

## Module Descriptor

<b>Module Code</b>	EEMTO3
<b>Module Name</b>	Contemporary Composition 1: History & Aesthetics
<b>ECTS Weighting<sup>1</sup></b>	5 ECTS
<b>Semester taught</b>	Semester 1
<b>Module Coordinator/s</b>	DR. ANN CLEARE
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Contemporary Composition 1 is a one-semester course taken by the M.Phil. students on the Music and Media Technologies (MMT) programme.</p> <p>This module is intended for those interested in gaining an understanding of key developments and compositional techniques from significant figures in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Composition, working within the fields of Acoustic and Electronic Music and Sound Art.</p> <p>In order to enable participants to come to a greater awareness of compositional approaches and principles, we will undertake both technical and aesthetic analyses of a variety of works from across the world, exploring the interactions of sound, art, and technology in the last century.</p>
<b>Module Aims</b>	<p><b>AIMS</b></p> <p>The module intends for students to critically assess and assimilate approaches taken within the most significant stylistic shifts throughout the development of Music and Sound Art from the past one hundred years. Students are encouraged to analyse and critique the works of artists explored during the course, both to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Contemporary Art and their creative approaches to Composition. This Semester 1 module prepares for Semester 2's <i>Contemporary Composition 2: Practice</i>, where students are taught to develop their own approach and style to creating compositions for a resident ensemble.</p>
<b>Module Content</b>	<p><b>MODULE CONTENT</b></p> <p><u>October 2:</u> Music and its Others?: Silence, Sound, Noise</p> <p><u>October 9:</u> Tonality &amp; Atonality</p> <p><u>October 16:</u> Radicalised Parameters: Melody, Harmony, Rhythm in the C20th</p> <p><u>October 23:</u> Experimentalism</p>

---

October 30: Simplicity & Complexity

November 6: Microtonality & Ideas of Space

Reading Week: no class

November 20: Timbre: Spectralism

November 27: Texture: Musique Concrete Instrumentale

December 4: The Expanding Stage

December 11: Haptic Bodies

December 18: Sonic Fictions: what will music be in the future?

## Teaching and Learning Methods

### METHODS OF TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

Students will be introduced to concepts and repertoire through various audio, video, literary, and score-based resources. Materials will be introduced, discussed, and class activities will explore these ideas further.

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussion and activities, prepare a creative portfolio of assignments, a half-semester curation assignment, and a paper of short essay questions related to class topics and repertoire.

The course delivery method will be a combination of face to face classroom and online learning, which will be reviewed and updated depending on the evolving COVID situation.

## Assessment Details

### METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

- enthusiastic class participation. **Continuously assessed (10%)**
- short written/composed reflections, submitted weekly, on a prescribed element of a listening /reading/composition assignments, and emailed prior to the following week's class. These weekly exercises are then compiled and submitted as a portfolio at the end of semester. **Due date tbc (20%)**
- half-semester assignment: curate a hypothetical concert based around one of the themes of our classes so far (Music & its Others/ Radicalising

Parameters/Experimentalism, Minimalism, Complexity, Space etc..) With unlimited resources and budget, create a programme of exciting and diverse works to take place in a setting of your choice. Non-conventional concert settings are both accepted and encouraged. Write a 1000-word introduction/programme note for this event, outlining the aesthetic thinking and decisions behind the repertoire (compositional features) and presentation (performance context/presentation, production, role of the audience). **Due date tbc (20%)**

- written paper of short essay questions: using audio/visual/literary/score works introduced during the course to demonstrate an awareness and critical understanding of key ideas and repertoire of the last century. **Due date tbc (50%)**

#### Contact Hours

#### Contact hours:

22 hours: lectures/workshops (2-4pm)  
8 hours: optional refresher theory tutorials (4.15-5pm)  
2 short feedback tutorials during the semester  
Drop in Office hours: 4-5pm on Thursdays  
Self-study: approximately 70 hours

#### Recommended Reading List

#### INDICATIVE RESOURCES

- Cage, John (1961) *Silence: Lectures and Writings*. Wesleyan Press.
- Cox, Christoph and Warner, Daniel (Revised edition 2017) *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. London: Continuum.
- Demers, Joanna (2010) *Listening through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental Electronic Music*. Oxford University Press.
- Eshun, Kodwo (1998) *More Brilliant than The Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction*. London: Quartet Books.
- Gottschalk, Jennie (2016) *Experimental Music Since 1970*. Bloomsbury Academic Press.

- Holmes, Thom (2012), *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music and Culture*, New York: Routledge.
- Lewis, George (2020), *A Small Act of Curation*, On Curation Journal, <https://on-curating.org/issues.html>.
- Morton, Timothy (2008), *The Ecological Thought*, Harvard University Press.
- Morton, Timothy (2013), *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, University Of Minnesota Press.
- Rutherford-Johnson, Tim (2017) *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989*. University of California Press.
- Van Eck, Cathy (2017) *Between Air and Electricity: Microphones and Loudspeakers as Musical Instruments*. Bloomsbury Academic USA.
- Voegelin, Salome (2010) *Listening to Noise and Silence: Toward a Philosophy of Sound Art*. Continuum Press.

Written and listening material will be also assigned in lectures each week.

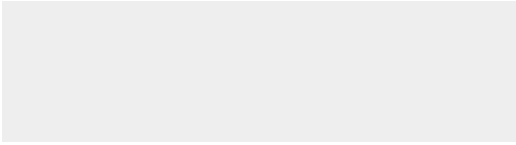
#### Module Pre-requisite

#### PREREQUISITE MUSICIANSHIP LEVEL REQUIREMENT TO CONTINUE INTO SEMESTER 2

Grade 4 standard of Musicianship/Theory or equivalent knowledge is required to continue to Semester 2's Composition Class. To enable all students to reach the required theory level for Semester 2's module, optional informal tutorials are provided as part of Semester 1's module from 4.15-5pm on Fridays. These tutorials are open to all MMT students who would like to improve their Music Theory skills, regardless of whether they are taking the Composition modules or not.

#### Module Evaluation

#### EVALUATION



The CAPSL survey is used but feedback is usually also freely given by students