

MUSI 3070/4070: **Electro-Acoustic Orchestra**

Time/Location:

Tuesdays 2:30-5:30pm
September 13, 2016 - November 29, 2016
DisPerSion Lab, CFA 334

Instructor:

Prof. Doug Van Nort
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Office Hours:

Tuesdays 1:30-2:30pm and by appointment

Course Website

<http://eao-class.dispersionlab.org>

Course Overview (Catalog)

Allows students to participate in a large electro-acoustic orchestra that will create (re-create) and perform both historical and contemporary repertoire using both the latest digital sound production hardware as well as traditional instruments. A participating student will be required to function as both performer and in at least one other capacity such as composer, arranger, improviser or conductor.

Course Overview (Real Version)

This course engages the Electro-Acoustic Orchestra as a living, emergent sonic organism. It provides an opportunity for acoustic performers to expand the sonic and expressive palette of their instrumental practice in the context of a mixed electronic and acoustic ensemble, and for electronic musicians to expand their practice into an ensemble performance situation. The orchestra will engage in regular improvisation sessions as a means to further develop attentiveness to all aspects of sound including timbre, texture, blending noise/tone, and blending acoustic/electronic sources in space. Compositions drawn from the experimental and electroacoustic literature will be performed, as well as new pieces written by and for the group. The orchestra will present their work in several public presentations throughout the term, in collaboration with the instructor and invited guest artists.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Learn to perform as an ensemble in order to realize electro-acoustic compositions.
- 2) Develop or refine an instrumental practice that blends acoustics and electronics.

- 3) Develop or refine an improvisational practice with this instrumentation.
- 4) Deepen your listening abilities and embodied sonic awareness.
- 5) Acquire new language and theoretical concepts to describe electroacoustic performance and organised sound in all of its facets.
- 6) Compose a piece for the ensemble that explores new musical territories through the electro-acoustic medium.
- 7) Learn to effectively follow the conducting language utilized in class.
- 8) Develop a deeper personal understanding of the historical and contemporary world of experimental and electroacoustic music.

Required materials:

- I. You will need to arrive at an instrumental setup, which may require you to develop or access new tools/instruments. This will be determined by the sound you are hoping to achieve and your means to do so. If you require a speaker to amplify sound within the DisPerSion Lab, then you **will be required to purchase the proper cabling such that your signal connection ends as either an XLR or a TRS (not TS) 1/4" cable**, with sufficient length to reach the audio snake while you are seated in the centre of the room.
- II. You will need to have regular usage of a computer (Mac or Windows), and be able to install free software programs, in order to complete certain assignments.
- III. The lab floor will eventually be re-worked this academic year as part of another project; if this happens during the fall semester, you may be required to take off your shoes at the door for class. You would thus be required to purchase any needed socks or slippers.

Storage of Instruments/Gear:

You are welcome to store instruments and gear in the lab during the term. However, you would need to coordinate with the instructor in order to retrieve them in between classes, as the lab is locked at all times.

Grading:

15% Participation

This course will flourish as a product of our coming together to perform and share ideas/experiences. Thus your participation is essential, and so lack of engagement (for example: refusing to speak or play, or absences without permission from your Dr. or Dean) will lower your grade.

Please note that if you are on social media sites, texting, doing non-class work, unrelated web surfing, or falling into any other “black holes” of technological distraction, I will consider you absent from class.

Learning the lab audio setup, developing a standard weekly personal setup within this, and being self-sufficient in getting prepared for playing will be a major aspect of this grade.

10% Reading/Listening Responses

A weekly paragraph summary (if a reading) or reaction (if a listening), with 3 questions that it raised for you.

40% Assignments

Weekly or bi-weekly studies that will cover environmental sound, documentation, electro/acoustic instrumentation and blending, and compositional strategies.

20% Composition for the Ensemble

You will write a piece that is playable by all members of the ensemble, using our emerging vocabulary centered around sound, instrumental gestures and our perception as it relates to listening/performing. The piece may include new notation systems, software, text instructions.

15% Final Process Paper

3-5 page paper about your experience in the course as it relates to performance, composition and listening. The paper can draw from your own notes taken throughout the course, but should relate to (and cite in the body of the text) at least 3 readings/listenings covered in class.

Grading Scheme:

Grade	Grade Point	Per Cent Range	Description
A+	9	90-100	Exceptional
A	8	80-89	Excellent
B+	7	75-79	Very Good
B	6	70-74	Good
C+	5	65-69	Competent
C	4	60-64	Fairly Competent
D+	3	55-59	Passing
D	2	50-54	Marginally Passing
E	1	(marginally below 50%)	Marginally Failing
F	0	(below 50%)	Failing

See: <http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/2015-2016/academic/grades/>

Key Dates:

Sept 13: Introduction, Orientation, Planning

Oct 11: EAO full ensemble

Oct. 14: Pauline Oliveros invited lecture, recital hall, 11am-1pm.

Oliveros/Ione/Bourne/Van Nort Quartet @ Music Gallery (X-Avant), 8pm.

Nov 2-5: EAO (full) performs at 416 Creative Improvisers Festival

Nov 29: Final Class

Dec 4: Messiah Rehearsal day

Dec 5-7: EAO (class) in Electric Messiah (in collaboration with Soundstreams).

Dec 9+: EAO (full) final show at DisPerSion Lab with guest artists (tbd)

Academic Honesty and Integrity

York students are required to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and they are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom and other academic settings, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. The instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. The policy and procedures governing disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=82>

Access/Disability

York University is committed to principles of respect, inclusion and equality of all persons with disabilities across campus. The University provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials. These services are made available to students in all Faculties and programs. Students in need of these services are asked to register with disability services to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. Students are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with their course directors to discuss their accommodation needs. Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=68>

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community and making accommodations for observances of special significance.

Students, who because of religious commitment cannot meet academic obligations, other than formally scheduled examinations (December and April examination period), on certain holy days are responsible for giving their instructor reasonable notice (not less than 14 days), of each conflict.

For the full description, see: <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>