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MUJS 4120/5130/5490

VOCAL JAZZ STYLES/GRADUATE IMPROVISATION (VOCAL)



Description & Objectives of the Course

Vocal Jazz Styles serves as the final classroom curriculum course for vocalists in the UNT Division of Jazz Studies, with the purpose of bringing together many facets of what it takes to be a successful professional jazz vocalist once you will be leaving the program. There will be heavy emphasis on vocal improvisation skills at a high level, moving past “making the changes” and into content that is practical and relevant. Those graduate students who are enrolled for Graduate Improvisation will follow the same syllabus and curriculum for the class, but will use more advanced song selections for the same assignments, and often at different tempos. They will also meet one additional 50-minute period to further reinforce the more advanced topics of the class.

By the end of this semester, you will:

- Improvise both syllabically and using lyrics competently in a way befitting the voice at fast tempos, on the blues, in static/modal harmony, and straight eighth-note (Brazilian) grooves.
- Develop practice methods for practicing improvising over chord changes in a combination of theoretical and aural ways.
- Have explored some the most important current jazz vocalists
- Be confident with concepts related to musical programming and performance aesthetics in recital, concert and gig settings.

Course Information

T/Th 11 - 11:50 am Zoom!

(Grad Improv, also Mo 12 - 12:50)

Instructor: Jennifer Barnes

Office: Rm 346

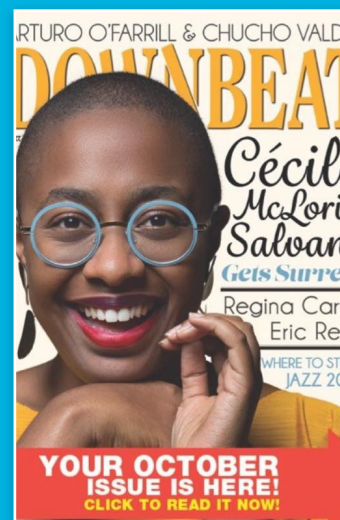
email: jennifer.Barnes@unt.edu

cell: (661) 713-0260

Course Attendance, Grading & Policies

- Absences are limited to two for the semester. If there is a medical emergency, the student and instructor will work out a modified due date for the assignment(s) missed ASAP. Other than a medical impossibility of singing, all other assignments that were due in class must be submitted by recording on the day due or will be subject to a late penalty. (see below). While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me *prior to being absent* as to what may be preventing you from coming to class so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class. If you are experiencing cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, or any of the other possible symptoms of COVID-19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.
- Each assignment/performance will be graded on Canvas; the grade is determined by the quality of preparation and the musicality of the assignments/performances.
- The final semester grade will be calculated as follows:
 1. Attendance and class participation – 15%
 2. Assignment grades, averaged – 75%
 3. Final performance – 10%
- Homework, in-class performances or projects that are submitted late will be subject to a grade reduction off the total grade on the following scale, but will still be expected to be completed, since you must learn the material (exceptions will **only** be made for excused absences cleared in advance):
 - 1 – 2 days late = 10% reduction
 - 3 – 6 days late = 25% reduction
 - 7 – 13 days late = 50% reduction
 - 14+ days late = no credit

If you do well in this class, you too can be successful, like these people!



- My expectation for participation in this class, which is uniquely being conducted over Zoom this semester, includes the following:
 - You will be awake (!), alert, dressed as if you were attending class in person, and sitting or standing in an upright position.
 - Your screen must always have the video portion active, and the sound remains muted unless you're speaking, which you will be often in class to respond
 - You will not be looking at either your phone or any other content on your computer/tablet screen during class, to be fully attentive and engaged in your learning process
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Although this syllabus is a guide to our plan for this class, the final word on scheduled assignments, due dates and specific content for each assignment will be on **Canvas**, NOT this syllabus, due to adjustments that will invariably need to be made to accommodate the individual pace and level of this specific class. It is each student's responsibility to consult the online course to verify each assignment's content and due date.

Required Textbook:

Vocal Jazz Improvisation: An Instrumental Approach (Intermediate & Advanced Studies), by Darmon Meader (audio examples by Darmon Meader and Rosana Eckert!). Available for purchase at the UNT Barnes & Noble Bookstore.



Additional University policies:

Academic Integrity Policy: <http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity>

Student behavior policy: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

ADA Accommodation Statement. UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Canvas for more specifics)
1	8/25	Introduction to class; Syllabus review; Intro to blues.	
2	8/27	Blues vocabulary; soloing over "McDuff's Groove"; transcription of changes.	"McDuff's Groove" #1
3	9/1	Blues performances; discuss song lists (Google doc);	Self-evaluation of McDuff #1 performance. Prep "McDuff's Groove" performance #2. Upload piano performance of blues changes.
4	9/3	(JB gone Friday - class moved to Monday) McDuff performances #2. Programming discussion, Part 1.	Google doc songlist; themed program.
5	9/8	Programming discussion, Part 2.	Create a 75-minute thematic concert program.
6	9/10	Methods of Shedding Changes; introduce "Alone Together" (Styles) & "I Remember You" (Improv)	Shed vocal improv. Upload piano changes.
7	9/15	Workout on changes - introduce motivic development.	Two choruses soloing
8	9/17	In-class performances; shed and prep for a cappella performances	Self-evaluation; prep for two choruses of soloing
9	9/22	Workshop day	Shed
10	9/24	In-class performances; further motivic development.	Self-eval; prep for final motivic development performance (new motives)
11	9/29	In-class performances; start Modal Improv	Self eval; shed Modal Improv
12	10/1	In-class workshop on "Maiden Voyage"	Shed!
13	10/6	First performance of "Maiden Voyage"	Self-eval
13	10/8	Second performance of modal tune; start "Love for Sale"	Self-eval; record changes
14	10/13	Present practice techniques on "Love for Sale"	Shed
16	10/15	(Discussed recitals - field trip - discuss Current Artist Reports)	Shed LFS
18	10/20	First performance on "Love for Sale" (120 bpm)	Self-eval; continued work at faster tempi.
19	10/22	Second performance on "Love for Sale" (180 bpm)	Self-eval; transcribe solo and edit/improve it.
20	10/27	Work transcribed/edited solo on "LFS" - individual sessions.	Self-eval; shed
21	10/29	Edited solo performance of "LFS". Work faster tempos.	Self-eval. Prep "Corcovado" - upload changes.
22	11/3	First performances on "Corcovado". Diminished scale work in Meader book.	Self-eval; continued shedding on "Corcovado"
23	11/5	Second performances of "Corcovado". Introduce "Spain"	Self-eval; work "Spain"; upload changes; shed guide tones & roots
24	11/10	In-class workshop on "Spain"; perform roots and guide tone lines at 240 bpm (120 for beats 1 & 3).	Shed!

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Canvas for more specifics)
25	11/12	In-class performances of "Spain"; discuss final exam	Self-eval
26	11/17	"Spain", performance #2; discuss odd meters.	Self-eval; current artist reports
27	11/19	Current Artist Reports (2); Odd meter workshop #1	Bring odd-meter song of choice that you might solo over to sing in class or standard adaptation to odd meter
28	11/24	Current artist report (2); Odd meter workshop #2	Odd meter shed
	11/26	(No class - Thanksgiving!)	
29	12/1	Odd meter performances; Meader book licks	Insert Meader licks into tune of your choice.
30	12/3	Meader licks inserted into tune performance; SPOT evaluation in class (please bring device)	
	12/8	11 - 12:30 Final Performance Exam - Open to the "public"	