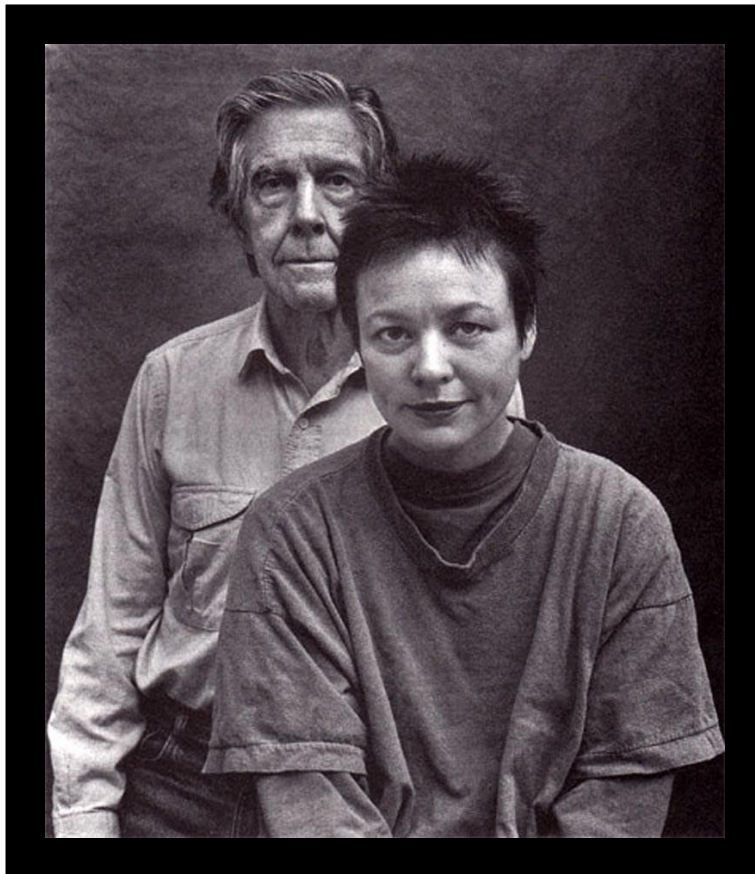


MU124 Music for Masochists

Five centuries of “difficult listening” in Western Classical Music

FALL 2020



Good evening.
Welcome to Difficult Listening Hour.
The spot on your dial for that relentless and impenetrable sound of
Difficult Music.

So sit bolt upright in that straight-backed chair,
button that top button,
and get set for some
difficult music

Ooola.

Seminar Leader: Paul Festa

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Course Times: Mondays, 14:00 – 17:15

Email: p.festa@berlin.bard.edu

Office Hours: By appointment—probably the hours directly before and after class.

Requirements

Passing the course requires submission of all assigned work.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance, etc.

- The class meets in person, as of this writing, and a combination of common sense, good will, open communication, and flexibility will help us navigate exceptions. Obviously don't come to class if you feel at all ill. If you are well enough to join us virtually, Zoom in. If not, take the absence—ways to make it up below.
- Two 90-minute absences, no penalty. Each additional absence, 0.3 is deducted from the semester course grade unless excused by leave of absence from the registrar or made up as described below.
- You may make up as many as three unexcused absences by giving a ten-minute presentation at your subsequent appearance that covers the assigned material. The presentation should cover the basics of the material along with your own take on it, and you'll answer questions from the group. Credit is awarded on a scale of 0.0 – 0.3: a score of 0.3 cancels the absence, and 0.0 leaves the penalty intact.
- Eight and a half 90-minute absences—excused, made-up, or otherwise—amount to more than 30 percent of the course, and Bard does not award credit. Consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.
- These policies apply equally to sessions missed during the add-drop period.
- Lateness is billed in 30-minute increments (so 5 min. late = 1/3 attendance).
- Lack of required texts—paper copies—equals 1/2 attendance.
- Phones powered off or in airplane mode.

Assignments

- Regular brief quizzes for your own self-assessment and preparation for the two exams. We will go over these in class but I will not collect them. You will be asked to identify music from the syllabus (current and prior weeks), answer questions about the reading, give basic information about the composer's life and work, and briefly contextualize the excerpt (**0 percent**).
- Weekly responses to assigned material. Include timecode in all writing. These are informal notes on listening, not polished essays, may be read in class, and are counted with your class participation (**25 percent**).
- Midterm exam testing your ability to recognize works from the syllabus and situate them stylistically and historically (Week 7, Oct. 12, **25 percent**).
- A ten-minute film, probably under the headings of documentary and criticism and almost certainly not music video; or your choice of two of the following challenges (group projects encouraged—**25 percent**):
 - a semi-staged scene from *Doktor Faustus*
 - lip-synch for your grade (to an atonal aria)
 - interpretive dance to difficult music (props, costumes, concept)
 - difficult(-)music video (live or video)
 - narrate a piece of difficult music (live or video)
 - multimedia report on your visit to St. Burchardi Church in Halberstadt on *Organ2/ASLSP (As Slow as Possible)* by John Cage, which is scheduled to be completed in 2640 (double credit).
 - a challenge of your own devising, subject to class approval
- Final Exam (Completion Week, Dec. 14, **25 percent**)

Policy on Late Submission of Work

Student Handbook rules on the submission of essays applies to all assigned work: *essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.*

Library and Book Purchase Policies

Required texts

- Alex Ross, *The Rest Is Noise*
- Packet
 - Syllabus
 - Composer timeline
 - Readings

Schedule

WEEK 1 — Monday, 31 August

Words to music; musical notation; the harmonic series; plainchant to the Renaissance

MUSIC **Hildegard von Bingen** (Bermersheim vor der Höhe, 1098 - 1179, Bingen)

- Rubor sanguinis
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDeR9MeGNPg>

Léonin (probably French; fl. 1150s — d. 1201 [?])

- organum duplum
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngCRm7uLirA>

John Taverner (English; c. 1490 – 1545)

- Dum transisset sabbatum
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUBF7kNVlbY>

Carlo Gesualdo da Venosa (Venosa, 1566 – 1613 Gesualdo)

- “Moro, lasso al mio duolo,” Madrigals, Book VI, Nr. 17
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvwzrtgCBdU>

Sir John Kenneth Tavener (London, 1944 – 2013, Dorset)

- The Lamb
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIMUquOdDT4>
- God Is with Us
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loSi0Q4AEko>

TEXT **Wayne Koestenbaum**

- *The Queen’s Throat*, “The Unspeakable Marriage of Words and Music”

Paul Festa

- *Apparition of the Eternal Church* (film transcript, 2006)

Wikipedia

- Harmonic series (music)
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harmonic_series_\(music\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harmonic_series_(music))

Hugh M. Miller

- *History of Music*: plainchant (14 – 15), early polyphony (25 – 27), the Renaissance (49 – 59)

WEEK 2 — Monday, 7 September

The Baroque, Bach, contrapuntal music

MUSIC **Johann Sebastian Bach** (Eisenach 1685–1750 Leipzig)

- The Art of the Fugue, BWV 1080
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9OUfBDIGhw>

- Sonata #3 in C major for violin alone, BWV 1005
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oNBktYIGgQ&vl=en>

TEXT Hugh M. Miller

- *History of Music: the Baroque* (81 – 85), Instrumental Music (100 – 105)

Christopher Wolff

- *The New Grove Bach Family* (4 – 5, 159 – 172)

Yehudi Menuhin and Curtis W. Davis

- *The Music of Man* (128 – 137)

Arnold Schoenberg

- *Style and Idea: "Bach"* (393 – 397)

WEEK 3 — Monday, 14 September

Against difficulty and back again: the classical period and its disruptor

MUSIC **Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach** (Weimar 1714 – 1788 Hamburg)

- Sonata for flute and obbligato harpsichord in C Major, Wq. 149, H. 574
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUdTVzzU1Sw>

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Salzburg 1756 – 1791 Vienna)

- String Quartet No. 19 "Dissonance," K. 465
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcfDxgfHs64>

Ludwig van Beethoven (Bonn 1770 – 1827 Vienna)

- Symphony no. 3 in E flat major "Eroica," op. 55
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZfzQ8L39dl>
- Grosse Fuge, Op. 133
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAgdd2VqLVc>

TEXT Hugh M. Miller

- *History of Music: The Classical Era* (1750 - 1820): General Considerations (115 – 119); Instrumental Music (120 – 125)

ART Adolph von Menzel (1815 – 1905)

- "Flötenkonzert Friedrichs II. in Sanssouci," oil on canvas, 1850 – 1852
Alte Nationalgalerie, Room 1.05
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/64/Adolph_Menzel_-_Fl%C3%B6tenkonzert_Friedrichs_des_Gro%C3%9Fen_in_Sanssouci_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

WEEK 4 — Monday, 21 September

The Romantic Period: virtuosity; tonality on the rocks

MUSIC **Niccolò Paganini** (Genoa 1782 – 1840 Nice)

- Caprice 5
 - **Leonidas Kavakos**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fijl_fyRwik
 - Alexander Markov
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLgBejh5TLA>
 - Augustin Hadelich
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JY5Km0c8YmE>
 - **Sumina Studer**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jXXWBt5URw>
- Caprice 6
 - Yehudi Menuhin
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnxK9EVwxms>
 - Augustin Hadelich
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aTVxebY6Zg>
 - Paul Zukovsky
- Caprice No. 24
 - Jascha Heifetz
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPcnGrie__M

Franz Liszt (xxxx – xxxx)

- *Bagatelle Sans Tonalité*

Richard Wagner (xxxx – xxxx)

- *Tristan & Isolde*

TEXT Ross, i – xviii, 1 – 15, 339 – 341

WEEK 5 — Monday, 28 September

Strauss and Mahler

MUSIC **Richard Strauss** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Also Sprach Zarathustra*
- *Elektra*
- *Ariadne* (Majordomo's announcement through Zerbinetta's aria)

TEXT **Gustav Mahler** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Sixth Symphony*

TEXT Ross, 15 – 35

WEEK 6 — Monday, 5 October

A Faustian Bargain

MUSIC **Claude Debussy** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Preludes*

Arnold Schoenberg (Nationality, date – date)

- *Verklärte Nacht*
- *Gurrelieder* (opening)
- *Pierrot Lunaire*
- *Fünf Klavierstücke*, Op.23
- *Moses & Aron* (scenes)

TEXT Ross, 36 – 66

ART Claude Monet

- *Waterlilies*

William Turner (Nationality, date – date)

- *Work*, Info

Arnold Schoenberg (Nationality, date – date)

- *Self-portrait*

WEEK 7 — Monday, 12 October

The Second Viennese School

MUSIC **Alban Berg** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Lulu*
- *Violin Concerto*

Anton Webern (Nationality, date – date)

- *Six Bagatelles*
- *Six Pieces for Orchestra*

TEXT Ross, 67 – 79, 211 – 232

EXAM **Midterm**

WEEK 8 — Monday, 26 October

France

MUSIC **Erik Satie** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Le Fils des Étoiles*, Prelude
- *Gymnopédies*

Edgar Varèse (Nationality, date – date)

- *Amérique*

Maurice Ravel (Nationality, date – date)

- *Bolero*

Olivier Messiaen (Nationality, date – date)

- *Le Banquet Celeste*
- *Nativity Suite*
- *Quartet for the End of Time*

TEXT Ross, 80 – 116, 148 – 149, 390 -391, 483 – 505

WEEK 9 — Monday, 2 November

Postwar Messiaen

MUSIC **Olivier Messiaen**

- *Vingt Regards de l'Enfant Jesus* (1 – 6)
- *Couleurs de la Cité Celeste*
- *Canyons* (excerpts)
- *Organ Book* (excerpts)
- *Illuminations from the Beyond* (excerpts)

TEXT Ross, 80 – 116, 148 – 149, 390 -391, 483 – 505 (review)

WEEK 10 — Monday, 9 November

Russia

MUSIC **Igor Stravinsky** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Sacre du Printemps*

Dmitri Shostakovich (Nationality, date – date)

- *Violin Concerto #1 in a minor*

Alfred Shnittke (Nationality, date – date)

- *Concerto Grosso*

Sofia Gubaidulina (Nationality, date – date)

- *Offertorium*

TEXT Ross, 84 – 120 (some review), 575 – 578

WEEK 11 — Monday, 16 November

Eastern Europe

MUSIC **Bela Bartok** (Nationality, date – date)

- *String Quartet #4*
- *Violin Concerto in B major*

Gyorg Ligeti (Nationality, date – date)

- *Lux Aeterna*
- *Grand Macabre*

TEXT Ross, 88 – 122 (mostly review), 505 – 514

WEEK 12 — Monday, 23 November
The International Style

MUSIC **Pierre Boulez** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Piano Sonata No. 1*

Karlheinz Stockhausen (Nationality, date – date)

- *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1955/1956)

Toru Takemitsu (Nationality, date – date)

- *Piano distance* (1961)

Iannis Xenakis (Nationality, date – date)

- *Khoai* (1976)
- *Analogique A Et B* (1958-59)

Philip Venables

- *Numbers 76-80*

TEXT Ross, 386 – 396, 424 – 434, 562 – 575

WEEK 13 — Monday, 30 November
America the Difficult

MUSIC **Ruth Crawford Seeger** (Nationality, date – date)

- *Chant 3*, Info

Aaron Copland (Nationality, date – date)

- *Fanfare for the Common Man*
- *Connotations* (1961/1962)

Charles Ives (Nationality, date – date)

- *Concord Sonata*

John Cage (Nationality, date – date)

- *Chorals for violin solo*

Morton Feldman (Nationality, date – date)

- *Rothko Chapel*

Elliott Carter (Nationality, date – date)

- *Duo for violin and piano*

David Rakowski (Nationality, date – date)

- *Piano Etudes*
 - o *25, Fists of Fury*
 - o *30, A Gliss is Just a Gliss*
 - o *43, Wiggle Room*
 - o *53, Cell Division*

TEXT Ross, 284 – 313, 386 – 417, 434 – 442

WEEK 14 — Monday, 7 December

Against masochism again—and back again: minimalism

MUSIC **La Monte Young** (Nationality, date – date)

- *For Brass*
- *String Trio*

Terry Riley (Nationality, date – date)

- *In C*

Philip Glass (Nationality, date – date)

- *Einstein on the Beach* (excerpts)

Steve Reich (Nationality, date – date)

- *Variations for Winds, Strings, and Keyboards. (1979)*

Louis Andriessen (Nationality, date – date)

- *De Staat*, Info

TEXT Ross, 515 – 573

COMPLETION WEEK — Monday, 14 December

FINAL EXAM