

Improvisation, MU 322.2

Fall, 2006

Class meetings: T, Th; Foy Hall; 10:20 - 11:10 (period 3a)

Professor: Dr. Barbara Liebhaber

Office: Music Department Room 305

Phone: 861-1671 office

e mail: mebjl01@moravian.edu

office hours: M/W 2:00 – 3:30

or by appointment

Reading:

Required texts: The Inner Game of Music; Barry Green
Free Play – Stephen Nachmanovitch

On Reserve in Music Library:

CD's:

Swingle Singers – Mozart and Bach

Bach – Goldberg Variations – two versions:

1. piano – original Bach composition
2. Jacques Loussier trio – jazz version

Score – Bach Goldberg Variations

Terry Riley, *In C*, CD and score on reserve in music library

Course Objective:

Students will begin by using their bodies, voices, percussion instruments, Orff instruments and, eventually, their applied instruments to explore rhythmic and melodic possibilities. Students will use the six elements of music (melody, harmony, rhythm, tone color, form, expression), as well as different forms of music for improvisation. The goal is that students become comfortable expressing themselves through sound, through music and become less self-conscious as performers. We will use many techniques to explore the infinite expressive possibilities using the widest variety of dynamics, tempo, rubato, fermata and any other musical emotions. Experimentation will be encouraged. Blues structure will be used for more formal improvisation exercises where students will follow the 12 bar blues harmonic structure and using a step by step process, improvise on given melodies in the large class and then in small ensembles.

Requirements:

Attendance: Any unexcused absences will result in a zero for class work that day.

Homework: All homework is due at the class meeting for which it is assigned. **Late assignments will not be accepted** and students will receive a zero for any assignments not turned in.

Tardiness Policy: Students are required to be in class at the beginning of class, 10:20. If a student is late to class two times, a point will be subtracted from the final grade at the end of the semester.

Process log: After each class session jot down your reaction to the class. This is informal. It can be as short as one sentence or as long as you want it to be.

Critical Reflection on Reading: After reading the assignment, write your personal response to the book. This paper must focus on two or three ideas from the reading that you found particularly helpful or interesting. This paper should not be more than 2 pages, typed, double-spaced. Bring three copies of your paper to class. Two will be given to your classmates for comments, one will be submitted to the professor.

Papers from classmates: Return papers to classmates with your comments at the next class meeting. Comments are about content only. It is expected that students will validate each other's points of view and reflect on the ideas presented.

Portfolio: Due at last class meeting. Includes process log and critical reflection on reading with comments given by your classmates. Also include a final process log that offers your reflection on what you gained from the class during the semester.

Required concert: All B. Mus. Students are required to attend the trip to the opera in NYC on Wednesday, October 25, 2006. There will be no music classes that day.

Required concert attendance:

Students must attend at least two jazz or big band concerts during the semester and write a short review.

Grading:

Class participation/Attendance:	40%
HW – papers/listening assignments	40%
Concert attendance; reviews	
Portfolio -	20%

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to uphold the standards of academic honesty, as they are spelled out in the Student Handbook.

Reading Assignments are as follows, with accompanying papers due on that date:

Text: The Inner Game of Music – Barry Greene

Week :	Chapter:	Due:
1	Intro. - chapter 3	Thurs., 9/7
2	chapters 4 - 8	Thurs., 9/14
3	chapters 8 - 12	Tues., 9/21
4	chapters 11-15	Thurs., 9/28

Text: Free Play – Stephen Nachmanovitch

5	The Sources	Thurs., 10/5
6	The Work	Thurs., 10/12
7	Obstacles and Openings	Thurs., 10/19
8	The Fruits	Tues. , 10/31

Homework for weeks 9 – 14: Students will perform the Terry Riley composition, In C, and then compose their own compositions using the same form as the Riley composition. These compositions must be printed on a music program such as Finale, and then copies brought to class. Students will perform each other's compositions and critique the pieces and performances.

Students can expect to work 5 hours per week outside of the class preparing for this class.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Improvisation – Fall, 2006, Weekly Syllabus and Homework
Class meetings: Tuesday, 10:20 – 11:10

Week of:

- 8/28 Classes begin; rhythmic and vocal games
- 9/5 Rhythm improvisation
- 9/12 Rhythm and vocal improvisation
- 9/19 Bring instruments; begin instrumental improvisation
- 9/26 Bring instruments; begin blues progression
- 10/3 Bring instruments; continue blues progression
- 10/10 no class Tuesday, fall break; listen to Terry Riley *In C*; follow score
- 10/17 perform *In C* as class; each begin composition
- 10/24 continue working on compositions; continue blues progression activities -
- 10/31 no class Thursday; work on projects – original “In C” compositions –
groups preparing blues improvisations using familiar tunes
- 11/7 groups continue to prepare blues improvisations; demonstrate to class
progress so far; groups perform
- 11/14 all groups perform blues; evaluate and discuss
- 11/21 no class Thursday, Thanksgiving
Perform “In C” compositions – evaluate and discuss
- 11/28 on Thursday, class attends program at Charter High School
Perform “In C” compositions – evaluate and discuss
- 12/4 last week of classes;
Use 12 bar blues harmonic structure for class improvisation