

MUCP 4590 / 5590

Spring 2008

Intermedia Performance Art:

Center for Experimental
Music and Intermedia

University of North Texas
Division of Composition Studies

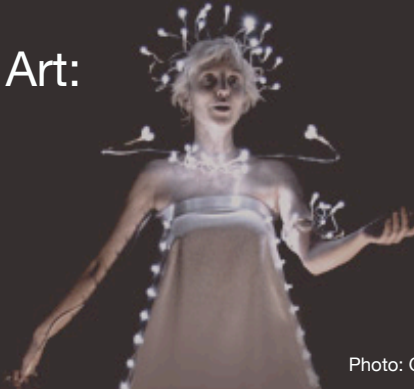


Photo: Genevieve Favre as "Elektra" 2007

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This course is meant to provide an introduction to making artistic performances out of diverse media. We will study historical and contemporary models of artistic collaboration and investigate current multimedia technologies to provide context for individual and collaborative projects. The goal is to learn about and create art combining multiple disciplines through performance.

Creatively, the course will be focused on the preparation of materials for midterm and end-of-semester showings. Each student will create two intermedia projects on their own or in collaboration with other students in the class, rehearse the new works, and present them to the public. Depending on the size and scope of our projects, we may supplement our new projects with realizations of important works from the repertoire.

The central end-of-semester showing will be a concert in the Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theater on Friday, April 25, 2008. For students who may have a conflict with this concert time (particularly dance majors participating in the New Choreographers Concert) there will be a public showing during class time on Thursday, April 24th..

The course will be structured in three main sections: 1) A survey of ideas, artworks, and artists; 2) Creative work on individual and group projects for the concert; 3) Documentation of these projects.

Basic Information

Instructor: David Bithell
Office: Music 108
Office Phone: 1(940) 565-3763
Email: dbithell@music.unt.edu

Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:00-4:20 pm
Location: Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theater (Music 1001)
Office Hours: Tues. 2:00-3:00 pm (or by appointment)

Course Materials

The majority of materials for this course will be distributed electronically via a course website:

<http://www.davidbithell.com/MUCP4595.html>

Here you will be able to access PDF versions of readings, scores, and daily slideshow presentations as well as compressed Audio and Video clips.

Additional materials will be put on reserve in the Music Library as needed.

Grading and Projects

Grading will be based largely on the quality of assignments and projects and the level of your participation in the collaborative classroom environment. Final grades in the class will be determined as follows:

Reading Questions 20%

Intermedia Projects (2) 50% (25% each - or other distribution - see below)

Collaborative Projects, Participation and Effort 20%

Final Documentation 10%

Reading Questions - There will be regular reading or viewing assignments to complement our studies. Most readings will be found on the course website. Most of the viewings will be available through online resources (like YouTube or GoogleVideos) or on reserve in the Music Library. I will distribute questions to accompany these – your responses are due by the beginning of class on the day listed on the schedule. Email your responses to me at – dbithell@music.unt.edu

Intermedia Projects - Each student will participate in the creation of two (2) intermedia projects over the course of the semester: one “Concert Performance Project” and one “Non-Traditional Venue Project” (see below for more description of these categories). At least one of these projects must be a collaboration (i.e. co-created) with one or more other students in the class. Both projects need to be fully realized and presented to the public. Non-Traditional Venue Projects will be shown in Week 8. Concert Projects will be performed at the end of the semester on either the In-Class Concert (April 24th) or the Evening Concert (April 25th).

You may choose to give more emphasis to one project over another (i.e. make an amazing and intricate installation project and a well-crafted, but shorter, performance piece -or- vice versa) but both should be interesting, well-executed works of art. If you are collaborating on a particular project - make sure you and your partner(s) are in agreement as to the relative scope of any particular project.

Sample of Possible Genres for Intermedia Projects:

Concert Performance Project

Music + Dance

Video + Dance

Video + Music

Dance Theater

Instrumental Theater

Concert Performance Art

etc.

Non-Traditional Venue Project

Installation

Environmental Work

Site Specific Work

Intervention

Net Art

Public Performance Art

etc.

Collaborative Projects, Participation, and Effort - Everyone will participate in designing and realizing an overall structure and flow of the various public presentations of our work. Individual participation in this may include – creating musical interludes, helping with stage management, designing lighting, acting, dancing, etc. Depending on the scope of student projects and interests, we may also recreate an existing work from the various repertoires of intermedia art. This realization would involve every student.

Final Documentation - The last assignment of the course is to professionally document one of your projects. Different projects will require different types of documentation. Most projects will require some combination of the following: Edited Video of Performance, Audio Recording, Score, Program Notes, Still Images, Website, etc.

Attendance and Participation - Regular attendance is necessary and expected. Please inform the instructor well in advance of any possible absences. The value of a course like this is set primarily by the level of participation and discussion among its participants. You will be expected to give regular updates on your own projects as well as to engage in your colleagues work and other topics of discussion. In other words, we will be working as a collaborative team and your participation is crucial. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a drop of 5% of your final grade per missed class.

**Graduates Students: As an expansion of the requirements listed above, graduate students enrolled in the 5590 section of this course are expected to create projects of appropriately significant scope and depth in consultation with the instructor.*

Disclaimer:

Because of the provocative nature of much contemporary art, some materials presented in this course may be offensive to some people. These materials may include language, nudity, radical political viewpoints, etc. If you have any concerns, please consult the instructor.

Cheating and Academic Dishonesty:

(from http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume3/18_1_11.html)

1) Academic dishonesty - cheating. The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations;
- (b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
- (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests, notes or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university;
- (d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s).
- (e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

2) Academic dishonesty – plagiarism. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and
- (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ADA:

(from http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume2/6_8_3.html)

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disabled veteran status, veteran of the Vietnam era, or qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in its programs, activities, admissions, or employment policies.

Individuals qualifying under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) who need special assistance to participate in a program, service or activity sponsored by the University Union are asked to contact the Verde Scheduling Office, a minimum of three business days in advance of when they will need the requested assistance to allow time for the request to be handled in an appropriate manner. The Verde Scheduling Office is located on the level 2 of the University Union. Telephone: (940) 565-3804, 565-3806 or TDD access through Relay Texas 1-800-735-2989.

Weekly Schedule

Dates	Tuesday	Thursday
1 - January 15, 17	Introductions + Intro to Multimedia Theory	Showings of student work (3 minute maximum excerpts)
2 - January 22, 24	Guest Artists: Hunter/Gatherer - presentation of theatrical percussion works by Georges Aperghis and David Bithell.	Reading Questions: Nicholas Cook "Ch. 3"
3 - January 29, 31	Topic: Installation + Interactivity	Genres of Intermedia Performance: "Non-Traditional Venue Works" + Models of Collaboration
4 - February 5, 7	1st Intermedia Project Proposal Due	Reading Questions: Higgins "Intermedia"
5 - February 12, 14	Topic: Early 20th Century Intermedia	Topic: Performance Art + Intervention
6 - February 19, 21	Genres of Intermedia Performance: "Concert Works"	Reading Questions: Goldberg "Ch. 7"
7 - February 26, 28	Reading Questions: Salzman "Some Notes on Origins"	Proposal Feedback + Group Work Day
8 - March 4, 6	Project Presentation + Discussion	Limon Dance Reconstruction Symposium (2-4pm RTVF 262) + Group Work Day
	Topic: Multimedia Dance + Meredith Monk	Project Presentation + Discussion
	Reading Questions: Smithner "Meredith Monk"	Group Work Day - No Class (Spark Festival)
	1st Intermedia Projects Due (Non-Traditional Venue Works) - Showing and Critique	1st Intermedia Projects Due (Non-Traditional Venue Works) - Showing and Critique

Dates	Tuesday	Thursday
9 - March 11, 13	2nd Intermedia Project Proposal Due (Concert Works) Topic: Video Work (Ashley, Dance for Camera)	Proposal Feedback Topic: Plan concert structure
10 - March 18, 20	...Spring Break...	...Spring Break...
11 - March 25, 27	Guest Artist: Peter Yates	Project Presentation + Discussion
12 - April 1, 3	Program Notes Due Topic: Cage, Cunningham	Group Work Day
13 - April 8, 10	2nd Intermedia Projects Due Topic: Kagel + THE	Topic: Preparing to Document Your Work
14 - April 15, 17	Rehearsal	Rehearsal
15 - April 22, 24	Dress Rehearsal	In-Class Concert
Evening Concert - Friday, April 25 (8pm - MEIT)		
Final - Thursday, May 8 (1:30-3:30pm, MEIT)		Final Documentation Due, Discuss Final Performances, Student Evaluations

Reading List

Week 1

Cook, Nicholas. "Chapter 3: Models of Multimedia" *Analyzing Musical Multimedia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Week 2

Higgins, Dick. "Intermedia" *Leonardo*, Vol. 34, No. 1. (2001), pp. 49-54.

Week 3

Goldberg, RoseLee. "Chapter 7: The Art of Ideas and the Media Generation 1968 to 2000" *Performance Art From Futurism to the Present*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2001.

Week 5

Salzman, Eric. "Some Notes on the Origins of New Music Theater" *Theater Journal*, (Summer 2000), pp. 9-23.

Week 7

Smithner, Nancy Putnam. "Meredith Monk: Four Decades by Design and Invention" *The Drama Review*, Vol. 49, No. 2. (Summer 2005), pp. 93-118.