SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, MEDIA, PERFORMANCE & DESIGN
Visual Art and Art History

Course: FA/VAAH 3056 3.0 – Time-Based Art: Sound for Artists

Course Webpage: http://www.xenopraxis.net/sound-for-artists

Term: Fall 2017

Prerequisite(s): VAAH: Art Fundamentals (1010) or permission of the course director. **Students from other departments and faculties are welcome to join the course, pursuant to course director permission.**

Course Director
Marc Couroux (course director)
258 Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts
couroux@yorku.ca
Course consultation hours: by appointment.

Time and Location
Monday 1:30 PM – 5:30 PM, Goldfarb Fine Arts 330 and 328 (lab)

Expanded Course Description
Sound for Artists is dedicated to an exploration of sound art both as a distinct practice and through its interdisciplinary intersections with sculptural, installation, performative, musical, and other time-based visual art practices. The history of sound art will be explored, from the Futurists to John Cage, to Fluxus, soundscape, speech-based and radio art practices, exploring both analog and digital manifestations. Topics covered include: acoustics/psychoacoustics, feedback/delay, collage/edit and studio manipulation, architecture/space and installation, speech/language/sound poetry, technological blind spots, subliminal and lowercase sound, expanded notions of the soundscape, radio art, noise and industrial music, silence…

The student will produce sound projects applying digital technologies within the context of their own discipline and practice, or as freestanding works. Potential projects may include acoustical experiments, installation / spatial works, collages / cut-ups, performance pieces, noise-based work, environmental sound, and will involve the use of non-linear editing / mixing systems (Digital Performer) and professional sound recording technologies (see below).

Each class will begin with a 60-minute presentation on artists relevant to the course of study. In addition to this, readings and listening excerpts will be assigned each week. These materials will either be available on reserve in the library or accessible online.

In-class tutorials for professional sound software (Digital Performer – installed on desktop computers in 328) and professional digital recording technologies (audio recorders (Zoom & Sony), microphones (SoundMan OKM earbud, boom and lavalier)) will take place periodically in the VAAH computer lab (328). (See http://forerunner.finearts.yorku.ca/~visalabs/equipment.html for a comprehensive list of Time-Based Area equipment).

Reviews of material covered in class will be made available on the class website. Following in-class tutorials, the remainder of the class will be devoted to discussion of concepts/readings, student presentations, open studio / lab time for assignments and project support.

Assignments

In addition to small weekly tutorials and exercises to be completed by the student for each class, there will be three major project assignments and various in-class exercises and discussions requiring preparation, documented on a personal blog dedicated to sonic investigation. In addition to this, students will be periodically required to present their work-in-progress for class discussion. Each assignment will require use of the Time-Based Area's professional digital sound recording equipment (which can be signed out) and editing software suites (installed on desktop computers in the VAAH lab).

Blog Notebook – Sonic Investigations

An essential component of studio production is personal research and development. This information will be related to all aspects of production including: research; drafting of ideas with conceptual implications, timeline and technical requirements; goals and strategy and notes on production. This notebook will be in a blog format (blogger, wordpress, tumblr etc.) and document an accumulation of ideas and practical information over the duration of the course of study.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Purpose

Sound for Artists is dedicated to an exploration of sound art both as a distinct practice and through its interdisciplinary intersections with sculptural, installation, performative, musical, and other time-based visual art practices. The history of sound art will be explored, from the Futurists to Cage, to Fluxus, soundscape, speech-based and radio art practices, exploring both analog and digital manifestations. Topics covered include: acoustics/psychoacoustics, feedback/delay, collage/edit and studio manipulation, architecture/space and installation, speech/language/sound poetry, technological aporias, subliminal and lowercase sound, enlarged notions of the soundscape, radio art, noise and industrial music, silence…

In addition to small weekly tutorials and exercises to be completed by the student for each class, there will be three project assignments, each given equal weight. In addition to this, students will be periodically required to present their work-in-progress for class discussion.

In-class tutorials for professional sound software (Digital Performer – installed on desktop computers in 328) and professional digital recording technologies (audio recorders (Zoom & Sony), microphones (SoundMan OKM earbud, boom and lavalier)) will take place periodically in the VAAH computer lab (328).

Following in-class tutorials and presentations of theoretical materials, the remainder of each class will be devoted to discussion, open studio / lab time for assignments and/or project support.

2. Specific objectives

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- think about sound in a wide variety of contexts/systems (political, cultural, social), at the intersection of / parallel to a plethora of disciplines (music, visual art, architecture);
- create sound works with digital technologies, enacted in manners which situate and re-situate the listener (installation, public/private spaces, interactive work etc.);
- competently exploit the features of professional digital audio recorders (Zoom / Sony) and microphones (SoundMan OKM earbud, boom, lavalier) as well as sound editing software (Digital Performer);
- develop critical skills within a critique-based format which will enable him/her to assess

the work of his/her peers and offer suggestions as to alternate / future creative or technical ramifications;
- engage in a critical discussion of ideas with his/her peers;
- learn how to effectively research solutions to technical problems while engaging with online communities.

Course Text / Readings
Online readings will be assigned during the course and will be subject to in-class discussion. Students will also be asked to research aspects of sound art in the Scott Library and bring the results of their findings to share with the class.

Evaluation

In addition to three major studio projects, each student will be required to maintain an online blog (in any format) documenting theoretical and practical knowledge and personal sonic investigations undertaken during the course period.

The final grade for the course will be based on the following items weighted as indicated:

Project #1:	20%	(Performance / Listening)
Project #2:	25%	(Expanded field recording)
Project #3:	25%	(Sound in the social realm)
Blog (sonic investigations):	20%	
Participation + presence:	10%	

The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade. See the policy for exceptions to this aspect of the policy:
http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=86

	Term F	Term Y	Term W
Last date to drop courses without receiving a grade	Nov. 10	Feb. 9	March 9

Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties and Missed Tests

Grading: The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ - 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)
(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar: http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/calendars/2011-2012/academic/grades/

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis. For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the Faculty of Fine Arts section of the Undergraduate Calendar: http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/calendars/2011-2012/faculty_rules/FA/grading.htm

Assignment Submission: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment.

Lateness Penalty: Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized (one half-letter grade for each additional day after the due date). Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the Course Instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter).

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Academic Honesty and Integrity
York students are required to maintain high standards of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=69). There is also an academic integrity website with complete information about academic honesty. Students are expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website (http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity).

Access/Disability
York provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials. These services are made available to students in all Faculties and programs at York University.

Students in need of these services are asked to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Please note that registering with disabilities services and discussing your needs with your professors is necessary to avoid any impediment to receiving the necessary academic accommodations to meet your needs.

Additional information is available through Counselling & Disability Services at www.yorku.ca/cds or from disability service providers:
• *Personal Counselling and Learning Skills Services: N110 BCSS, 416-736-5297*
• *Mental Health Disability Services: N110 BCSS, 416-736-5297*
• *Learning Disability Services: W128 BCSS, 416-736-5383*
• *Physical, Sensory and Medical Disability Services: N108 Ross, 416-736-5140, TTY: 416-736-5263*
    Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing students may also contact dhh@yorku.ca

Glendon students - Counselling & Disability Services, Glendon Site: Glendon Hall E103, 416-487-6709

Ethics Review Process
York students are subject to the York University *Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants.* In particular, students proposing to undertake research involving human participants (e.g., interviewing the director of a company or government agency, having students complete a questionnaire, etc.) are required to submit an Application

for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants at least one month before you plan to begin the research. If you are in doubt as to whether this requirement applies to you, contact your Course Director immediately.

<u>Religious Observance Accommodation</u>
York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for an in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the Course Director within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the Course director immediately. Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete an Examination Accommodation Form, which can be obtained from Student Client Services, Student Services Centre or online at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf (PDF)

<u>Student Conduct</u>
Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=82

Please note that this information is subject to periodic update. For the most current information, please go to the ASCP webpage (see Student Information Sheet under Reports, Initiatives, and Documents)
http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/senate_cte_main_pages/ASCP.htm