [http://www.bruceduffie.com/tower.html](http://www.bruceduffie.com/tower.html)
New Music Box: [http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/category/articles/](http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/category/articles/)
Music and Politics: [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp)
Copland Collection, Library of Congress, [https://www.loc.gov/collections/aaron-copland/about-this-collection/](https://www.loc.gov/collections/aaron-copland/about-this-collection/)