Syllabus
Graduate Seminar in Algorithmic Composition (206b)
(DANM 217)
UC Santa Cruz, Winter, 2016
Polansky

Revision: 1/5/16

Wednesday, 4–7, DARC 340

Class website:
http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~larry/classes.html

Schedule (tentative, will be revised as class progresses)

1/5: Introduction to class, texts, assignments

• Some thoughts about “algorithmic” composition: What is it? What might it include?
• What’s the difference between “algorithms” and “theory”, algorithms and “methods”? Style simulation, compositional algorithms, emulations of preexisting bodies of knowledge (mathematics, sonifications, information networks, cognition). Programming or !programming?
• Some examples from my own work
  Assignment for next week:
  • 20-minute presentation about an algorithmic work of your choice, not your own, and preferably, one you were not previously familiar with.
  • Student led discussion of the readings: to be assigned

Assigned readings (all class readings from Tenney book, class website, or JSTOR)
Tenney, From Scratch, Writings in Music Theory (on reserve in main library), Chapters:

• 2 (Meta+Hodos), 6 (“Form in 20th Century Music”), 9 (“Hierarchical Temporal Gestalt…”), Appendix 1 (“Pre—Meta+Hodos”)
• Optional reading: “Introduction”
1/12: Parameters
Discussion of the readings: what is form, how might it be determined, discussed? Parametric, perceptual, cognitive formal determinants. The use of parametric curves.

Assignment for next week:
- Short composition: a “purely” algorithmic work
- Student led discussion of the readings: to be assigned

Assigned readings
- Ames, “Automated Composition in Retrospect,“ *Leonardo* 20/2, 1987 (on class website and JSTOR)

1/20: Guest speaker, Larry Cuba (meeting at his house, pizza provided)

1/27: Pitch and harmony
Assignment for next week:
Assigned readings
- Tenney
  - Chapters: 10 (“…Contributions”), 11 (“…Aggregates”), 12 (“John Cage…”), 19 (“…Diapason”)
  - Optional: Chapters 13, 16, 17, 18
- Polansky

2/3: Statistics and Probability

Assigned Readings

• Tenney, Chapters: 8, “The Chronological Development of Ruggles’…”, 15 (“About ‘Changes’…”)
• Ames (on JStor)

2/10: Mike Winter, guest talk

2/17: Morphology
TBA (student pieces)

2/24: TBA (student Pieces)

3/2: No class (LP at Other Minds)

3/9: Final projects

Week of 3/12: Final concert?