

COURSE SPECIFICATION FORM
for new course proposals and course amendments

Department/School:	MUSIC	With effect from Academic Session:	2012-13 and thereafter, as offered
Course Title:	Silent Film Performance	Course Value: (UG courses = unit value, PG courses = notional learning hours)	0.5
Course Code:	MU3418	Course JACS Code: (Please contact Data Management for advice)	W300
Availability: (Please state which teaching terms)	Term 1 or term 2	Status: (i.e.: Core, Core PR, Compulsory, Optional)	Optional for BMus, joint, major/minor students
Pre-requisites:	None	Co-requisites:	None
Co-ordinator:	Dr Julie Brown		
Course Staff:	Dr Julie Brown		
Aims:	<p>This course will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the first 35 years of film exhibition from a sonic point of view • Investigate primary sources from the period as sources of information about the sonic dimension of early film exhibition • Explore more recent trends in performing 'silent' films • Encourage students to think about and/or experiment with historically informed techniques for performing 'silent' film • Encourage students to think about and/or experiment with postmodern approaches to performing 'silent' film • Explore the critical debates raised by an attempt to recreate performance styles of past centuries 		
Learning Outcomes:	<p>By the end of the course, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * be familiar with the history of silent film sound. * understand the epistemological issues stemming from the ephemerality of early film sound and early film itself * be able to engage critically with primary sources documenting early film performance * explore the critical issues raised by attempts to recreate performance styles of the past * apply knowledge of historical performance styles to their own performances * be able to reflect upon their significance of postmodern silent film performance in the theoretical field 		
Course Content:	<p>This course will include lectures on the various theatrical contexts of early film exhibition and its pre-history. It will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * various sound practices: including speaking to the screen; speaking behind the screen; live sound effects; song slides; mixed film programmes; live film prologues; the history of actual film accompaniment (including 'film funning', cue sheets, photoplay music, improvisation, 'special music') * the use and development of technologies for providing sound (gramophone records; piano rolls; sound effects machines; early sound synchronisation technologies; keyboard-driven instruments, etc.). * the gradual institutionalisation of sound practices * the emergence of an industry around sound practices <p>Students will then be required to research and deliver a presentation stemming from one of the above topics, investigating selected primary sources for information about historically informed performance, and applying this information to their own performances.</p>		
Teaching & Learning Methods:	20 hours of lectures/seminars, including individual student presentations and discussions on texts and themes, in conjunction with formative activity, contributing to some 130 hours of private study, resulting in the notional total of 150 hours of study for the course.		
Details of teaching resources on Moodle:	Course outline, bibliography, details of presentation topics and assignments, and links to primary sources available online via such repositories as Hearing the Movies (compiled by Prof. James Buhler), and other resources supplied by the lecturer.		

<p>Key Bibliography:</p>	<p>Rick Altman, <i>Silent Film Sound</i> (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004) Richard Abel and Rick Altman, eds. <i>The Sounds of Early Cinema</i> (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001) Julie Brown, 'Audio-Visual Palimpsests: Resynchronizing Silent Films with "Special" Music', in David Neumeyer, ed. <i>The Oxford Handbook of Music in Film and Visual Media</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) Paolo Cherchi Usai, <i>Silent Cinema: An Introduction</i>. Revised and expanded edition. (London: BFI Publishing, 2000) Richard Taruskin, <i>Text and Act</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) Peter Walls, <i>History, Imagination and the Performance of Music</i> (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003)</p>
<p>Formative Assessment & Feedback:</p>	<p>Each student will gain feedback on their presentation before they submit a written-up version for summative assessment. In addition, one essay of 2500-2750 words to be written during the course and contributing to the final course mark; the essay to be returned with tutorial mark and written comment, together with annotations where appropriate. See also under Teaching and Learning Methods.</p>
<p>Summative Assessment:</p>	<p>Coursework portfolio: 1. One essay of 2500-2750 words completed during the course (50%) 2. Written-up version of presentation (2000 words) with either (a) recording of student's own performance (8 minutes) or (b) synchronized film of equivalent length, demonstrating an application of techniques of historically informed performance (50%)</p> <p>Deadlines: The items in the portfolio to be submitted by the appropriate in-course deadline in order to qualify for final submission for assessment.</p>

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The information contained in this course outline is correct at the time of publication, but may be subject to change as part of the Department's policy of continuous improvement and development. Every effort will be made to notify you of any such changes.