

Final year - Special subjects - Music

Musicology

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The student will, with supervision from a designated tutor, research and write a dissertation on an aspect of Musicology of their choosing. Areas of investigation will result in a prose dissertation, but this may include analysis, editing, or performance, if approved and appropriate. Attendance at the Department's Musicology Research Seminar series (selected Tuesdays at 5 pm) is compulsory.

Studio Composition

- Prerequisite: Successful completion of the optional module Studio Composition.

Semester 1: Seminars (of 2 hours most weeks) to ensure that students are thoroughly familiar with all the available Studio resources. Starting from a group recording session to gather individual source sound materials, the course builds on and consolidates techniques learned in course B11 Studio Composition, focusing on digital sound editing, processing and mixing. More advanced and elaborate signal processing software than that used in B11 is also introduced. Guided reading and listening, along with discussion of compositional and aesthetic issues, will inform the learning process. This is aided by attendance at [BEAST \(/facilities/ea-studios/index.aspx\)](#) events in Birmingham and by weekly listening sessions throughout Semesters 1 & 2, curated by staff and postgraduate composers, using the Elgar Room MiniBEAST system. Attendance at these sessions (11.30-12.30 on Wednesdays) is part of the course, with students keeping a diary of attendance and critical notes on the works presented; 322 students should avoid committing to any other activity at this time. Towards the end of Semester 1, classes will be replaced by individual tutorials to establish the specific materials for each student's piece and the best methods of developing that material for the compositional aims of each person.

In Semester 2, attention shifts almost completely to the composition of individual pieces by each student. To support this, fortnightly individual tutorials with the class tutor focus on the specific material and compositional ideas of each person.

Paper Composition

- Prerequisite: Successful completion of the optional module Paper Composition.

The course comprises three strands:

Semester 1: Issues in Contemporary Music: weekly seminars on a variety of substantial and influential works, analysis, aesthetic and perceptual issues and aspects of performance. The course requires extensive listening. Tutorials follow on and initial compositional ideas are work-shopped by NME towards the end of term.

Semester 2: A tutorial course intended to monitor the preparation of the composition folio, of which at least 50% must be original composition. Final Compositions will be played through by BCMG in the first week of the Summer Term: see Diary for details of deadlines relating to this element of the course.

Additional seminars, workshops and concerts with BCMG are an integral and quality part of the course. 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 practices is also required.

Performance

- Attainment of 60% in the first study assessment of second year Critical Musicology module is a prerequisite for admission to this module.
- The Examiners for this module will comprise a panel of three members of the salaried staff from within the Department.

Instrumentalists and Vocalists: Regular individual tuition (22 hours in total) and practice; occasional seminars on programming, presentation and other general matters.

Conductors: As above, but including conducting the University Chamber Orchestra and a specially constituted vocal ensemble.

Accompanists: As for instrumentalists, but focused on the role of accompanist rather than soloist.

Interactive Music and Creative Computing

- Successful completion of the optional module Interactive and Creative Computing is a prerequisite for admission to this course.

This course continues on from Interactive and Creative Computing and explores advanced topics in computer-based composition. A variety of topics will be covered in seminar sessions. These may include working with instruments and interactive systems, FFT based processing and other advanced DSP topics, sound installations, algorithmic composition and high level control systems, and realtime video, among others. These will be supplemented by tutorials and group workshop sessions in which student projects will be developed. Knowledge of advanced maths is not a prerequisite.