

ACS New Music Ensemble Learning Object Preparation

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Background

The Orpheus Alliance, the music collaborative of the Associated Colleges of the South (www.colleges.org/~music), has created a series of on-line music resources for use in classes and as general reference tools. Last year three large sites were created to support performances given at the ACS Music Technology Workshop and New Music Festival. These were devoted to George Crumb's *Vox Balaenae*, Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and his *Three Piano Pieces, Op. 11*. (See www.colleges.org/~music/modules/LOindex.html). These modules were previewed in the spring before the conference by faculty and students who were to attend. They are now being used in music history and theory classes in several ACS colleges. In addition to providing a wide range of information about the pieces, they also now contain the recordings of the performances of the works made at the workshop by the ACS new music ensemble, now known as *Luna Nova*.

Description

Because these initial modules have been well received and have a growing number of classes using them, the members of the new music ensemble are looking ahead to expanding this project so that the range of the on-line resources are broadened and so that the number of live performances at member institutions will also be increased. We would like to see the whole on-line module and new music ensemble package include:

1. Study modules for each piece that include all the elements in the current projects as well as recordings of *Luna Nova*'s performance of the works.
2. Concert appearances on member campuses supplemented by lecture demonstrations and master classes given by members of the ensemble for student composers as well as for music history and theory classes.
3. Additional divisions within the modules that address performance practice issues which will be of particular interest to students of the cello, piano, and other instruments in the ensemble.
4. Performances of works by ACS faculty composers on as many of the ensemble's public appearances as possible.

Within the next academic year, we project building modules on works by Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen, and Elliott Carter. These will serve both to support the performances planned for the 2004 ACS New Music Festival and also provide an ongoing resource for music history and 20th-Century music literature classes.

In order to build the modules, a number of pieces have to come together. Patricia Gray, ACS music collaboration coordinator, designed and built the current modules with input from members of the ensemble and is prepared to do that again for the next set. At the core of the materials needed for this new set are recordings of works by our own ensemble. (This is particularly necessary in order to avoid the copyright problems that would be involved if we used commercial recordings.)

This proposal is submitted on behalf of the ACS New Music Ensemble, *Luna Nova*. The stipend would be used to cover the following expenses:

- A three-day residency for the ensemble at Birmingham-Southern College during which time digital audio and video recordings would be made for each of the four modules.
- The creation of performance practice chapters within the modules
- Stipends for the performers and the recording technicians.
- Production costs for a small number of demo CDs.

Timeline

April 15 - Outline and basic materials for each of the four projects on-line at the ACS music site.
May 15, 2004 - Performance practice notes, scores, and audio illustrations on-line.
July 1, 2004 - Audio and video recordings completed.
July 15, 2004 - Luna Nova recordings and video files incorporated into modules.

Technology

The recording equipment and editing software needed are available at Birmingham-Southern. The inclusion of the sound and video files into the modules can be done with existing equipment and server space at the ACS Technology Center. Patricia Gray will oversee this process.

Other Support

Because of the alliances made at the summer music workshops we have four professors who are willing to test the modules with their students and report on their effectiveness. They are:

Prof. Todd Gabriel, Centenary College

Prof. Nancy Fleming, Hendrix College

Prof. Justin Merritt, Trinity University

Prof. Tim Cutler, Austin College

These faculty members are involved with various ACS music projects and are very proactive in their approach to using these materials in their classes.

Learning Outcomes

Even as we are now in the 21st Century, students in our institutions frequently have relatively little exposure to new 20th-Century music. The combination of on-line modules, live performances, and real interaction with professional performers of the music will help bridge the gap that still exists between contemporary music and their concept of what classical music is. As they go into graduate schools, they will be much better prepared for the world of contemporary music making because of this project.

Curriculum

The subjects covered by these modules have wide application in the undergraduate music curriculum. They are all appropriate for use by music history survey courses, 20th-Century music literature classes, and form and analysis classes. With the addition of the proposed materials relative to performance practice, they will also be of value to applied music students.

Assessment

Ideally, these modules will continue to grow as faculty and others suggest additional materials, assignments, and student exercises to be added. At the 2003 workshop, we discussed the concept of the teaching modules, what they should contain, and what they should provide for students. In the 2004 workshop, we plan have progress reports and suggestions from faculty about how the modules can be improved. We also feel it is important to have direct student reaction to these materials. Last year, we had nine student composers who attended the workshop and who previewed the 2003 study modules and sent comments. We expect to have a similar number of students available for this task by the middle of the spring semester.

Dissemination

These materials will viewed by the projected 40 faculty and student participants in the 2004 workshop before the event and then incorporated into the classroom assignments by representative faculty in the 2004-2005 academic year. The current modules are referenced by Merlot and a number of other external music sites. These will be advertised there as well.