

**Music 373: Bach Across the Centuries**  
**Spring 2008**

Dr. Hilde Binford

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:50 – 2:20 p.m.

Office Hours: Brethren's House 302, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:15-11:15 and 2:30-3:30.

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- I. **Course Description:** The primary focus of this seminar is an understanding of the intellectual world of J. S. Bach. We will investigate the aesthetic, spiritual, mathematical, and scientific certainties of the 18th century as mirrored in Bach's music. The secondary focus will be an examination of our world and its impact on the interpretation of Bach's music, as well as its ideas and impact on our world. Students will gain a deeper understanding of Bach's music and a more profound understanding of the time in which we live.
- II. **Instructional Materials:** *Johann Sebastian Bach: His Life in Picture and Documents* by Conrad Fischer. Scores and recordings on reserve in the music library.
- III. **Goals of Course:** Students gain familiarity with Bach's music, as well as the society in which he lived. In addition, they will learn how Bach's music has been interpreted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most importantly, each student will participate in a mini-conference on Bach, where they each choose a topic and prepare both a written paper and an oral presentation. They will learn the research methodology necessary to write a conference paper and will have the opportunity to present their work in a public forum.
- IV. **Teaching Strategies:** The course will be conducted with a series of lectures and class discussions based on the reading assignments, audio-visual materials, and other supplemental materials presented by the instructor. The class will also participate in a reading of *Bach in Leipzig*.
- V. **Course Requirements:** Attendance is mandatory. For each unexcused absence, your overall grade for the class will be lowered by .25 (using a 4.0 scale). Excused absences include illness (doctor's note required) and family funeral (note from home or Student Services required). All other absences will be evaluated at the discretion of the instructor. Chronic lateness will not be tolerated, and will be reflected in the overall grade.

Assignments must be turned in by 4 p.m. on the day they are due in order to receive a letter grade. Assignments not turned in by that time will receive a "zero." Assignments which receive a grade of C+ or lower may be rewritten for a higher grade; students must submit the original paper along with the rewritten one. Rewrites will be accepted at any time up to and including the start of the final exam for this course.

- VI. **Exams, Research Paper, Reviews, Class Presentations, and Journal:**
  - Research Paper:** An essay (30%, minimum of 3500 words) on a topic related to the class will be turned in by April 24<sup>th</sup>. Students will need to submit the paper topic for approval by February 6th. No subject may be selected by more than one student (first come, first serve on topics). All work submitted, including drafts, must be printed on computer. Standard fonts and margins are required. Papers must be free from errors of grammar and spelling.
  - Exam:** There will be a midterm exam, worth 25% of the final grade.
  - Reviews:** Students will write reviews for two of the performances of cantatas in the Bach at Noon series. (5%)
  - Reading:** Each student will participate in a reading of *Bach in Leipzig*. (5%)
  - Journal/Class Participation:** (25%) As this is a seminar class, class participation is essential. Each student will be expected to maintain a journal (notebook). The journal will be reviewed periodically for completeness. It should include notes from the required readings, outside sources, and other materials pertinent to the course.
  - Class Presentations:** (10%) Each student will be expected to make an oral presentation as part of a "mini-conference" on Bach.

- VIII. Students can expect to work a minimum of four to six hours per week outside of class preparing for this class, which includes keeping a journal, required reading and listening, library research, writing, and concert attendance.
- IX. 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.
- X. **Please note that the syllabus and calendar of class assignments are subject to change.**
- XI. **Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to uphold the standards of academic honesty, as they are spelled out in the Student Handbook.
- XII. The music department is preparing for its March 2010 National Association of Schools of Music accreditation renewal. One of the NASM requirements is to provide examples of academic growth. **Please be advised that your work from this and other music classes may be saved for this purpose to show growth over time.** All class work presented to NASM will be "blind," meaning student identification will be removed. If you do not wish your work to be used for this purpose, please inform me.
- XIII. **Preliminary Schedule:**
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| Jan 15       | Introduction to Bach  |
| Jan 17       | Bach Biography on Film, Early Childhood, pp. 7-47   |
| Jan 22       | Weimar , pp. 48-65, <i>Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 538</i> , and the <i>Well-Tempered Clavier</i> , (also see article on reserve) |
| Jan 24       | Cöthen, pp. 66-79, <i>1<sup>st</sup> Brandenburg Concerto</i> , Marissen pp. 11-34,   |
| Jan 29       | Leipzig, pp. 80-114, <i>Christmas Oratorio</i>  |
| Jan 31       | <i>Gaian Variations</i> – <b>Focus the Nation</b> – <a href="http://www.gaianvariations.com">www.gaianvariations.com</a>                |
| Feb 5        | Bach in Potsdam, pp. 136-153, <i>Musical Offering, An Evening in the Palace of Reason</i>   |
| Feb 7        | Performance Practices (students)  |
| Feb 12       | Bach @ Noon (Central Moravian Church)   |
| Feb 14       | Bach in Feature Films   |
| Feb 19       | Research Methodology (Reeves Library)   |
| Feb 21       | Review and Discussion   |
| Feb 28       | Mid-term Exam   |
| <b>Mar 4</b> | <b>Spring Break</b>   |
| <b>Mar 6</b> | <b>Spring Break</b>   |
| Mar 11       | Bach @ Noon (Central Moravian Church)   |
| Mar 13       | Student-led discussion  |
| Mar 18       | Preparation for Reading with Bill Bauman  |
| Mar 20       | Student-led discussion  |
| Mar 25       | Student-led discussion  |
| Mar 27       | Student-led discussion  |
| Apr 1        | <i>Bach in Leipzig, Act I</i>   |
| Apr 3        | <i>Bach in Leipzig, Act II</i>  |
| Apr 8        | Bach @ Noon (Central Moravian Church), drafts of papers due   |
| Apr 10       | Individual meetings   |
| Apr 15       | Dress rehearsal   |
| Apr 17       | Mini-conference   |
| Apr 22       | Dress rehearsal   |
| Apr 24       | Mini-conference   |