

Syllabus

The Piano Prelude from Chopin to Debussy (MUSI4520)

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Shanahan
Office: Room 129 (basement), Kerchof Hall (Math Building; on C parking lot across from Clark Hall.)
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Office hours: Tues: 11:30-1:30, Weds:2:30-4:30, and By Appointment
Course: MUSI4520
Credit: 3.0 credits
Term: Spring 2014
Time: MWF / 1-1:50pm
Place: Old Cabell Hall, 113
Class No: 20225
Text: None. Collab will be updated with readings consisting of journal articles, book chapters, and scores.

Course Objectives

This course looks at the piano prelude in the late 19th- and early 20th-century from many different angles. We will study the various compositional techniques employed by composers such as Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, and Debussy, and we will use selected sets of preludes as a way of examining aspects of chromaticism, “impressionism”, music-theoretical discourse, and performance practice. This course will explore the repertoire in depth and provide the students with the tools for engaging with music that frequently eludes discussion.

In this course you will:

- Learn about the various approaches to discussing the standalone piano prelude
- Understand the historical and cultural contexts within which these pieces were composed
- Engage in the analytical discourse of the 20th century surrounding the genre

Resources

There is no text for this class. Articles, scores, and scanned book chapters will be made available on Collab.

Website

I will be sticking with Collab for supplemental readings, quizzes, and assignments this semester. This Syllabus is on Collab, and I will be adding content (recordings, links, articles, etc.) to the Collab site on a daily basis.

Policies and Grading

It is very easy for this topic to become overwhelming if one is not accustomed to working with it on a regular basis. In order to avoid falling behind, you are expected to come to all class meetings, and return all written assignments promptly.

There will be frequent assignments (including question sheets, analyses, and reading responses), and one final project this semester.

Assignments and tests will receive numerical grades (100 = perfect).

The breakdown of grades for this class is as follows:

- Assignments (40%)
- Attendance/Participation (30%)
- Final Project (20%)
- In-Class Presentation (10%)

Classwork, Homework, and Grading

Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be docked 5 points according to the number of days (24-hour timespans) from the official due date. For example, if you hand in an assignment that would normally receive an 88 within 24 hours of the class, it will be reduced to an 83.

Presentations

Each of you will be paired with another classmate to present your homework once on one of the Mondays during the semester, starting on January 27th. In addition to the copy of the homework that you hand in to me, you are responsible for making a copy for every other member of the class, so make sure to leave enough time to make copies for your presentation.

Begin your presentation by asking the class a series of questions that will get them to think about the assignment and explain how they approached it. You will then distribute your own solutions, explain them, and solicit responses. You should plan for your presentation to take only 10 minutes, but follow-up questions are likely to go on for a bit longer. Your oral presentation counts as one homework grade, separate from the grade you receive on the homework itself. Try to present as well as possible: be prepared, be strategic about the way you use your audio-visual aids (slideshows, if preferred), speak loudly and clearly, and use the appropriate terminology.

I am happy to meet with you beforehand to go over your presentation. Before meeting with me and certainly before presenting in class, you should also convene with your partner, discuss the assignment together, and plan out the presentation.

You can see a rubric of how presentations on Collab.

Late Assignments

Assignments must be submitted at the beginning on class, either on Collab or by paper (depending on the assignment). Late assignments will be deducted 5 points per class. For example, an assignment due on Monday that earns a 94 will be awarded an 89 if handed in before Wednesday, an 84 if handed in before Friday, etc. **ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT ALL AFTER TWO WEEKS.**

Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance is required, and is an extremely large part of your grade. Sign-in sheets will be handed out at the beginning of each class, and will be collected within the first 10-15 minutes of class. If you are unable to sign in, it will be treated the same as an absence.

You may miss at most two classes with no deduction, unless you have a written excuse from a health care provider or another authorized excuse as arranged with the teacher. Consistent unexcused absences (more than 2) will lead to a 5 point deduction in your attendance and participation grade.

Assistance

I am available and interested in talking with you about the course, the course material, and strategies to enhance your learning. We can usually have brief discussions after class, and I am able to answer questions by e-mail (dts9h@virginia.edu) at any time. Please feel free to visit me during office hours (see above) at any point during the semester. Additionally, I am happy to set up an appointment at a time that is mutually acceptable for more lengthy discussions.

Lecture and Reading Schedule

Class	Topic	Assignment Due
1.M (1/13)	Introduction: Why study the piano miniature?	No assignment
1.W (1/15)	Beethoven Op. 39: Historical context, analysis, influence	
1.F (1/17)	Hummel, Op.67 Historical context, analysis, influence	
2.M (1/20)	No class, Martin Luther King Jr. Day	No assignment
2.W (1/22)	Melodic and Harmonic reduction; Chopin's Op.28, No.20.	
2.F (1/24)	Metric reduction Op.28, No.7	
3.M (1/27)	Op.28, No.1	Question Sheet about Wallace Berry's "Metric and Rhythmic Articulation in Music"
3.W (1/29)	Expectation/Implication in Music	
3.F (1/31)	Analysis of Implication in Op.28, No.22	
4.M (2/3)	Op.28, No.21	Question Sheet about Op.28, No.21.
4.W (2/5)	Ambiguity: Op. 28, No.22	Question Sheet about Alison Hood's "Ambiguity of Tonal Meaning in Chopin"
4.F (2/7)	Ambiguity Continued	
5.M (2/10)	Deconstructing Op.28, No.7	Question sheet for Subotnik's "How could Chopin's A-Major Prelude be Deconstructed?"
5.W (2/12)	Op.28, No.7 Continued	
5.F (2/14)	Fourth Ballade (op.52) Discussion	
6.M (2/17)	Fourth Ballade continued	Questions about Klein's "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative"

6.W (2/19)	Op.28, No.17 and Narrative	
6.F (2/21)	Performance Analysis and Chopin	Read Cook's "Performance Analysis and Chopin's Mazurkas"
7.M (2/24)	Blumenfeld, Op.17, No.15	Written comparison between Blumenfeld Op.17, No.15 and Chopin's Op.28, No.3.
7.W (2/26)	Busoni's Op.37	
7.F (2/28)	Busoni's Op.37 (continued)	
8.M (3/3)	Rachmaninoff, op.23	Comparison of Cui's Op.64, No.7 and Rachmaninoff's Op.23, No.5.
8.W (3/5)	Cui, Op.64	
8.F (3/7)	Scriabin, Op.11	
9.M (3/10)	Spring Break (woot)	
9.W (3/12)	Spring Break	
9.F (3/14)	Spring Break	
10.M (3/17)	"La filles aux cheveux de lin" Analysis (Reduction)	Assignment due: Comparison of "La filles aux cheveux de lin" and "Bruyeres"
10.W (3/19)	"Bruyeres" Analysis	
10.F (3/21)	"Bruyeres" continued/"Canope"	
11.M (3/24)	"Canope" Continued (Tonal Ambiguity)	Comparison of "La cathedrale engloutie" and "Des pas sur la neige"
11.W (3/26)	"La cathedrale engloutie" (Ambiguity, modality)	
11.F (3/28)	"La cathedrale engloutie"/ "Des pas sur la neige"	
12.M (3/31)	"Des pas sur la neige" (Non-functional harmony, narrative)	Question sheet on Rings's "Mysteres limpides: Time and Transformation in Debussy's 'Des pas sur la neige'"
12.W (4/2)	"Les collines Anacapri" (Narrative, continued)	
12.F (4/4)	"Les collines Anacapri" (continued)	

13.M (4/7)	Approaches to musical rhythm	Question sheet for Trezise's "Debussy's 'rhythmicized time'"
13.W (4/9)	Rhythmic projection in "Feuilles mortes"	
13.F (4/11)	Metric grouping in "Danseuses de Delphes" and "Minstrels"	
14.M (4/14)	Conformational Forms in the Preludes	Questions related to selections from Bonds's <i>Wordless Rhetoric</i>
14.W (4/16)	Generative forms and 'Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir'	
14.F (4/18)	Discontinuous and 'Moment' Forms, and 'Brouillards'	
15.M (4/21)	Post-tonal approaches; 'Voiles' Analysis	Questions related to both Nadeau's and Schnebel's Analyses of 'Brouillards'
15.W (4/23)	'Voiles'/'Ce qu'a vu le vent O'uest' Analysis	
15.F (4/25)	"Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest" Analysis	
16.M (4/28)	Final class and party (woot)	

Final Project is Due Wednesday April 30th by 5pm.

Final Paper

Your final, 10- to 12-page paper will be due at 5pm on Wednesday, April, 30th. I will meet with each of you individually during the week of Monday, March 31st, to discuss possible paper topics. Sign-up will be on Collab the previous week. Please come to our session with at least two possibilities in mind. You are also required to submit a 1-page, single-spaced outline and a 1-page, single-spaced bibliography by the beginning of class on April 14th. I expect to find at least **6** distinct and substantial sources in your bibliography. (A wikipedia article is not a substantial source, nor is a blog.) Be succinct in your outline and judicious in your choice of sources for your bibliography. Since research methods and materials are specific to the topic you choose, we will strategize about them during our individual meetings.

Honor

I trust every student in this course to comply with all of the provisions of the UVA honor system. I will ask that you pledge and sign the quizzes, the exam, and all assignments. Your signature on the exams affirms you have not received nor given aid while taking your exams, nor accessed any notes, study outlines, old exams, answer keys, or books while taking an exam and that you have not obtained any answers from another student's exam. Your signature on the papers affirms that they represent your original work, and that any sources you have quoted, paraphrased, or used extensively in preparing the paper have been properly credited in the footnotes or bibliography.

Students with disabilities

This syllabus is available in alternative formats (PDF, HTML, epub) upon request. In addition, if you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me immediately. Students with special needs can contact UVa's Office of Disability Services.