# Module Descriptions

## Core Modules (Compulsory for BMus students; optional for JH students)

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| **212 Analysis** | |
| **Description:** This module introduces basic analytical concepts and skills for the understanding of Western art music from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century. Topics may include mode, word-painting, fugue, the schemata of the gallant style, cadence and themes in the Classical style and thereafter, sonata form, the Romantic fragment, Wagner’s form and harmony, narrative patterns, pitch-class collections and sets, non-Germanic musical syntax, twelve-note technique, analysis of rhythm, texture and gesture. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student should be able to:   * Understand some of the principal approaches available in current analytical work * Understand some of the principal techniques employed by composers from 1500 onwards * Apply appropriate analytical concepts to a range of repertories with accuracy * Work confidently with complex musical scores from a broad historical range | |
| **Staff responsible:** | [Matthew](mailto:p.j.rodmell@bham.ac.uk) *Riley* and *Ben Earle* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Exam I (2 hours)  50% Exam II (2 hours) |

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| **213 Critical Musicology** | |
| **Description:** This module introduces basic critical methodologies, concepts and vocabularies employed in current academic work in the fields of historical musicology, ethnomusicology and popular music studies. Topics may include the history of musicology, music and culture, contrasting approaches to the anthropology of music, the sociology of music, music and postcolonial theory, music and critical theory, sound studies, the ontology of music, musical modernism and postmodernism, music and politics, music and class, music and ideology, music and violence, the ethics of sound recording, critical organology, music and race, music and feminism, music and gender, music and queer theory, theories of performance, and theories of reception. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student should be able to:   * Understand the critical approaches employed in recent writing on a wide range of music and its contexts. * Critically evaluate a wide range of types of writing on music. * Apply appropriate critical methods to broad range of music and its contexts. * Work confidently with critical vocabularies drawn from a broad range of writers. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Ben Earle*, *Eliot Bates*, *Amy Brosius* |
| **Assessment:** | 40% Essay I (2,000 words)  40% Essay II (2,000 words)  20% Weekly paragraphs answering questions related to set readings |

### **Optional Modules**

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| **B10 Paper Composition**  *Prerequisite: Successful completion of 113 Composition.*  *Successful completion of B10 is a prerequisite for admission to 323 Special Subject Paper Composition and 313 Independent Study Paper Composition* |
| **Description:** Personal aesthetic convictions are respected, but a willingness to expand one’s awareness and a desire for creative investigation are expected. Presented topics, upon which fortnightly assignments are based, will develop a number of technical aspects of contemporary music. Workshop-style sessions provide the opportunity to review compositional decisions and to monitor progress. Final projects are played through during the Summer Term revision period. Additional seminars, workshops and concert attendance are an integral and quality part of the module. Attendance is required (10% of the final mark), and one mark will be subtracted for each unjustified absence. *Bona fide* membership of NME so as to develop an understanding of twentieth-century performance practice is also recommended. |

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| **Learning Outcomes:** The student should be able to write original works of contemporary music to a higher level than Level 1. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Michael Zev Gordon* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Coursework; exercises to be submitted as directed  50% Final Composition: 25% based upon substantial progress being made during tutorials and 25% based upon the final version submitted by the date listed in the **Diary**.  The overall mark for the module may be reduced by up to 10 marks if there is unjustified absence from designated seminars/workshops. |

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| **B11 Studio Composition**  *Prerequisite: Successful completion of 113 Composition.*  *Successful completion of B11 is a prerequisite for admission to 322 Special Subject Studio Composition and 312 Independent Study Studio Composition* | |
| **Description:** This course builds on techniques learned in Studio Composition level 1 (part of course 113). Starting from a group recording session to gather source sound material, classes (nominally fortnightly) focus on techniques of digital sound editing, processing and mixing, together with discussion of compositional and aesthetic issues. The learning process is significantly informed by guided reading and listening – attendance at the weekly MiniBEAST listening sessions (11.30-12.30 on Wednesdays throughout Semesters 1 & 2) and at BEAST events in Birmingham are compulsory components of the course, for which students are required to keep a diary containing critical notes on the works presented; they should therefore avoid scheduling instrumental lessons or committing to any other activities at these times. In Semester 2, attention shifts to the composition of individual pieces by each student; scheduled class times provide an opportunity for the tutor to monitor and give feedback on the progress of each student’s piece as it develops. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** By the end of semester 1, students will be able to make a studio-based source sound recording and be competent in the use of the computer systems available. They will have an understanding of file structures and of the ways in which the various applications interact, and will be able to back-up and retrieve their material. Focusing on the development of selected source material, credit will be given for imaginative and sensitive use of the resources, and for an awareness of how an individual’s compositional processes relate to the wider context of the genre. By the end of the course, the student will be able to produce a sonically interesting and engaging work in the electroacoustic medium, using current technology, and also have an understanding of the creative, musical and technological processes involved at a higher level than expected at level 1. They will also have a growing awareness of the acousmatic repertoire and their relationship to it. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *tbc* |
| **Assessment:** | 25% Course work (3 exercises as directed)  25% Attendance (class, with evidence of progress; MiniBEAST, with diary & notes; BEAST events)  50% Final Assignment to be submitted by the date specified in the **Diary**. |

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| **B12 Orchestration**  *Prerequisite: Normally, successful completion of 112 Techniques of Musical Perception.* | |
| **Description:** The module aims to provide students with facility in orchestrating Classical and Romantic music; to sharpen the ear and improve command of harmony and counterpoint, musical notation, calligraphy, and the presentation of scores and parts.  The module begins with basic techniques of scoring for strings, woodwind and brass, and moves to the scoring of Classical, Romantic, Impressionist music for symphony orchestra, and 20th century music for smaller ensemble. Examples of instrumental scoring by a range of composers will be examined in class and prescribed for private study. As well as 4 main summative assessments, students will also take additional formative assessments. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The students should be able to orchestrate music from the period 1770–1945 for either an appropriately-sized orchestra, or smaller ensemble. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Michael Zev Gordon* |
| **Assessment:** | 60% Coursework; exercises to be submitted as directed.  40% final assessment of up to 100 bars of music submitted by the date specified in the **Diary**. |

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| **B13 Puccini** | |
| **Description:** Despite—and, surely, because—of their central place in the performing canon, Puccini’s operas have proven remarkably resistant to academic discourse. This seminar aims to rectify that situation, and also to interrogate it. Drawing on a variety of critical perspectives , as well as our own close listening to representative works, we’ll try to develop new interpretations of some of Puccini's major operas, while also paying close attention to their afterlives on stage and screen. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to:  demonstrate a knowledge of the operas of Puccini, the cultural and social milieu in which they were composed and first performed, and their musical style;  describe and evaluate the nature of the development of Puccini's musical style;  analyse selected films and stage production in light of larger critical issues;  cite and, where appropriate, analyse, specific and suitable pieces of music as examples in support of their commentaries and evaluations. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Arman Schwartz* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Essay I 2500-3000 words, to be submitted as directed. 50% Essay II 2500-3000 words, to be submitted by the date specified in the Diary |

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| **B14 British Musical Renaissance** | |
| **Description:** The ‘British Music Renaissance’ has been commonly dated to the first performance of Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* in 1880.  From that date, it has been argued, Britain gradually shed its status as ‘das Land ohne Musik’ (the land without music), with the work of such composers as Stanford, Parry, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Holst and many others all encouraging the development of a musical culture which Britain had previously lacked.  This course examines the work of these and other composers active in Britain between 1880 and 1914, the relative importance different musical genres (opera, operetta, art song, oratorio, secular cantata, symphony, orchestral music etc.), and British cultural and social attitudes to music and musicians, via a mixture of case studies and historical research. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to:   * Distinguish between a variety of musical genres in use during the relevant period and place; * Identify significant topoi and themes which influenced British composers of this period; * Relate a variety of musical works and genres to their appropriate contexts, whether musical, literary, religious or social; * Display a knowledge of relevant recent scholarly literature; * Convey his/her perceptions in writing and in speech. * Demonstrate an ability to produce assessed work independently employing appropriate resources, literature, and techniques. * Cite and, where appropriate, analyze, specific and suitable pieces of music not discussed in seminars as examples in support of their commentaries and evaluations. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Paul Rodmell* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Essay I 2,500 words to be submitted as directed.  50% Essay II 3,000 words to be submitted as directed. |

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| **B15 Music in California** |
| **Description:** This module is concerned with understanding the “audible history” of California through its many musical forms. Three themes central to the module are multiculturalism (and the different forms multiculturalism takes), music in social life (how music serves as the nexus for community building and cultural identity), and cultural geography (how different musical forms articulate specific localities, whether those be neighbourhoods, towns, cities, or regions). Topics and examples may include indigenous communities and their musical forms (and the politics of indigenous territorial claims); pre- and post-statehood Spanish-language musics in relation to the changing demographics of work; the role of experimental popular musics (e.g. punk, heavy metal, surf rock) in local underground scenes; multiculturalism and the pedagogy of “world music” in California; Hollywood film music; the recording industry of Los Angeles; jazz music and community organizing in Los Angeles and San Francisco; and California’s avant-garde art musics as a distinctive hybrid between classical, popular, and world musical forms. |

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| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to:   * Understand sociological and anthropological approaches to the study of music and multiculturalism, music and cultural geography, and music and social life. * Critically evaluate a wide range of types of writing on music. * Apply appropriate critical methods to broad range of music and its contexts. * Develop and implement a brief guided research project that explores the course themes in relation to an individual musician, locality, or music scene. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Eliot Bates* |
| **Assessment:** | 30% Essay (2000 words)  50% Research project (2500 words)  20% Ongoing short-answer questions related to set readings |

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| **B16 Conducting**  ***This is a performance-based module****.* | |
| **Description:** The course will comprise a combination of theory and practice. The basics of stick technique will be studied as one of the means of communicating with performers. The importance of analysis and the issues involved in learning a score and making decisions about it will also be investigated. Students will conduct ensembles formed by the rest of the group. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the module the student will be able to demonstrate some ability to stand up in front of a group of musicians and to direct them in their music-making. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Dan Rosina* |
| **Assessment:** | 75% A short practical examination (approximately 25 minutes) conducting an ensemble (either vocal or instrumental) in an extract from a specified piece.  25% Essay 1500­–2000 words to be submitted by the date specified in the **Diary**. |

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| **B17 Arts Management in Practice** | |
| **Description:** A practical module in Arts Management focusing on the Classical Music industry delivered as a combination of seminars and practical classes. Subjects covered may include marketing, project management, fundraising and finance, programming and contracts. Guest lecturers will be invited from the University Cultural Partnerships and from Alumni working in the field. Assessment will be report and presentation based. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the module students will:   * Assess the viability of project proposals * Present a project proposal to a panel in both written and oral forms * Produce an income and expenditure budget for a single event using established costs, e.g. venue rental charges, Musicians’ Union fees, hire library costs etc. * Produce a marketing strategy for an individual event * Produce a funding application/strategy | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Jo Sweet* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Final Assignment (2500 words)  25% Class Presentation (10 minutes, supported by a prose summary/handout)  25% Coursework (3 short written exercises, each 400 words) |

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| **B18 From Glinka to Glazunov** | |
| **Description:** This module will examine the music composed when Russian musicians were becoming more conscious of their national identity and attempting to create a distinctive national style of composition. The composers examined will include Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rubinstein, Balakirev, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov, Borodin and Glazunov and we will attempt to find out what, if anything, made their music distinctive from that of the contemporary ‘mainstream’ Western tradition. The relevant social, political and cultural context will also be examined. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will:   * display a knowledge and understanding of the music composed in Russia between roughly 1835 and 1890 together with a comprehension of relevant external factors. * Prepare and present assignments, both verbally and in writing * Demonstrate an ability to produce assessed work independently employing appropriate resources * cite and, where appropriate, analyze, specific and suitable pieces of music as examples in support of their commentaries and evaluations | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Paul Rodmell* |
| **Assessment:** | 40% Essay I (2000-2500 words) to be submitted as directed  40% Essay II (2000-2500 words) to be submitted by the end of the relevant teaching period.  20% Class test |

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| **B19 An Introduction to Sound Recording Techniques** | |
| **Description:** An introduction to the skills required in contemporary recording. The course covers aspects of microphone use and placement; mixing and balancing; monitoring; production and engineering techniques; track compilation and post-production and CD-R Mastering. The course is primarily practice based, and takes a musical, as opposed to a technical, approach to recording. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to follow a recording project through from its first planning stages to completed master tape production, and will be able successfully to record anything from a solo instrument to a symphony orchestra. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | [James](mailto:ajh166@bham.ac.uk) *Carpenter* |
| **Assessment:** | 25% Coursework: fortnightly exercises to be submitted as directed  25% Short (ca. 3’ - 5’) solo recording assignment  50% Final Assessment - portfolio of recordings, nature and length as directed, submitted by the date specified in the **Diary**. |

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| **B20 Eighteenth-Century Counterpoint** | |
| **Description:** This course will familiarize students with 18th-century counterpoint techniques through the study of major repertoire and the writing of a variety of small forms such as canons, preludes, and inventions. The course will also include the introduction to the fugue, in form of exercises and writing of an exposition. An emphasis will be placed on practical skills. This course is suitable for anyone interested in deepening their understanding of counterpoint as well as developing their practical writing skills, and is particularly suitable for composers. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will:   * display knowledge of 18th-century contrapuntal techniques; * analyze polyphonic compositions from the discussed period; * compose short pieces (canons, preludes, inventions) in the 18th-centruy style. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Daria Kwiatkowska* |
| **Assessment:** | 100% a set of five short compositions in Baroque style written during the 2nd semester of study (20% each). |

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| **B21 Baroque Performance Practice** | |
| **Description:** We shall take as a starting point the fundamental question ‘In what ways can historical awareness contribute to a successful performance of early music?’ Performance practice issues addressed will include: Pitch, tuning, temperament and key colour; instruments; notation, ornamentation, tempo and rhythm, instrumental and vocal techniques; continuo playing; dance forms; baroque opera practices; performance rhetoric and Affekt. These will be explored through case studies of individual works, discussions of performances and recordings, readings of contemporary treatises, critical evaluation of the secondary literature on Baroque Performance Practice, and workshops/masterclasses with CEMPR vocal and instrumental tutors. If you know that you want to take performance as part of your assessment, *it would be helpful*, for planning purposes, if you would indicate this on your form, stating which is your melody instrument/voice/continuo instrument. If you are not sure at this stage, just say so. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to: (a) demonstrate an awareness of the idea of historically-informed performance and (b) demonstrate familiarity with the most important issues in the performance of music from the period c1565 to c1750. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | *Christine Whiffen* |
| **Assessment:** | 50% Essay I, 2500-3000 words to be submitted as directed; and EITHER 50% Essay II, 2500-3000 words to be submitted as directed OR 50% Performance of which 40% for a 12-minute performance (at the end of Term 2 or during the Semester 2 examination period), plus 10% for a 1000 word supporting programme note (and discussion where appropriate) on issues arising from the performance. |

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| **B44 Interactive Music and Creative Computing**  *Successful completion of this module is a prerequisite for admission to 315 Independent Study Interactive Music and Creative Computing and 325 Special Subject Interactive Music and Creative Computing* | |
| **Description:** This course will explore the use of computers for the realtime creation of music and/or sound installations, within a lecture/workshop environment. It will explore the possibilities of software such as Max/MSP and SuperCollider. Topics will include sound synthesis, realtime processing, interaction, and the development of  graphical interfaces. Knowledge of computer programming and advanced maths is NOT a prerequisite. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** The student will be able to:   * demonstrate knowledge of some of the basic skills needed for interactive and realtime computer music and sound installation, and some basic principles of computer science; * gain experience with some of the more popular software available for such applications; * further their own learning and develop their own approaches and projects in this field. | |
| **Staff responsible:** | [Scott Wilson](mailto:s.d.wilson.1@bham.ac.uk) |
| **Assessment:** | 40% Small assignments given fortnightly in the early part of the course  10% participation in workshop sessions in the latter part of the course  50% Final Project (i.e. composition, interactive application, installation, etc.). |

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| **214 Solo Performance**  ***This is a performance-based module***  *Prerequisites: Successful completion of 114 Performance or, for Joint Honours students, satisfactory attendance and progress at the prescribed instrumental/vocal lessons. Regardless of whether 114 Performance is taken for credit or not, all students must pass the Aural Test and Concert Diary elements of 114 Performance in order to gain admission to 213 Performance.*  *Attainment of a mark of at least 60% in the first study examination of this module is a prerequisite for admission to 324 Solo Performance.*  *Attainment of a mark of at least 50% in the first study examination of this module is a prerequisite for admission to 314 Solo Performance.* | |
| **Description:** Students receive practical musical tuition during the teaching weeks of the year. This total of 20 or 22 hours’ tuition may be divided between two studies (instrumental or vocal; 1st study 12 hours, 2nd study 10 hours) or may all be taken on one study (20 hours). The aim is to make as much technical and musical progress as possible and to provide a basis for further specialisation in performance at Level 3. Lessons are given by tutors at the Birmingham Conservatoire, and by tutors employed by the Department of Music, some via CEMPR. | |
| **Learning Outcomes:** Perform music at a standard approaching that of the DipABRSM (1st study) and ABRSM Grade 7/8 (2nd study). | |
| **Staff responsible:** | Various (co-ordinated *Amy Brosius*) |
| **Assessment:** | 100% By audition taken during the main examination period. (If two studies are taken the weighting is 60% 1st study and 40% 2nd study.) |