

MUS 559 Topics in Analysis, Spring 2024

Analysis/Performance/Aesthetics: Inextricable Entanglements

Instructor: Judith Lochhead | Wednesday, 10am – 12:50pm

Participants in this seminar will explore the inextricable entanglements between music analysis, music performance, and aesthetics. We will familiarize ourselves with existing literature on the relation between analysis as a performance, performance as an analysis, and the questions surrounding the relation between analysis and performance. While a good deal of this literature addresses music of the “common practice,” we will be focusing for the most part on music of the present. The other, often unspoken, entanglement between analysis and performance is aesthetics. That is, decisions made in analysis, performance, and in their reciprocity are founded on underlying conceptions of aesthetic taste. We will explore selected writings on the philosophy of music with regard to aesthetic taste and judgment.

Seminar participants will explore the entanglements between analysis, performance, and aesthetics through close study and (to the extent possible) performance of selected works. We will also analyze recorded performances, focusing on the implied analytical/aesthetic positions taken by the performers. Our focus will be on music of the present, including music with and without a score and across all genres.

Seminar Requirements:

Weekly Reading and Analysis

Weekly presentation on the reading and analysis

Participation in seminar discussion

Semester Project and Seminar Presentation—exact details TBA

*This seminar is primarily intended for MA and PhD students. However, it is open to MM/DMA students with training in post-tonal analytical techniques. For students in the MA/PhD in Critical Music Studies track, it satisfies the Elective Group 3 requirement. For DMA students, it fulfills the Elective Group 2 requirement.*

3 credits