

SM3130: SOUND INSTALLATION AND SOUND SPATIALISATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Sound Installation and Sound Spatialisation

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

3130

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Sound is a key medium for our multisensorial experience of the environment. This course focusses on the design of sound in space – soundscape composition, virtual sonic environments, multichannel installation – as founded in the human perception of spatial sound. We study room acoustics and psychoacoustics, develop skills in a digital audio workflow for composition and production, and explore audio-based narratives and immersive acoustic environments. Course progress depends on developing theoretical knowledge in parallel with confidence in handling audio hardware and software tools for recording, editing, transforming, mastering, rendering, and reproducing sound. Through individual and group-based projects, we develop our sonic imagination and ability for artistic expression, within sound and other time-based media. We complete two creative projects in the course: first, an audio story mixed in stereo, then, a multichannel sound installation in a large physical space. The overall goal is to Design Novel Artworks in a Laboratory for Sonic Investigation.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the technology, history, and practice of sound installation and spatialisation.				x
2	Identify key theoretical issues concerning the dynamics of sound and space, and its relationship with the institutions of art.			x	
3	Integrate aural thinking in spatial art practices through guided independent research.			x	

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture	1/ Lectures	1	
2	Presentation and Critique	2/ In-class critique of students' works	1	
3	Tutorial / Workshop	3/ Sound walks 4/ Outdoor and site-specific tutorials that focuses on micro-listening 5/ Regular self-directed ear-opening exercises 6/ Field recording 7/ Audio synthesis	2	
4	Final Evaluation and Discussion	8/ individual guidance (semester-end project)	3	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Assignment 1 (in several parts): Exploring spaces	1, 2	30	-	Yes
2	Assignment 2 (in several parts): A physical sound installation	1, 2, 3	50	-	No
3	General (quizzes, contributions to the class, etc)	2	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Assessment of in-class critique and class participation

Criterion

This assessment task reviews students' participation and performance in discussions, debates and peer critique during the tutorial sessions. The evidence of 'negotiation', the sign of discovery, lies in students' pre-class preparation and interpersonal sensitivity to his/her peer members.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, strong ability to stimulate and positively steer class discussion.
- Evidence of extensive pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports.
- Readiness to share informed personal insights.
- Constructively critical, thus facilitating the discovery of new issues.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate and contribute to class discussion.
- Adequate pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Attentive in in-class participation, listening with comprehension, infrequent contribution.
- Adequate pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports.

Marginal (D)

- Unmotivated to participate in in-class discussion.
- Inadequate pre-class preparation.

Failure (F)

- Unwilling to participate in in-class discussion even when requested by the instructor.

- No evidence of pre-class preparation.

Assessment Task

2. Assessment of Assignments and Projects

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature.
- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium.
- Refined execution, evidence of a high level of technical competency.
- Highly efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium.
- Successful execution, evidence of a satisfactory level of technical competency.
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium.
- Evidence of an adequate level of technical competency.
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Marginal (D)

- Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Failure (F)

- Little to no appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium.
- Fail to adjust plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available.

Additional Information for AR

All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Room acoustics; Auditory perception; Digital and analog audio; Hardware and software for audio; Recording; Editing; Sample bank; Sonic psycho-geography; the tactical nature of sound; artifacts of sound; sound sculpture; hearing versus seeing; spatial sound fields and aural perception; choreography of sounds; virtual and physical sounds; form, space, time & sound; soundscape and visualization of sound.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	LaBelle, B., 2006. Background noise: perspectives on sound art. New York: Continuum International.
2	Schafer, R. M., 1994. The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world. Rochester, Vt.: Destiny Books.
3	Cox, C. & Warner, D. (eds.), 2004. Audio Culture. New York: Continuum.
4	Minard, R., 1993. Sound environments: music for public spaces – Klangwelten. Berlin: Berlin, Akademie der K�nst.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Kahn, D., 1999. Noise, water, meat: a history of sound in the arts. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
2	Collins, N., 2006. Handmade electronic music: the art of hardware hacking. New York : Routledge.
3	Kubisch, C. & Leitner, B., 2004. Zeitversetzt : Ettersburger Klangr�ume = Shifted in time : Ettersburg sound spaces. Heidelberg : Kehrer.
4	Kubisch, C., 2000. Klang Raum Licht Zeit: Works from 1980 to 2000 / Christina Kubisch. Heidelberg: Kehrer.
5	LaBelle, B. & Roden, S. (eds.), 1999. Site of sound: of architecture and the ear. Los Angeles: Errant Bodies Press.
6	Leitner, B., 1998. Bernhard Leitner: sound, space. Ostfildern: Cantz; New York: Distributed by Distributed Art Publishers.
7	Metcalf, D., 2004. Formula / Ryoji Ikeda. Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Forma Arts and Media.
8	Lucier, A., 1990. I am sitting in a room: for voice on tape. New York: Lovely Music.