

Ensemble Courses – Fall 2020

Department of Performance

Graduate Programs

As a result of the COVID health crisis, remote-delivery is the primary mode of teaching for McGill courses in Fall 2020. However, the nature of ensemble playing does not easily transfer to a remote-teaching experience and many of our large and small ensemble courses will not be offered. As a result, special accommodations have been made to enable students to meet their large and small ensemble program requirements and to gain meaningful experience in ensemble-related skills. According to the specific context of each program and ensemble, a variety of options are offered. **All these courses will be offered remotely.** Should circumstances allow the creation of some small in-person ensembles, these will be arranged on an ad-hoc basis and incorporated into the courses below. Since our priority for in-person performance activities at the School will be practical instruction (i.e. lessons and vocal coaching) as well as limited access to practice facilities, the possibility of in-person small ensembles will be contingent on the number of students and faculty present in our facilities at any given time, the availability of suitable spaces, and the ability to safely control the flow of people in and out of the building.

Course offerings in Early Music and Orchestral Instruments include two components: a 2-credit course and a 1-credit course. Unless you are a returning student who has already earned a number of ensemble credits that exceeds normal program expectations, you should register for both 1cr and 2cr courses.

Note that in addition to the area-specific courses listed below, **MUEN 569 Tabla Ensemble (1cr)** will be offered remotely and is open to all students.

Conducting

You may choose from the following options:

MUPG 674-002 The Players' Experience in an Ensemble Setting (2cr) (see description below under Orchestral Instruments)

MUPG 674-003 Historical Performance Ensemble Skills (2cr) (see description below under Early Music)

MUPG 674-004 Singing Together When We Are Apart (2cr) (see description below under Opera and Voice)

MUPG 673-004 *L'Art de bien chanter* / The Art of Singing (1cr) (see description below under Early Music)

Early Music (courses are open to students in Early Music programs and to others by permission of the instructors)

MUPG 674-003 (2cr) and MUPG 673-003 (1cr)

Historical Performance Ensemble Skills (Prof. Dorian Bandy)

This course will prepare students for participation in professional period-instrument ensembles. Lectures, discussions, masterclasses, demonstrations, readings, and assignments will focus on all aspects of historical-performance ensemble playing or singing, including topics such as: the close study of individual works in the standard baroque repertoire; broader issues involving style and performance; historical and theoretical sources; and professional-development matters including rehearsal techniques and entrepreneurship for baroque ensembles. Instruction on individual topics will be delivered by various members of the Schulich faculty, as well as by leading period performers from the US, UK, and Europe. Although the course will focus on the baroque period, we will also examine select works from earlier and later repertoire. This course will consist of two sections: one two-credit section intended for all interested early music students, and various one-credit sections focusing more specifically either on instrumental (MUPG 673-003) or vocal techniques (MUPG 673-004).

MUPG 673-004 (1cr)

L'Art de bien chanter / The Art of Singing (Instructor TBA)

This course takes its name from a well-known book on singing by Bénigne de Bacilly in 1668. From the early 17th century to the early 19th century, singers were expected to grace music with vocal decorations. Treatises were written to guide the singers in the art of ornamenting in “good taste”. Bacilly’s book also addresses pronunciation, articulation, intonation and ornamentation, or graces. These qualities were considered essential in order to fully express the meaning of the text, and to move the listener’s emotions. Since instrumentalists of the time were encouraged to imitate the voice, the course is suited to singers and instrumentalists alike: particularly to flute players, recorder players, violinists, cellists, gambists and continuo players who want to explore this repertoire. Those who practice the art of self-accompaniment are most welcome. We will study the qualities needed to be a good singer based on French 17th century texts and music. Things have not changed that much over the centuries and the ability to move the listener is still one of the main goals for musicians today. Our activities will include: reading and interacting with treatises; performing 17th century French airs; a listening guide; group discussions; guest presentations by leaders in the field of 17th French music

Jazz

All Jazz ensembles will be offered remotely under their regular course codes. Jazz students should register for ensemble courses as per usual.

Opera and Voice

MUEN 654 (Opera Repertoire Experience) (1cr)

MUEN 696 (Opera Theatre) (1cr)

MUPG 674-004 (2cr)

Singing Together When We Are Apart/Ensemble Skills for Singers (Prof. Jean-Sébastien Vallée)

Ensemble singing is often understood as an activity focussing on rehearsals and performances, however, making music with others is in fact even more about learning, growing, connecting, building community, exploring and innovating. **Ensemble Skills for Singers** is a new course to be offered in Fall 2020 that will focus of the latter elements of ensemble music. The course will include virtual singing projects, exploration of new ensemble skills, discussions on repertoire and performance practice, and reflections on innovative performance opportunities and the future of ensemble music in the context of our new reality. The course will explore a wild range of repertoire from early music to 21st century extended techniques. In addition, the weekly meetings will feature guest artists joining the class to discuss their experience and approach to ensemble singing. The list of guests includes well-known singers, coaches, composers, arrangers, and conductors from around the globe.

MUPG 673-004 *L'Art de bien chanter* / The Art of Singing (1cr) (see description above under Early Music)

Orchestral Instruments and Guitar

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass

MUPG 674-006 (2cr) and MUPG 673-006 (1cr)

Playing in Large and Small Ensembles for String Players (Prof. Violaine Melançon)

How does one prepare as deeply as one can for rehearsal, develop the inner ear, and react flexibly and meaningfully to those around us? What are all the physical ramifications of playing ensemble music? How is ensemble playing positioned in a large context, socially and historically? How do we find and sustain meaning? Who are the ensemble musicians of today and what does their career look like? This course proposes to explore and teach the essential skills and surrounding aspects of ensemble playing, using a combination of practical training classes meeting once a week, weekly workshops/discussions with guests, and creative student-led projects through flexible modules. We will dig deeply into important questions often neglected while exploring a myriad of skills and perspectives. The course will be delivered in two distinct sections, U0-U2, and U3-Graduate, although some of the activities and events will overlap.

Woodwinds (except Saxophone) & Brass Instruments

MUPG 674-002 (2cr) and MUPG 673-002 (1cr)

The Player's Experience in an Ensemble Setting (Prof. Alain Cazes)

In absence of a real ensemble playing experience during the Fall 2020, this seminar offers a sophisticated overview of some aspects of the musician's life in the orchestra or any ensemble setting (wind orchestra or chamber music). The seminar offers an inspiring range of topics and perspectives, (such as Professional Ethic, Preparation for Auditions, Individual Preparation in Professional setting, and many others) shared by experienced orchestral musicians from the MSO and OM, offered in team teaching. This seminar will be offered on line twice a week (90 minutes each session) for a total of 3 credits. Some possible interactive activities will take place as follow: Mock Auditions and evaluations; Class discussions based on Article Analysis from renowned orchestral musicians; Interactive session on Stress Management; Video observations followed by class discussions; Team work in groups of two or more participants; Submission a recording of your part of a given work selected pending of the number and variety of participants

Saxophone

You should register for:

MUPG 674-002 (2cr) (see description above under Woodwinds and Brass) **and**
MUEN 560-273 (1cr) (remotely-delivered saxophone ensemble course)

Harp

You should register for:

MUPG 674-002 (2cr) (see description above under Woodwinds and Brass) **and**
MUEN 560-184 (1cr) (remotely-delivered harp techniques class)

Percussion

You should register for:

MUPG 674-002 (2cr) (see description above under Woodwinds and Brass) **and**
MUEN 598 (1cr) Percussion Ensemble

Guitar

You may choose from the following options:

MUPG 674-003 (2cr) (see description above under Early Music)

MUPG 674-004 (2cr) (see description above under Opera and Voice)

MUEN 569 (1cr) **Tabla Ensemble** (taught remotely)

and register for:

MUEN 562 1cr Guitar Ensemble (taught remotely)

Organ

You may choose from the following options:

MUPG 674-003 2cr (see description above under Early Music)

MUPG 673-003 1cr (see description above under Early Music)

MUPG 673-004 1cr (see description above under Early Music)

MUPG 674-004 2cr (see description below under Opera and Voice)

Piano

MUPG 674-005 (2cr)

Piano Chamber Music: Interpretation, Context and Ensemble Skills (Prof. Kyoko Hashimoto)

The goal of the course is to prepare pianists for advanced-level chamber music performance. It will focus on the study of the core ensemble repertoire, development of attentive/critical listening skills, increasing students' knowledge of rehearsal skill and their understanding of different styles, as well as details of the search for musical meaning in markings, textures, and other necessary knowledge about playing with other instruments. Pianists will be asked to do some homework, such as preparation for presentations and other related work.

MUPG 674-004 Singing Together When We Are Apart (2cr) (see description above under Opera and Voice)