

BERLIN: CITY OF MUSIC
MU171 FALL 2024
SYLLABUS
Final Version Sept. 2, 2024

Seminar Leader: Benjamin Hochman
Email: b.hochman@berlin.bard.edu
Class Location: Lecture Hall, P98A
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Berlin's musical life presents an embarrassment of riches- where to begin? This course helps you chart a path through Berlin's endlessly fascinating musical offerings, from chamber music to opera, covering a wide range of musical styles from the last three hundred years. We will attend concerts throughout the city as well as musical performances in digital format. Choice of events will depend on scheduling and the availability of low-cost tickets. Venues will include the Philharmonie Berlin, Isang Yun Haus, Boulez Saal, and Piano Salon Christophori. We will prepare for each event by reading texts (musicological, historical, critical), listening to recordings, and watching films. We will host several guests representing the rich variety of musical life in Berlin. Written requirements for the course will include weekly short assignments, two quizzes, and two longer assignments: a midterm and a final. No prior musical knowledge is required: music-lovers and musicians of all levels are equally welcome. This course is organized with Google Classroom, where all materials will be provided.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Read and respond to emails in a timely fashion.

- Attend classes punctually and completely.
- Attend off-campus events punctually and completely.
- Complete assigned work on time.
- Actively participate in class discussions.
- Remain open, curious, and engaged throughout the semester.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. 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

- Attendance at all classes and off-campus excursions is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, one absence (that is, one absence from one three-hour session) will not affect the grade or require documentation.
- You may encounter circumstances that prevent you from attending classes for which you may be excused, meaning that the absence will not impact your grade. These circumstances include illness, religious observance, military obligation, attendance at a conference, a Bard Network event, a civic engagement initiative, a research trip or other compelling circumstance outside of your control (i.e. court appearance, visa appointment, death of a family member). Optional non-academic travel, hosting visiting family and friends, or work schedules are not ground for excused absences. You will be allowed to self-report your absence one time, meaning that a notification informing your instructor about the reason for your absence before or within 24 hours of the class is sufficient. If you miss class more than once you will need to provide your instructor with appropriate documentation in order to be excused (i.e. a doctor's note).
- If you have any general medical issues or other concerns that could impact your compliance

with these regulations, you need to inform your instructor during the first week of the semester. For information on disability accommodation, you should consult with Maria Anderson Long, Head of Student Life: m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu. Tardiness after fifteen minutes will be considered an absence.

- All unexcused absences will lower the final grade by one step (i.e. if your final grade is a B, you will be downgraded to a B-).
- Please note that Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

- Assignments (essays, presentations, homework) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). The professor is not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.
- Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Assessment

Students are expected to complete the required homework (readings, listening, viewing, written assignments) and contribute creatively and meaningfully to class discussions. You will receive a participation grade which is based on your in-class engagement and completion of homework. Please reserve 3 hours on average for weekly class preparation and asynchronous class work. Readings will be made available on Google Classroom.

Assignments and due dates

Students are expected to:

- Complete short weekly written assignments, approximately 300 words each. Due in advance of each class or as specified in Google Classroom.
- Take two quizzes: on Oct. 14 and on Nov. 25. The quizzes will review material already covered in class and previously assigned as homework.
- Submit a Midsemester Essay: approximate length 1000 words. Due October 18, 23:59.
- Create a Final Project: approximate length 1500 words. Due December 13, 23:59.

Course Grade Breakdown

- Active classroom participation: 20%
- Weekly written assignments: 20%
- Quizzes: 20% (10% per quiz, two quizzes in total)
- Midterm essay: 20%
- Final Project: 20%

Schedule

There are likely to be schedule updates throughout the semester. It is the student's responsibility to pay close attention to all communications via email and Google Classroom.

Week 1

Monday, Sept. 2, 15:45-19:00 Introductions. The Fall of the Wall.

Week 2

Monday, Sept. 9, 15:45-19:00 Preparation for Ensemble Modern concert.

Music by Beyer, Crawford Seeger, Balch, León.

Friday, Sept. 13, 18:00-22:30 Concert Visit: Ensemble Modern, Philharmonie Berlin.

<https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/musikfestberlin/programm/2024/kalender/ensemble-modern-ii>

Guest Leader: Prof. Dr. Dr. James S. Helgeson, Dean at the Barenboim-Said Akademie.

<https://www.barenboimsaid.de/en/professor/james-s-helgeson>

You will meet Prof. James Helgeson at the Philharmonie outside, on the side facing the Kunstforum. Map with arrow to exact location will be provided on Google Classroom in advance.

Herbert-von-Karajan-Straße 1, 10785, Berlin

Week 3

Monday, Sept. 16, 15:45-19:00

Guest Leader: Elinor Rufeizen, conductor. <https://www.elinorrufeizen.com/>

The symbiotic relationship between French and American music in the early 20th century.

Week 4

Monday, Sept. 23, 15:45-19:00

Guest Leader: Tomoki Park, pianist. <https://www.tomokipark.com/>

Peter Serkin's Synthesis of Performance and Composition. Part I: Immigration of Cultures.

Week 5

NO CLASS SEPT. 30. In-class meeting TBC Oct. 1, 2, or 4.

Sunday, Oct. 6, 18:00-20:30 Concert Visit: Brentano Quartet at the Boulez Saal.

<https://www.boulezsaal.de/de/event/brentano-string-quartet-400062>

Französische Str. 33D, 10117 Berlin

Week 6

Monday, Oct. 7, 15:45-19:00

Guest: Sommer Ulrickson, choreographer and director. <https://sommer-ulrickson.com/vita.php>

A Night at the Opera

Quiz # 1. Information about the quiz will be provided by Sept. 30.

Sunday, Oct. 13, 15:30- 18:30

Concert Visit: Recital by Yezu Woo and Tomoki Park at Yun-Haus Berlin

<https://yun-gesellschaft.de/en/events-yun-house-berlin/>

Sakrower Kirchweg 47, 14089 Berlin

Week 7

Monday, Oct. 14

Guest: Anthony Tomassini, former chief Classical Music Critic at The New York Times.

<https://www.nytimes.com/by/anthony-tommasini>

Marian Anderson

Friday, Oct. 18, 23:59. Midterm essay due. Instructions for the essay will be provided early in the semester.

Week 8

Mon, Oct. 21 - Sun, Oct. 27 Fall break

Week 9

Monday, Oct. 28, 15:45-19:00

Guest: Peter Laki, Prof. of Music Emeritus, Bard College.

<https://www.bard.edu/faculty/details/?id=2122>

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of his Birth.

Week 10

Monday, Nov. 4, 15:45-19:00

Guest Leader: Tomoki Park, pianist.

Peter Serkin's Synthesis of Performance and Composition. Part II: Bringing New Music to Life.

Week 11

Monday, Nov. 11, 15:45-19:00

Guest Leader: Avery Morris, Czech Fulbright Award Scholar. <https://www.averyviolin.com/>

Gideon Klein: Music in the Holocaust.

Week 12

Monday, Nov. 18, 15:45-19:00 TBA

Week 13

Monday, Nov. 25, 15:45-19:00

Guest: Saleem Ashkar, pianist. <https://www.saleemashkar.com/>

Quiz #2. Information about the quiz will be provided by Nov. 18.

Week 14

Monday, Dec. 2, 19:30-22:30

Concert Visit: Benjamin Hochman Album Release Concert at Piano Salon Christophori.

https://www.konzertfluegel.com/N_konzerte.html

Works by Beethoven, Benjamin, Downland, and Josquin de Prez.

Week 15

Monday, Dec. 9, 15:45-19:00

Guest: Misagh Joolaei <https://www.misaghjoolaei.com/>

Persian Classical Music.

Friday, Dec. 13, at 23:59. Final essay due. Instructions for the essay will be provided by Nov. 18.

Assigned Materials and Course Cost

Materials for reading, listening, and viewing, will be provided throughout the semester on Google Classroom. No purchases of texts or course readers are required for this class. In lieu of that cost, there may be a modest expense to each student for purchase of concert tickets. Every effort is being made to arrange concert attendance for the lowest possible cost. Most tickets for concert visits will be purchased through the college, although some tickets may need to be purchased directly by each student at their own expense. Total cost to each student will not exceed 30 Euros per student per semester.