

MUSC 1240M

Composing with Ableton Spring 2018

Tuesday, Thursday 10:30-11:50am, Granoff Multimedia Lab

OBJECTIVES

- Gain fluency with technical content of Ableton Live.
- Compose, and optionally perform, expressive musical works using Ableton Live.
- Understand the range of possibilities for interfacing Ableton Live with other software and the physical world outside the computer.
- Consider the diverse genre and interaction possibilities permitted by various constellations of music software and hardware.

PROJECTS

Project #1 Fixed media 10%

Duration: 3-4 min. Create a fixed (i.e. non-interactive) musical composition using Ableton Live. This should demonstrate your fluency with the basic technical principles of the software, as well as your willingness to take creative and sonic risks. What makes your music unique? How does this piece contribute to development of your unique compositional voice?

Project #2 Controller/ hardware 15%

Duration: 4-5 min. Compose a piece using hardware controller input to Ableton Live. The controller part may be composited or performed live (should be performative/ soloistic). What are the unique demands and expressive possibilities of interfacing Ableton with physical objects? How might this fit with or depart from your typical practice, as opposed to Project #1?

Project #3 Max/ software 20%

Duration: 5-6 min. Create a composition using both Ableton Live and MaxMSP (or another music software for live interaction). Explore various methods for achieving bi-directional software communication. What do multi-software musical setups do well? How might such a setup help you realize your compositional goals or challenge your musical assumptions?

Final Project Unique compositional voice 40%

Duration: 6-8 min. Create a longer work synthesizing multiple skills developed through previous projects. Pay attention to both large-scale form and local-level details. Consider the intended listening environment of your work. Is it meant to be heard in the background of some venue (coffee shop, store, etc.), or does it feature interaction with performers and/or audience? Ensure that there is a clear musical goal or incentive for this work, and that your unique compositional voice is prominent.

MATERIALS

The primary materials for this class are software, such as Ableton Live and MaxMSP including Max for Live. Hardware such as MIDI controllers will also be used. Some materials support will be provided, or students may optionally purchase software licenses or gear of their own. Consult with me individually if any questions arise.

SCHEDULE

Thu Jan 25	Intro, syllabus
Tue Jan 30 Thu Feb 1	Composing and listening: definitions and intersections Project 1: Audio & midi tracks
Tue Feb 6 Thu Feb 8	Project 1 (cont): Mixing & arrangement Project 1 (cont): Looping & form
Tue Feb 13 Thu Feb 15	Project 1 check-in Project #1 due: present in class, submit to Canvas by F 2/16, 9pm
Tue Feb 20 Thu Feb 22	NO CLASS, Long weekend Project 2: Racks
Tue Feb 27 Thu Mar 1	Project 2 (cont): Control Project 2 (cont): Performance & controller affordances
Tue Mar 6 Thu Mar 8	Project 2 check-in Project #2 due: present in class, submit to Canvas by F 3/9, 9pm
Tue Mar 13 Thu Mar 15	Project 3: Max intro, M4L day 1 Project 3 (cont): M4L day 2
Tue Mar 20 Thu Mar 22	Project 3 (cont): software interfacing 1 Project 3 (cont): software interfacing 2
Tue Mar 27 Thu Mar 29	NO CLASS, Spring recess NO CLASS, Spring recess
Tue Apr 3 Thu Apr 5	Project 3 check-in Project #3 due: present in class, submit to Canvas by F 4/6, 9pm

Tue Apr 10 Final project: Revisiting form; local vs global
Thu Apr 12 Final project (cont): Live vs studio methodologies

Tue Apr 17 Final project (cont): Genre bending 1
Thu Apr 19 Final project (cont): Genre bending 2

Tue Apr 24 Final project check-in
Thu Apr 26 **Final Project due: present in class, submit to Canvas by F 4/27, 9pm**