

## **The Era of the Modern Piano**

### **Course Syllabus MUHL 396, Winter 2010**

Instructor: Dr. Xenia Pestova

Lectures: TuTh 10-11:25, Strathcona Music Building C-412

Office Hours: Tu 11:30-12:30, Strathcona Music Building E-330

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This course will examine important solo piano repertoire by influential European and North American composers from 1850 to the present day. Special emphasis will be given to the stylistic and creative tendencies found in Twentieth century and contemporary piano music. Examples of contemporary repertoire will be taken as points of departure. We will trace trajectories back to traditional repertoire, looking for roots, influences, similarities and differences in each topic that we explore.

Books, CDs, and scores will be made available on reserve in the music library, while some resources will also be available online. You are expected to do the required reading and listening to prepare for in-class discussion.

#### **Assessment:**

Class participation	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Term Paper	30%
Final exam	35%

Class attendance is mandatory. There will be a midterm exam, a group presentation (in April), and a final exam. There may also be written or oral assignments as part of class participation. Concerts: several concerts are listed in the schedule below, and further opportunities will be announced in the lectures. You are expected to attend as many as possible.

**Crediting Sources:** For the written assignments, you may consult library materials and internet resources. When using or referring to external material, make sure to use correct citation formats. For more information on standard forms of quotations, footnotes, and bibliographies, please consult a style manual such as the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information)

**Topics Covered** (updates at <http://xeniapestova.com/MUHL396.html>):

January 5<sup>th</sup>: Visual Music 1 – Tom Johnson: *Symmetries*, Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*

January 7<sup>th</sup>: Visual Music 2 – Albeniz: *Iberia*, Granados: *Goyescas*, Rachmaninov: *Etudes-Tableaux*

January 12<sup>th</sup>: Music and Nature 1 – Arlene Sierra: *Birds and Insects book 1*, Olivier Messiaen: *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, *La Fauvette des jardins*, *Petites esquisses d'oiseaux*

January 14<sup>th</sup>: Music and Nature 2 – Ravel: *Miroirs*, *Jeux d'eau*, Debussy: *Estampes*, *Images*, Liszt: *Années de Pèlerinage*

January 19<sup>th</sup>: Spectra, Spirituality and Sensuality 1 – Tristan Murail: *La Mandragore*, *Cloches d'adieu...*, Ravel: *Gaspard de la nuit*, Messiaen: *Preludes*, Debussy: *Preludes*

January 21<sup>st</sup>: Spectra, Spirituality and Sensuality 2 – Takemitsu: *Les yeux clos II*, Scelsi: *Suites*, Messiaen: *Regards*, Scriabin: *Sonatas*

January 26<sup>th</sup>: Structures 1 – Mahnkopf: *Rhizom*, *Kammerminiatur*, Ferneyhough: *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, Xenakis: *Mists*, *Evryali*

January 28<sup>th</sup>: Special guest Sebastian Berweck (Berlin/Huddersfield) – reading complex notation

February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Structures 2 – Messiaen: *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*, Stockhausen: *Klavierstücke*, Boulez: *Piano Sonatas*, Cage: *Music of Changes*

February 4<sup>th</sup>: Structures 3 – Schoenberg: *Klavierstücke*, op. 11, *Suite*, op. 25; Berg: *Sonata*, Webern: *Variations*, op. 27

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m., Christ Church Cathedral (1444 Union): The Contemporary Keyboard Society perform new music for piano, harpsichord and toy pianos

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m., Tanna Schulich Hall: Sara Laimon performs *De Profundis* by Frederic Rzewski

February 9<sup>th</sup>: The Extended Piano 1 – piano + other keyboards, with special guest Dr. Katelyn Clark, toy piano (The Contemporary Keyboard Society)

February 10<sup>th</sup>, 8 p.m., The Interstice (242 Young, métro Bonaventure): The Contemporary Keyboard Society perform new music for toy pianos and electronics

February 11<sup>th</sup>: The Extended Piano 2 – Annea Lockwood: *Piano Burning*, Lachenmann: *Guero*, Berio: *Sequenza IV*, Henry Cowell: *The Banshee*

February 16<sup>th</sup>: Folklore – Finnissy: *Folklore, English Country Tunes*, Ligeti: *Musica ricercata*, Bartok: *Mikrokosmos*, Martinu, Janacek: *On an Overgrown Path*

February 18<sup>th</sup>: Rhythm – Messiaen: *Canteyodjaya, Neumes rythmiques*, Prokofiev: *Sonata nr. 7*, Bartok: *Allegro barbaro, Out of Doors*

March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Special guest Simon Docking (Toca Loca) – Unsuk Chin, Matthew Hindson, Pierre Boulez

March 4<sup>th</sup>: Miniatures – Heather Hindman: *Two and a Half Miniatures*, Kurtag: *Jatekok*, Berio: *Encores*, Satie: *Gnossiennes, Gymnopedies*, Mompou: *Charmes, Impressiones Intimas*, Grieg: *Lyric Pieces*

March 9<sup>th</sup>: Mid-Term Exam

March 11<sup>th</sup>: Special guest Sara Laimon (McGill) – Ives: *Concord Sonata*, Carter: *Night Fantasies, Piano Sonata*, Copland.

March 16<sup>th</sup>: The Extended Piano 3 – Gero Koenig: *Klangraum/passage*, George Crumb: *Makrokosmos*, John Cage: *Bacchanale, Sonatas and Interludes*

March 18<sup>th</sup>: The Extended Piano 4 – piano + fixed sounds: Luigi Nono: *...sofferte onde serene...*, Jonathan Harvey: *Tombeau de Messiaen*, Michel Gotteville: *Chute/parachute*, Denis Smalley: *Piano Nets*

March 23<sup>rd</sup>: The Extended Piano 5 – piano + processing +: Cort Lippe: *Music for Piano and Computer*, Philippe Manoury: *Pluton* (MIDI piano), Jean-Claude Risset: *Duet for one pianist* (disklavier), Hans Tutschku: *Zellen-Linien*

March 25<sup>th</sup>: Virtuosity 1 – Rakowski: *Etudes*, Ligeti: *Etudes*

March 30<sup>th</sup>: Virtuosity 2 – Stravinsky: *Etudes*, Scriabin: *Etudes*, Debussy: *Etudes*

April 1<sup>st</sup>: Lyricism – Prokofiev: *Visions fugitives*, Brahms *Klavierstücke* op. 118, 119, *Sonata #3*, Tchaikovsky: *The Seasons*, Fauré: *Nocturnes*

April 6<sup>th</sup>: Reactions – Morton Feldman: *Palais de mari, For Bunita Marcus*, John Adams: *China Gates, Phrygian Gates*, Shostakovich: *Preludes and Fugues*, Chris Paul Harman: *After Schumann*, John Rea: *Las meninas, Portrait of a Man in Elysian Fields*, Steven Gellman: *Fantasia on a Theme of Robert Schumann*, Edison Denisov: *Variations on a Theme of Handel*

April 8<sup>th</sup>: class presentations

April 13<sup>th</sup>: class presentations