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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
- Have more confidence with self-accompaniment at the piano
- 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 Rm. 292

(Grad Improv, also Fr 11 - 11:50)

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 on the day due or will be subject to a late penalty. (see below)
- 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:
 - Attendance and class participation – 15%
 - Assignment grades, averaged – 75%
 - 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
- Please silence your cell phone prior to entering the classroom space and put it in an inaccessible place to avoid causing distraction to yourself or anyone else. The only exception will be when you plan to use your phone as a recording device, in which case it must remain in “AIRPLANE MODE”.
- Laptops may be used for note-taking and recording, but no other activities. Students found to be doing so will earn a failing grade for class participation for that day.
- 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.

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



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>

ODA Statement: disability.unt.edu

Retention of Student Records: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Spring 2020 Final Exam Schedule

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Canvas for more specifics)
1	1/14	Introduction to class; Syllabus review; Intro to blues.	
2	1/16	Blues vocabulary; soloing over "McDuff's Groove"; transcription of changes.	"McDuff's Groove" #1
3	1/21	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	1/23	(JB gone Friday - class moved to Monday) McDuff performances #2. Programming discussion, Part 1.	Google doc songlist; themed program.
5	1/28	Programming discussion, Part 2.	Create a 75-minute thematic concert program.
6	1/30	Methods of Shedding Changes; introduce "Alone Together" (Styles) & "I Remember You" (Improv)	Shed vocal improv. Upload piano changes.
7	2/4	Workout on changes - introduce motivic development.	Two choruses soloing
8	2/6	In-class performances; shed and prep for a cappella performances	Self-evaluation; prep for two choruses of soloing
9	2/11	Workshop day	Shed
10	2/13	In-class performances; further motivic development.	Self-eval; prep for final motivic development performance (new motives)
11	2/18	In-class performances; start Modal Improv	Self eval; shed Modal Improv
12	2/20	In-class workshop on "Maiden Voyage"	Shed!
13	2/25	First performance of "Maiden Voyage"	Self-eval

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Canvas for more specifics)
13	2/27	Second performance of modal tune; start "Love for Sale"	Self-eval; record changes
14	3/3	Present practice techniques on "Love for Sale"	Shed
15	3/5	First performance on "Love for Sale" (120 bpm)	Self-eval; continued work at faster tempi.
16	3/17	Workshop day for faster tempi	
17	3/19	Second performance on "Love for Sale" (180 bpm)	Self-eval; transcribe solo and edit/improve it.
18	3/24	Work transcribed/edited solo on "LFS" - individual sessions.	Self-eval; shed
19	3/26	Edited solo performance of "LFS". Work faster tempos.	Self-eval. Prep "Corcovado" - upload changes.
20	3/31	First performances on "Corcovado". Diminished scale work in Meader book.	Self-eval; continued shedding on "Corcovado"
21	4/2	Second performances of "Corcovado". Introduce "Spain"	Self-eval; work "Spain"; upload changes; shed guide tones & roots
22	4/7	In-class workshop on "Spain"; perform roots and guide tone lines at 240 bpm (120 for beats 1 & 3).	Shed!
23	4/9	In-class performances of "Spain"; discuss final exam	Self-eval
24	4/14	"Spain", performance #2; discuss odd meters.	Self-eval; current artist reports
25	4/16	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
26	4/21	Current artist report (2); Odd meter workshop #2	Odd meter shed
27	4/23	Odd meter performances; Meader book licks	Insert Meader licks into tune of your choice.
28	4/28	Meader licks inserted into tune performance; SPOT evaluation in class (please bring device)	
29	4/30	Final Performance Exam	