

Senior Project in Music Composition

Contemporary Arts 446

Section: D100

Term: 2010 Spring

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Discussion Topics: Specific Description/topics: This semester, composers will write for four singers, (a cappella, one singer on a part) in an investigation of the contemporary classical voice and the SATB (Soprano/Alto/Tenor/Bass) four-part choral tradition. Seminar topics will include selecting text, the history of mixed choral singing in the Western tradition, and technical issues in composing for four voices unaccompanied. Four professional singers will be engaged to read student compositions in a series of three-hour workshops. At semester end, a concert of selected works will be performed at the SFU Theatre or, possibly, in the new theatre at SFU Woodward's in downtown Vancouver.

Regarding words/lyrics/text for songs: since this course is about exploring the genre of contemporary choral writing, composers are asked to select found-text for their compositions; that is, poetry or prose that has been published. The words selected for setting may be in Public Domain or they may require publishers permission; in which case, the composer must produce proof of permission from the copyright owner to use the selected words in a song. In some circumstances, composers will be allowed to use words by living collaborators. In rare circumstances, composers will be allowed to write their own text, but only with special permission of the instructor. Sacred text is also possible.

The format for all music composition courses (I-VI) is the same: a weekly seminar, which all composition students are required to attend, and a weekly tutorial with the instructor in a small group format. The tutorials are arranged on the first day of classes. 200 level students must complete at least six minutes of music, 300 level students must complete at least nine minutes of music and 400 level students must complete ten to twelve minutes in a unified, longer composition for voices.

Students enrolled in FPA 446-5 are expected to produce a graduating concert of their compositions in consultation with the instructor. Some funding from Contemporary Arts may be made available to assist students with producing the concert, but graduating composers are expected to contribute funds as well. FPA 446 students will work together in collaboration toward production of the concert. The notion of creating an extended composition for this concert is encouraged.

Grading: Attendance of all classes is mandatory. The final grade will be based on the compositions, (quality of ideas, invention and technique of all assignments); participation in seminar and tutorials; and over-all commitment and improvement as a composer.

Required Texts: None

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies: SFU Music supports Finale and Sibelius notation software.

Prerequisite/Corequisite: FPA 145 or prior approval

Notes:

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.