Music and Theater Arts (Course 21M)

Music

The Music subjects described below are grouped within five areas: Introductory, History/Culture, Composition/Theory, Performance, Advanced/Special Subjects, and Music and Media. Although most students start with introductory subjects, those who have vocal or instrumental training or extensive exposure to music are encouraged to begin at a higher starting level.

Introductory Subjects

21M.011 Introduction to Western Music
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Provides a broad overview of Western music from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, with emphasis on late baroque, classical, romantic, and modernist styles. Designed to enhance the musical experience by developing listening skills and an understanding of diverse forms and genres. Major composers and works placed in social and cultural contexts. Weekly lectures feature demonstrations by professional performers and introduce topics to be discussed in sections.
Fall: M. Marks, T. Neff, A. Boyles
Spring: E. Pollock, T. Neff

21M.013[J] The Supernatural in Music, Literature and Culture
Same subject as 21L.013[J]
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

Explores the relationship between music and the supernatural, focusing on the social history and context of supernatural beliefs as reflected in key literary and musical works from 1600 to the present. Provides an understanding of the place of ambiguity and the role of interpretation in culture, science and art. Explores great works of art by Shakespeare, Verdi, Goethe (in translation), Gounod, Henry James and Benjamin Britten. Readings also include selections from the most recent scholarship on magic and the supernatural. Writing assignments range from web-based projects to analytic essays. No previous experience in music is necessary. Projected guest lectures, musical performances, field trips.
C. Shadle, M. Fuller

21M.030 Introduction to World Music
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

An introduction to diverse musical traditions of the world. Music from a wide range of geographical areas is studied in terms of structure, performance practice, social use, aesthetics, and cross-cultural contact. Includes hands-on music making, live demonstrations by guest artists, and ethnographic research projects.
Fall: L. Tilley, L. Pellegrinelli
Spring: E. Ziporyn, L. Pellegrinelli

21M.051 Fundamentals of Music
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Introduces students to the rudiments of Western music through oral, aural, and written practice utilizing rhythm, melody, intervals, scales, chords, and musical notation. Individual skills are addressed through a variety of approaches, including keyboard practice in the required piano labs.
E. Kwon, F. Hollerweger, S. Lee

21M.065 Introduction to Musical Composition
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Through a progressive series of composition projects, students investigate the sonic organization of musical works and performances, focusing on fundamental questions of unity and variety. Aesthetic issues are considered in the pragmatic context of the instructions that composers provide to achieve a desired musical result, whether these instructions are notated in prose, as graphic images, or in symbolic notation. No formal training is required. Weekly listening, reading, and composition assignments draw on a broad range of musical styles and intellectual traditions, from various cultures and historical periods.
K. Makan, F. Hollerweger
History/Culture

21M.215 Music of the Americas
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

A survey of the music of North and South America from the Renaissance to the present, with emphasis on the cross-fertilizations of indigenous and European traditions. Listening assignments will focus on composers as varied as Copland and Still, Revueltas and Chihara.

Staff

21M.220 Medieval and Renaissance Music
Prereq: None. Coreq: 21M.301
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Examines European music from the early Middle Ages until the end of the Renaissance. Includes a chronological survey and intensive study of three topics: chant and its development, music in Italy 1340-1420, and music in Elizabethan England. Focuses on methods and pitfalls in studying music of the distant past. Students' papers, problem sets, and presentations explore lives, genres, and works in depth. Works studied in facsimile of original notation, and from original manuscripts at MIT, where possible.

Staff

21M.223[J] Folk Music of the British Isles and North America
Same subject as 21L.023[J]
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-1-8 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Examines the production, transmission, preservation and the qualities of folk music in the British Isles and North America from the 18th century to the folk revival of the 1960s and the present. Special emphasis on balladry, fiddle styles, and African-American influences.

G. Ruckert, R. Perry

21M.226 Jazz
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Historical survey from roots in African and American contexts, including spirituals, blues, and ragtime, through early jazz, Swing, bebop, and post-bop movements, with attention to recent developments. Key jazz styles, the relation of music and society, and major figures such as Armstrong, Ellington, Basie, Goodman, Parker, Monk, Mingus, Coltrane, and others are considered. Some investigation of cross-influences with popular, classical, folk, and rock musics. Enrollment may be limited.

M. Harvey

21M.235 Monteverdi to Mozart: 1600-1800
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of instructor
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Surveys Baroque and Classical genres: opera, cantata, oratorio, sonata, concerto, quartet and symphony. Includes the composers Monteverdi, Schutz, Purcell, Vivaldi, Bach, Handel, Haydn and Mozart. Bases written essays, projects and oral presentations on live performances as well as listening and reading assignments. Basic music score-reading ability required.

T. Neff

21M.250 Beethoven to Mahler: 1800-1910
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Surveys Romantic genres including Lied/song, choral music, opera, piano sonata/character cycle, concerto, and symphony/symphonic poem. Includes the composers Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz, Chopin, Brahms, Wagner, Verdi, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler. Bases written essays and oral presentations on live performances as well as listening and reading assignments. Basic score-reading ability recommended.

T. Neff
21M.260 Stravinsky to the Present
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Surveys musical works drawn from many genres, representing stylistic movements that have transformed classical music over the past hundred years. Focal topics include musical modernism, serialism, neoclassicism, nationalism and ideology, minimalism, and aleatoric and noise composition experiments. Discusses electronic and computer music, and new media and the postmodern present. Begins with Stravinsky’s early ballets and ends with music by current MIT composers and other important figures active today. Ability to read music required. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication provided.
E. Pollock

21M.269 Studies in Western Music History
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.
Explores particular questions or repertories in Western classical music. Requires individual participation, presentations, and writing. Topics vary each year. Examples include women in music, musical borrowing, the Ars Nova, Schumann, or music after 1990. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.
Staff

21M.271 Symphony and Concerto
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2016-2017: U (Fall)
Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Explores the style, form, and history of approximately two dozen pieces of canonical symphonic repertoire. Students write short reviews of musicological articles on the rich cultural history of selected works and complete one project about the state of classical music in contemporary society. Basic score-reading ability required.
E. Pollock

21M.273 Opera
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Focuses on the different styles and dramatic approaches exhibited by a range of operas. Central questions include the process of adaptation from source material, the conventions of different operatic eras, and how the works are staged in contrasting productions. Basic score-reading ability required.
E. Pollock

21M.283 Musicals of Stage and Screen
Prereq: One subject in film, music, or theater; or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Covers Broadway works and Hollywood films in depth. Proceeds chronologically, exploring three stage musicals and three films at a time, within four historical categories: breakthrough musicals of the 1920s and ’30s; classic “book musicals” of the ’40s and ’50s; modernist and concept musicals of the ’60s and ’70s; and post modern and cutting-edge works of the ’80s and ’90s. Attention given to the role of music in relation to script, characterization, and dramatic structure. Final papers involve comparison of one stage and one film work, selected in consultation with the instructor. Oral presentations required and in-class performances encouraged.
M. Marks

21M.284 Film Music
Subject meets with CMS.925
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-3-6 units. HASS-A
Surveys styles and dramatic functions of music for silent films of the 1910s-20s, and music in sound films from the 1930s to the present. Close attention given to landmark scores by American and European composers, including Korngold, Steiner, Rozsa, Prokofiev, Copland, Herrmann, Rota, Morricone, and Williams. Subsidiary topics include new trends in contemporary film-scoring, pop scores, the impact of electronics, and specialized genres (e.g., animation). Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments. Some background in the study of film and/or music is expected.
M. Marks
21M.289 Studies in Western Classical Genres
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of the instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Explores topics concerned with specific types of classical music, such as repertories for instrumental soloists and/or small ensembles, orchestral works, solo songs, choral works, or compositions for theater, film, or new media. Topics vary and may require additional prerequisites or specialized skills such as score-reading or playing an instrument. Examples include the English madrigal, Baroque chamber music, Beethoven's symphonies, French art song, Wagner’s 'Ring' cycle, American choral music, Stravinsky's theater works, and the Hollywood film score. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

21M.291 Music of India
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on Hindustani classical music of North India, and also involves learning about the ancient foundations of the rich classical traditions of music and dance of all Indian art and culture. Practice of the ragas and talas through the learning of songs, dance, and drumming compositions. Develops insights through listening, readings, and concert attendance.

G. Ruckert

21M.292 Music of Indonesia
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
2-2-8 units. HASS-A

Provides an introduction to the fascinating, intricate music of Indonesia. The Indonesian archipelago is home to a wide variety of cultures and musical traditions, many of them largely unknown in the West. From the Gamelan percussion orchestras of Bali and Java to the indigenous folk traditions of Sumatra and Borneo, and Western-influenced pop and street traditions.

L. Tilley

21M.293 Music of Africa
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Studies musical traditions of sub-Saharan Africa, with focus on West Africa. Explores a variety of musical practices and their cultural contexts through listening, reading and writing assignments with an emphasis on class discussion. Includes in-class instruction in drumming, song and dance of Senegal, Ghana, and South Africa, as well as live lecture-demonstrations by guest performers from throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

P. Tang

21M.294 Popular Musics of the World
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on popular music created for and transmitted by mass media. Studies various popular music genres from around the world through listening and reading assignments, while considering issues of musical change, syncretism, Westernization, globalization, the impact of recording industries, and the post-colonial era. Case studies include bhangra, Afro-pop, reggae, and global hip-hop.

P. Tang

21M.295 American Popular Music
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Surveys the development of popular music in the US, and in a cross-cultural milieu, relative to the history and sociology of the last two hundred years. Examines the ethnic mixture that characterizes modern music, and how it reflects many rich traditions and styles (minstrelsy, music-hall, operetta, Tin Pan Alley, blues, rock, electronic media, etc.). Provides a background for understanding the musical vocabulary of current popular music styles.

T. Neff

21M.299 Studies in World, Traditional, and Popular Music
Prereq: 21M.030 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Studies of selected topics in ethnomusicology (the study of music in culture). Topics vary. Examples include music and crisis, fieldwork methodologies, Asian classical traditions, Senegalese Mbalax, Hindustani Khyal, Brazilian Samba, or Duke Ellington. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

Staff
**Composition/Theory**

21M.301 Harmony and Counterpoint I  
Prereq: None  
U (Fall, Spring)  
3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Covers basic writing skills in music of the common-practice period (Bach to Brahms). Regular written assignments lead to the composition of short pieces. Analyzes representative works from the literature, keyboard laboratory, and sight-singing choir. Students should have experience reading music.  
*Fall: E. Ruehr, J. Rohwein, J. Casinghino*  
*Spring: M. Harvey, J. Casinghino, E. Ruehr*

21M.302 Harmony and Counterpoint II  
Prereq: 21M.301 or permission of instructor  
U (Fall, Spring)  
3-2-7 units. HASS-A

A continuation of 21M.301, including chromatic harmony and modulation, a more extensive composition project, keyboard laboratory, and musicianship laboratory.  
*Fall: W. Cutter, J. Casinghino*  
*Spring: J. Casinghino*

21M.303 Writing in Tonal Forms I  
Prereq: 21M.302  
U (Fall, Spring)  
3-1-8 units. HASS-A

Written and analytic exercises based on 18th- and 19th-century small forms and harmonic practice found in music such as the chorale preludes of Bach; minuets and trios of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; and the songs and character pieces of Schubert and Schumann. Musicianship laboratory is required.  
*C. Shadle*

21M.304 Writing in Tonal Forms II  
Prereq: 21M.303  
U (Spring)  
3-1-8 units. HASS-A

Further written and analytic exercises in tonal music, focusing on larger or more challenging forms. For example, students might compose a sonata-form movement for piano or a two-part invention in the style of Bach. Students have opportunities to write short works that experiment with the expanded tonal techniques of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Musicianship laboratory is required.  
*C. Shadle*

21M.310 Techniques of 20th-Century Composition  
Prereq: 21M.302, 21M.260, or permission of instructor  
U (Fall)  
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students complete written and analytical exercises based on compositional forms and practices from the first half of the 20th century. Areas covered include compositions based upon artificial scales and modes, as in Debussy, Bartok, and Stravinsky; compositions based on atonal pitch organizations, as with Schoenberg and Webern; compositions based on rhythmic process, timbral exploration, and/or non-Western influences. Basic instrumentation will be taught, and compositions will be performed in class.  
*K. Makan*

21M.340 Jazz Harmony and Arranging  
Prereq: 21M.051, 21M.226, or permission of instructor  
U (Spring)  
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Basic harmony and theory of mainstream jazz and blues; includes required listening in jazz, writing and analysis work, and two full-scale arrangements. Serves as preparation for more advanced work in jazz with application to rock and pop music. Performance of student arrangements.  
*M. Harvey*

21M.341 Jazz Composition  
Prereq: 21M.226, 21M.340, or permission of instructor  
Acad Year 2016-2017: U (Fall)  
Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered  
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Jazz writing using tonal, modal, and extended compositional approaches as applied to the blues, the 32-bar song form, and post-bop structural designs. Consideration given to a variety of styles and to the ways improvisation informs the compositional process. Study of works by Ellington, Mingus, Parker, Russell, Evans, Nelson, Golson, Coleman, Coltrane, Threadgill, Hemphill, and others. Performance of student compositions.  
*M. Harvey*
21M.342 Composing for Jazz Orchestra
Prereq: Permission of instructor
Acad Year 2016-2017: Not offered
Acad Year 2017-2018: U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores composition and arrangement for the large jazz ensembles from 1920s foundations to current postmodern practice. Consideration given to a variety of styles and to the interaction of improvisation and composition. Study of works by Basie, Ellington, Evans, Gillespie, Golson, Mingus, Morris, Nelson, Williams, and others. Open rehearsals, workshops, and performances of student compositions by the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble and the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra.

M. Harvey

21M.351 Music Composition
Subject meets with 21M.505
Prereq: 21M.304, 21M.310, or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Directed composition of original writing involving voices and/or instruments. Includes a weekly seminar in composition for the presentation and discussion of work in progress. Students are expected to produce at least one substantive work and perform it in public by the end of the term. Contemporary compositions and major works from 20th-century music literature are studied. Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments.

C. Shadle

21M.355 Musical Improvisation
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
3-1-8 units. HASS-A

Students study concepts and practice techniques of improvisation in solo and ensemble contexts. Examines relationships between improvisation, composition, and performance based in traditional and experimental approaches. Topics, with occasional guest lectures, may include jazz, non-western music, and western concert music, as well as improvisation with film, spoken word, theater, and dance.

Fall: E. Ziporyn
Spring: M. Harvey

21M.359 Studies in Musical Composition, Theory and Analysis
Prereq: 21M.302 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Explores techniques associated with musical composition and/or analysis. Written exercises in the form of music (composition) and/or prose (papers) may be required, depending on the topic. Topics vary each year; examples include fugue, contemporary aesthetics of composition, orchestration, music analysis, or music and mathematics. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

E. Egozy

21M.361 Electronic Music Composition I
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
2-1-9 units. HASS-A

Students develop basic skills in composition through weekly assignments focusing on sampling and audio processing. Source materials include samples of urban/natural environments, electronically generated sounds, inherent studio/recording noise, and pre-existing recordings. Audio processing includes digital signal processing (DSP) and analog devices. Covers compositional techniques, including mixing, algorithms, studio improvisation, and interaction. Students critique each other's work and give informal presentations on recordings drawn from sound art, experimental electronica, conventional and non-conventional classical electronic works, and popular music. Covers technology, math, and acoustics in varying detail.

P. Whincop

21M.362 Electronic Music Composition II
Prereq: 21M.361 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
2-2-8 units. HASS-A

Explores sophisticated synthesis techniques, from finely tuned additive to noise filtering and distortion, granular synthesis to vintage emulation. Incorporates production techniques and use of multimedia, with guest lecturers/performers. Considers composing environments such as Max/MSP/Jitter, SPEAR, SoundHack, and Mathematica. Assignments include diverse listening sessions, followed by oral or written presentations, weekly sound studies, critiques, and modular compositions/soundscapes. Prior significant computer music experience preferred. Consult instructor for technical requirements.

P. Whincop
21M.380 Music and Technology
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.
Explores various technologies in relation to musical analysis, composition, performance, culture, and quantitative methods. Topics vary each term and may include development and impact on society, generative and algorithmic music, or recording techniques. May involve hands-on components such as laptop music ensemble, new instrument building, or comparing the theory and practice of audio recording.
F. Hollerweger

Performance
Students may combine or repeat any of the 6-unit subjects listed below for 12 units (one full subject) of credit toward the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) General Institute Requirement (GIR). See the HASS Requirement website (http://web.mit.edu/hassreq/petitions.html) for details.

21M.401 MIT Concert Choir
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-4-2 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Rehearsals and performance of primarily large-scale works for chorus, soloists, and orchestra--from the Passions and Masses of J. S. Bach to oratorios of our own time.
W. Cutter

21M.405 MIT Chamber Chorus
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Rehearsal and performance of choral repertoire for small chorus, involving literature from the Renaissance to contemporary periods.
W. Cutter

21M.410 Vocal Repertoire and Performance
Subject meets with 21M.515
Prereq: None. Coreq: Participation in ensemble for vocalists
U (Spring)
3-0-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.
For the singer and/or pianist interested in collaborative study of solo vocal performance. Historical study of the repertoire includes listening assignments of representative French, German, Italian, and English works as sung by noted vocal artists of the genre. Topics include diction as facilitated by the study of the International Phonetic Alphabet; performance and audition techniques; and study of body awareness and alignment through the Alexander Technique and yoga.
A. Boyles

21M.421 MIT Symphony
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-4-2 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Rehearsals prepare works for concerts and recordings. Analyses of musical style, structure, and performance practice are integrated into rehearsals as a means of enriching musical conception and the approach to performance. Likewise, additional scores of particular structural or stylistic interest are read whenever time permits.
A. Boyles

21M.423 Conducting and Score-Reading
Prereq: 21M.302 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Introduces ensemble conducting as a technical and artistic discipline. Incorporates ear training, score-reading skills and analysis, rehearsal technique, and studies of various philosophies. Attendance of rehearsals and specific concerts required. Opportunities include conducting students, professional musicians, and MIT Symphony Orchestra (when possible). Instrumental proficiency required, although vocalists with keyboard abilities will be accepted. May be repeated once for credit with permission of instructor.
A. Boyles
21M.426 MIT Wind Ensemble
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-4-2 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Designed for advanced instrumentalists who are committed to the analysis, performance, and recording of woodwind, brass, and percussion literature from the Renaissance through the 21st century. The repertoire consists primarily of music for small and large wind ensembles. May include ensemble music from Gabrieli to Grainger, Schuller, Mozart, Dvorak, and various mixed media including strings. Performance of newly commissioned works. Opportunities for solo work and work with recognized professional artists and composers.

F. Harris

21M.442 MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-4-2 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Designed for instrumentalists dedicated to the analysis, performance, and recording of traditional and contemporary jazz ensemble compositions. Instrumentation includes saxophones, trumpets, trombones, piano, guitar or vibraphone, bass, percussion and occasionally french horn, double reeds, and strings. Provides opportunities to work with professional jazz artists and perform commissioned works by recognized jazz composers. Experience in improvisation preferred but not required.

F. Harris

21M.445 Chamber Music Society
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-4-2 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Study of chamber music literature through analysis, rehearsal, and performance. Weekly seminars and coaching. Open to string, piano, brass, woodwind players, and singers.

M. Thompson, D. Deveau, J. Rife

21M.450 MIT Balinese Gamelan
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
0-3-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

A performing ensemble dedicated to the traditional music of Bali and East Java. Members of the ensemble rehearse and study techniques on MIT’s three distinctive sets of gamelan instruments and perform in conjunction with Gamelan Galak Tika. No previous experience necessary, but prior enrollment in 21M.030 is strongly recommended.

Fall: L. Tilley
Spring: D. Alit

21M.451 Studio Accompanying for Pianists
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Open by audition to pianists who wish to explore and develop their talents as accompanists. Pianists are paired with a music scholarship recipient and attend that student’s private lesson each week. Accompanists prepare independently, rehearse with the student partner, and provide accompaniment at a juried recital or masterclass each term. Under supervision for music faculty and private lesson instructors, pianists may work with one or two scholarship students each term at 3 units each or one student in 21M.480/21M.512 for 6 units. Subject satisfies the performance requirement for pianists receiving music scholarships.

D. Deveau

21M.460 MIT Senegalese Drum Ensemble
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
0-3-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

A performance ensemble focusing on the sabar drumming tradition of Senegal, West Africa. Study and rehearse Senegalese drumming techniques and spoken word. Perform in conjunction with MIT Rambax drumming group. No previous experience necessary, but prior enrollment in 21M.030 or 21M.293 strongly recommended.

L. Toure
21M.480 Advanced Music Performance
Subject meets with 21M.512
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
1-2-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Designed for students who demonstrate considerable technical and musical skills and who wish to develop them through intensive private study. Students must take a weekly lesson, attend a regular performance seminar, and participate in a departmental performing group. Full-year commitment required. Information about lesson fees, scholarships, and auditions available in Music Section Office. Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments.

M. Thompson, D. Deveau

21M.490 Emerson Scholar Solo Recital
Subject meets with 21M.525
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
1-0-5 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Solo 50-minute recital prepared with a private teacher and approved by the Emerson Private Studies Committee based on evidence of readiness shown in the Fall Term performances. See Emerson Scholars Stellar site for application deadlines and conditions.

M. Thompson, D. Deveau, J. Rife

Advanced/Special Subjects

21M.500 Advanced Seminar in Music
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar that develops analytic and research skills in music history/culture or theory/composition. Topics vary, but are organized around a particular methodology, musical topic, or collection of works, that allow for application to a variety of interests and genres. Strong emphasis on student presentations, discussion, and a substantial writing project. May be repeated for credit with permission from instructor.

P. Tang

21M.505 Music Composition
Subject meets with 21M.351
Prereq: 21M.304, 21M.310, or permission of instructor
G (Spring)
3-0-9 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Directed composition of original writing involving voices and/or instruments. Includes a weekly seminar in composition for the presentation and discussion of work in progress. Students are expected to produce at least one substantive work and perform it in public by the end of the term. Contemporary compositions and major works from 20th-century music literature are studied. Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments.

P. Child

21M.512 Advanced Music Performance
Subject meets with 21M.480
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
1-2-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Designed for students who demonstrate considerable technical and musical skills and who wish to develop them through intensive private study. Students must take a weekly lesson, attend a regular performance seminar, and participate in a departmental performing group. Full-year commitment required. Information about lesson fees, scholarships, and auditions available in Music Section Office. Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments.

D. Deveau, M. Thompson

21M.515 Vocal Repertoire and Performance
Subject meets with 21M.410
Prereq: None
G (Spring)
3-0-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

For the singer and/or pianist interested in collaborative study of solo vocal performance. Historical study of the repertoire includes listening assignments of representative French, German, Italian, and English works as sung by noted vocal artists of the genre. Topics include diction as facilitated by the study of the International Phonetic Alphabet; performance and audition techniques; and study of body awareness and alignment through the Alexander Technique and yoga. Admission by audition. Emerson Vocal Scholars contact department.

A. Boyles
21M.525 Emerson Scholars Solo Recital
Subject meets with 21M.490
Prereq: None
G (Spring)
1-2-3 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Emerson Scholars may receive credit for a solo spring recital that has been prepared with and approved by the private teacher and the Emerson Private Studies Committee. Approval based on evidence of readiness shown in first term master classes.
M. Thompson, D. Deveau

21M.531 Independent Study in Music
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue independent studies or projects with members of the Music Section. Projects require prior approval by the Music and Theater Arts Chair.
Consult Music Section Office

21M.533 Independent Study in Music
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring)
Units arranged [P/D/F]
Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue independent studies or projects with members of the Music Section. Projects require prior approval by the Music and Theater Arts Chair.
Consult Music Section Office

21M.535, 21M.534 Special Subject in Music
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Study of musical topics not covered in the regular subject listings, particularly experimental subjects offered by permanent or visiting faculty.
Consult Music Office

Music and Media

21M.580[J] Musical Aesthetics and Media Technology
Same subject as MAS.825[J]
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Fall)
Not offered regularly; consult department
3-3-3 units
See description under subject MAS.825[J].
T. Machover

21M.581[J] Projects in Media and Music
Same subject as MAS.826[J]
Prereq: MAS.825[J]
G (Spring)
3-3-6 units
Can be repeated for credit.
See description under subject MAS.826[J].
T. Machover

Theater Arts
The subjects listed below are arranged in three sections: Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced Subjects.

Introductory Subjects

21M.600 Introduction to Acting
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-5 units. HASS-A

Explores the actor's tools: body, voice, mind, imagination, and the essential self. Through studio exercises, students address issues of honesty and creativity in the theatrical moment, and begin to have a sense of their strengths and limitations as communicating theatrical artists. Provides an opportunity for students to discover their relationship to "the other" in the acting partner, the group, the environment, and the audience.
K. Mancuso, J. Sonenberg, O. D'Ambrosio
21M.603 Introduction to Design for the Theater
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-6 units. HASS-A

Introduces the fundamental skills and concepts of scenography through a series of individual design projects structured to explore the relationship of the performer to the environment, the interrelation of lighting and stage design, and the evolution of visual narrative. Develops a basic visual literacy for the theater by honing skills in drawing, model building, 3-D modeling, digital image manipulation, and color theory. Projects complimented by study of artworks and theories by Cindy Sherman, Sol LeWitt, Alan Kaprow, Robert Wilson, Bertolt Brecht, Caspar Neher, and others.
S. Brown

21M.604[J] Playwriting I
Same subject as 21W.754[J]
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Introduces the craft of writing for the theater, with special attention to the "play" in playwriting. Through weekly assignments and in-class exercises, students explore scene structure, action, events, voice, and dialogue. In workshop format, students present individual work for feedback and are encouraged to bring a sense of fun, joy and playfulness to their writing. Readings include published plays, which provide exposure to a variety of styles, voices, and structures. Emphasizes process, risk taking, and finding one's own voice and vision.
L. Harrington

21M.605 Voice and Speech for the Actor
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-5 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Concentrates upon freeing the natural voice through awareness of physical, vocal and, at times, emotional habits and the willingness and desire to experience change. Teaches progression of contemporary approaches to voice through in-class vocal exercises. Students use sonnets or poems as vehicles to explore the components of language and the need to communicate and reveal oneself through the voice. Designed for students interested in theater or developing their voices for presentations and professional speaking.
K. Eastley, O. D'Ambrosio

21M.606 Introduction to Stagecraft
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-5 units. HASS-A

Introduces students to an array of production techniques in areas of scenery, costume, rigging, lighting, video, and sound design. Provides multiple opportunities to apply these techniques ranging from theoretical discussions and scenographic sketches to the precision execution of design elements for a series of studio performance exercises. Concentrating on a disciplined approach to creative problem solving, small groups collaborate on short performances for a live audience in which the scenography plays the leading role. Reading assignments and screenings provide a historical and theoretical context for this studio-driven class.
S. Brown

21M.611 Foundations of Theater Practice
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2016-2017: U (Fall)
Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Introduces the ideas, skills, and aesthetic issues which comprise the creation of the theatrical event. Guest artists and faculty members introduce the work of different disciplines such as directing, stagecraft, design, acting, dramaturgy, and criticism. Readings and in-class exercises help students understand and experience the basic creative impulse in each area.
J. Sonenberg

21M.624 Acting with the Camera
Prereq: 21M.600 or permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Studio workshop explores the discipline of acting for the camera through in-class exercises that focus on the creative challenges inherent to both filming and being filmed. Investigates the performer in the history of cinema, television, and multimedia stage performance through readings, screenings, and experimentation with the theory and practice of performing for and with the camera. Culminates in student-written, edited, directed, and acted short films. Instruction in written and oral communication provided.
A. Kohler
21M.645 Motion Theater
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Examines the theatrical event from the perspective of composition in a performance workshop. Studio exercises address the process of developing a theatrical work through an internalized understanding of compositional principles in theater. Examines physical action in time and space. Includes outside readings, videos, short essays, and in-class discussions. Provides the performer, director, choreographer, designer or writer opportunities to engage with large and small group ensembles in creation of theatrical events. Topics include image, motion, shape, repetition, gesture, and spatial relationship.

J. Scheib

Intermediate Subjects

21M.703[J] Media and Methods: Performing
Same subject as CMS.403[J]
Prereq: CMS.100, 21L.011, or permission of instructor
Acad Year 2016-2017: U (Spring)
Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
3-3-6 units. HASS-H

See description under subject CMS.403[J].

C. Fusco

21M.704 Music Theater Workshop
Prereq: 21M.600 or permission of instructor
U (Fall)
3-0-6 units. HASS-A

Introduces applications of music in theater and performance. Encourages experimentation with different genres of singing, acting, and movement by exploring an array of historical and contemporary styles and techniques. Students develop and perform their own original songs and textual materials, gaining a theoretical and practical understanding of the actor's contribution to the dynamic form of musical theater. Previous experience in musical theater not required.

A. Kohler

21M.705 The Actor and the Text
Prereq: 21M.600 or permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Gives students who have begun the process of bringing themselves to a dramatic moment the opportunity to apply their skills to scripted material. Studio work in this class further develops the completeness, spontaneity, and honesty of expression of the actor's body, imagination, and voice; and introduces written material and the problems of synthesizing the self, the moment, and the scripted word. Weekly rehearsals with a scene partner.

J. Sonenberg

21M.710 Script Analysis
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Focuses on reading a script theatrically with a view to mounting a coherent production. Through careful, intensive reading of a variety of plays from different periods and different aesthetics, a pattern emerges for discerning what options exist for interpreting a script. Students discuss the consequences of those options for production.

Fall: K. Mancuso
Spring: C. Conceison

21M.711 Production Seminar
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Pursues detailed study of a particular playtext or theme and is related to some planned production activity during the following IAP. Seminar activities may include guest speakers from various disciplines who approach some aspect of the playtext or theme from the perspective of their fields; various theatrical practitioners; and critical and scholarly presentations by seminar members. Participation in the IAP production is not required.

C. Hammond

21M.715 Topics in Theater Arts
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (IAP, Spring)
3-0-9 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Multidisciplinary studio seminar provides opportunity for study in performance theory and practice. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

Staff
21M.732 Costume Design
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Studio workshop designed for students who possess a basic understanding of the principles of design and seek a more intensive study of costume. Students develop designs through a collaborative creative process that incorporates production dramaturgy and script analysis, and map those findings to a scenographically charged directorial concept. Fosters period research, conceptual design, and rendering skills through practical studio exercises. Instruction in life drawing, visual presentation, and basic costume construction provides the tools for applying conceptual design skills in performance.

O. Botez

21M.733 Scenic Design
Prereq: 21M.603 or permission of instructor
Acad Year 2016-2017: U (Fall)
Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Investigates the creation of stage environments for live performance. Students develop stage designs related to current production projects at MIT. A research paper exploring the work of a theater designer is also required. Focuses on developing the designer’s communication tools, particularly in the areas of visual research, 3-D digital model making, and design presentation. Examines the relationship of stage design to theater architecture, emerging media technologies and dramaturgies of the 20th and 21st centuries.

S. Brown

21M.734 Lighting Design
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Explores the history, concepts and techniques of sculpting space with light within a contemporary context. Students experiment with a wide range of approaches, tools, and skills to develop their own creative vision. Focuses on discrete forms that include live performance, installation, architecture, and developments in applied technologies. Studio projects alternate between conceptual studies and realized designs reflective of students’ own unique interests and talents.

K. Barrett

21M.735 Technical Design for Performance
Prereq: 21M.606 or permission of instructor
U (Fall)
3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Studio examines the role of the technical designer as an integral member of an ensemble. Focusing on the artistic process, students develop their own unique approaches to stage design, lighting, sound, video design and other new media applications for the performing arts. They also explore an array of pre-production research and rehearsal techniques and analyze dramatic texts. Introduces theoretical and practical aspects of technical design, from the budgeting of time and selection of materials, to use of new technologies. Culminates in a public showing of final design projects for an invited audience.

Staff

21M.785[J] Playwrights’ Workshop
Same subject as 21W.769[J]
Subject meets with 21M.789
Prereq: 21M.604[J], 21W.754[J], or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-2-7 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Continued work in the development of play scripts for the theater. Writers work on sustained pieces in weekly workshop meetings, individual consultation with the instructor, and in collaboration with student actors, directors, and designers. Fully developed scripts eligible for inclusion in the Playwrights’ Workshop production. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

A. Brody

21M.789 Playwrights’ Workshop
Subject meets with 21M.785[J], 21W.769[J]
Prereq: 21M.604[J], 21W.754[J], or permission of instructor
G (Spring)
3-2-7 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Continued work in the development of play scripts for the theater. Writers work on sustained pieces in weekly workshop meetings, individual consultation with the instructor, and in collaboration with student actors, directors, and designers. Fully developed scripts eligible for inclusion in the Playwrights’ Workshop production. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

A. Brody

21M.790 Directing
Subject meets with 21M.791
Prereq: 21M.600; 21M.710 or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
21M.791 Directing
Subject meets with 21M.790
Prereq: 21M.600; 21M.710 or permission of instructor
G (Spring)
3-0-6 units

Explores several models of directing, each with its unique structures, philosophy, terminology, and techniques. Exploration is intended to lead to the development of an individual voice for each student and clarity in his/her directorial point of view. Class sessions concentrate on how a point of view is arrived at through analysis of material and the way the results are rendered with the basic tools of theater. All points of view are honored as long as they can be actively supported by the work. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.
J. Scheib

Advanced Topics and Practica

21M.800 All the World's a Stage: Socio-Political Perspectives in Global Performance
Subject meets with 21M.801
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Investigates repertoire from international creators of theater, opera, performance art, and dance. Explores diverse storytelling and directorial points of view, examining the contexts which inform approaches to performance making. Discusses specific cultural and political shifts that have inspired the work of international artists, such as Marina Abramovic (Serbia), Pina Bausch (Germany), Nora Chipaumire (Zimbabwe), Ping Chong (US/Canada), Peter Sellars (US), and The Yes Men (US). Weekly readings, screenings and guest artists provide the foundation for an understanding of the role of director as an artist who finds inspiration in the contradictions of the world. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.
C. Brathwaite

21M.805 Performance and Design Practicum
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring; second half of term)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Provides directed practice in the artistic disciplines of performance, including stage design, projection and new media design, acting, directing, lighting design, costume design, and other creative fields. Students test and refine their skills in the presentation of fully produced plays, installations, design projects, dance, film, music theater, opera, and other performing arts events by participating in research and the rehearsal/performance process. Students seeking to design an individual project with a particular faculty member must obtain the approval of the Director of Theater Arts.
Staff
21M.815 Studio Performance and Design Practicum
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring; second half of term)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Provides opportunities for applied practice in the artistic disciplines of performance and scenography, including acting, directing, playwriting, stage design, lighting design, costume design, projection, and sound design. Students test and refine their skills in the prototyping of design projects, installations, plays, dance, film, music theater, opera, and other performing arts events. Follows the research and rehearsal process through production and studio performances. Students seeking to design an individual project with a particular faculty member must obtain the approval of the Director of Theater Arts.
Consult Theater Arts Staff

21M.830 Acting: Techniques and Style
Subject meets with 21M.835
Prereq: 21M.624, 21M.705, or permission of instructor
U (Fall)
4-0-8 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Refines the student actor’s use of the language of the stage with work on text and physical presentation. Explores issues of style, including the understanding and honoring, in performance, of the specific requirements from several different periods of the Western theatrical tradition. Periods may differ from term to term. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.
A. Kohler

21M.835 Acting: Techniques and Style
Subject meets with 21M.830
Prereq: 21M.600
G (Fall)
4-0-8 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Refines the student actor’s use of the language of the stage with work on text and physical presentation. Explores issues of style, including the understanding and honoring, in performance, of the specific requirements from several different periods of the Western theatrical tradition. Periods may differ from term to term. Students taking graduate versions complete additional assignments.
A. Kohler

21M.840 Performance Media
Subject meets with 21M.841
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-2-7 units. HASS-A

Integrates media and communication technologies in performing arts. Studio exercises provide a forum for experimentation. Contemporary and historical techniques for media integration examined through readings, viewing videos and short written essays. Technologies examined include digital imaging, composite and live feed digital video, and web-based performance. Engages the designer, director, choreographer, performer, visual artist or programmer in the practice of integrating media into live art events. Equipment is provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.
B. Karasu

21M.841 Performance Media
Subject meets with 21M.840
Prereq: None
G (Spring)
3-2-7 units

Meets with 21M.840 but assignments differ. Graduate students are expected to complete additional assignments. See description under 21M.840.
B. Karasu

21M.846 Topics in Performance Studies
Subject meets with 21M.847
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Multidisciplinary lecture/workshop engages students in a variety of approaches to the study and practice of performance as an area of aesthetic and social interaction. Special attention paid to the use of diverse media in performance. Interdisciplinary approaches to study encourage students to seek out material histories of performance and practice. New topics are discussed each year.
Fall: C. Conceison
Spring: C. Brathwaite
21M.847 Topics in Performance Studies
Subject meets with 21M.846
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units
Can be repeated for credit.
See description under 21M.846. Assignments differ.
Fall: C. Conceison
Spring: C. Brathwaite

21M.851 Independent Study in Performance and Design
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring; second half of term)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.
Multidisciplinary independent study provides opportunity for individual practica in the performing arts. While opportunities may include directed theoretical research and practice in production and performance with permanent and visiting faculty, students are encouraged to propose independent programs of study. Approval may be obtained from the Director of Theater Arts.
Theater Arts Staff

21M.863 Advanced Topics in Theater Arts
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (IAP, Spring)
4-2-6 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Advanced multidisciplinary studio workshop provides opportunity for advanced study in the performing arts. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs.
C. Conceison

21M.865 Research in Theater
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Spring)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.
Offers directed research of advanced theatrical subjects occurring in either the performance or theoretical spheres. May be repeated for credit with permission.
C. Conceison

21M.THT Pre-Thesis Tutorial
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, IAP, Spring)
1-0-5 units
Can be repeated for credit.
Definition of and early-stage work on thesis project leading to 21M.THU Undergraduate Thesis in Music or Theater Arts. Taken during the first term, or during IAP, of the student’s two-term commitment to the thesis project. Student works closely with an individual faculty tutor.
Consult Music Headquarters

21M.THU Undergraduate Thesis
Prereq: 21M.THT
U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.
Completion of work on senior major thesis in Music or Theater Arts under supervision of a faculty tutor. Includes oral presentation of thesis project early in the term, assembling and revising final text and meeting at the close with a committee of Music or Theater Arts faculty evaluators to discuss successes and limitations of the project.
Consult Music and Theater Arts Headquarters

21M.UR Undergraduate Research in Music and Theater Arts
U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.
21M.URG Undergraduate Research in Music
U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.
Individual participation in an ongoing music research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.
Staff