

הפקולטה לאמנויות ע"ש יולנדה ודוד כץ, בית הספר למוזיקה ע"ש בוכמן-מהטה

שם הקורס: טקסי קודש של הנצרות והיהדות במוזיקה קלאסית ועכשווית:
המתאוס פסיון מאת יוהן סבסטיאן באך, **תיקון חצות** מאת מרדכי סתר ו**רקוויאם המלחמה** מאת
 בנג'מין בריטן

Name of course: Christian and Jewish Ritual in classical and contemporary music:
 J. S. Bach's *Matthäus Passion*, Benjamin Britten's *Requiem* and Mordecai Seter's
Midnight Vigil

סמסטר ב', תשע"ה
 סמינר, 2 ש"ס

שם המרצה: ד"ר אורי גולומב
 טל: 054-6320458 / 03-6850597
 דוא"ל: uri.golomb@cantab.net

שעת קבלה
 בתאום טלפוני מראש

Second semester, 2014-2015
 Seminar, 2 hour weekly course

The course will be held in English.

Name of instructor: Dr. Uri Golomb
 Tel: 054-6320458 / 03-6850597
 Email: 054-6320458 / 03-6850597

Reception time
 By appointment only

תיאור הקורס בעברית

הקורס יתמקד בשלוש יצירות המתבססות, לפחות בחלקן, על טקסטים דתיים. הפסיונים של באך – וביניהם **המתאוס פסיון** (1736-1727), שבו יתמקד הקורס הנוכחי) נכתבו במקורם כחלק אינטגרלי מטקס דתי, אך כיום הן מתפקדות בעיקר כיצירות קונצרטנטיות. היצירות האחרות שידונו בקורס – **רקוויאם המלחמה** (1962) מאת בנג'מין בריטן והאורטוריה **תיקון חצות** (1961-1959) מאת מרדכי סתר – נועדו מלכתחילה לביצוע קונצרטנטי, אך מתבססות על טקסטים שמקורם בפולחן דתי. **הרקוויאם** של בריטן משלב את הטקסט הסטנדרטי של מיסת האשכבה הקתולית עם שירת מחאה אנטי-מלחמתית שחיבר המשורר וילפרד אוון בשעה ששירת כקצין בצבא הבריטי במלחמת העולם הראשונה; ואילו האורטוריה של סתר נוצרה בהשראת פולחן

יהודי מיסטי-מדיטטיבי, ומשלבת בתוכה מסורות מוזיקליות ודתיות של עדות שונות – בראש-ובראשונה יהדות תימן.

כל שלוש היצירות מתאפיינות בריבוי רבדים, הבא לידי ביטוי בטקסט ובמוזיקה כאחד. שלושתן משלבות טקסטים ממקורות שונים ומתקופות שונות; שלושתן משלבות ז'אנרים שונים, הנבדלים זה מזה במקורם ההיסטורי ובסגנונם המוזיקלי; ובשלושתן נעשה שימוש במספר גופים מוזיקליים, המנהלים דו-שיח ביניהם. ביצירתו של באך, כל הרבדים הללו נועדו לדור בכפיפה אחת, ולעמוד לשירותה של ליטורגיה אמונית חסרת ספיקות; אך ריבוי הרבדים שימש ברבות השנים השראה לפרשנויות שמצאו בה יסודות חתרניים. בשתי היצירות האחרות, שנכתבו במאה העשרים ונועדו לביצוע קונצרטנטי, נוצר יחס מורכב ורב-משמעי (השלמה הדדית מחד גיסא, עימות וחיכוך מאידך גיסא) בין מקורות ההשראה הליטורגיים לבין יסודות חדשניים יותר, המשקפים את העידן החילוני שבו נכתבו היצירות.

הקורס יבחן את כל שלוש היצירות לאור המסורות המגולמות בהן – ובכלל זה הרקע התרבותי והחברתי של כל אחת מהן, והמסורות המוזיקליות הספציפיות ששימשו להן כמקור השראה. בין השאר, ידון הקורס במוזיקה של באך ככלל – ובפסיונים בפרט – כמקור השראה לבריטן ולסטר.

Description of Course

The course will focus on three works based, at least in part, on religious texts. Bach's Passions – including the *Matthäus Passion* (1727-1736), which will serve as the Bachian focal point for this course – were conceived for liturgical use, but today function primarily as concert works. The other two works discussed in this course – Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* (1962) and Mordecai Seter's oratorio *Midnight Vigil* (1959-1961) – were conceived as concert works, but draw on liturgical texts. Britten's *Requiem* combines the standard text of the Roman-Catholic Mass for the Dead with anti-war protest poetry by World War I officer Wilfred Owen; and Seter's oratorio is inspired by a private, mystical Jewish ritual and by Jewish (predominantly Yemenite) religious and musical traditions.

All three works are characterized by a dialogic, multi-layered approach, which is manifest in text and music alike. They all combine texts of different origins, written in different eras; they all combine different genres, distinct in their historical provenance and musical style alike; and all employ multiple ensembles, which engage in dialogue with each other. In Bach's work, all these layers were intended were meant to support each other in the liturgical expression of unquestioning faith; but later generations seized on the work's multi-layered complexity in their quest for more subversive interpretations. The other two works – written in the 20th century and intended for concert performance – embody more complex, ambiguous relationships (sometimes complementary, sometimes confrontational) between their liturgical inspirations and the more modern elements, which reflect the secular age in which they were conceived.

The course will examine each of the three works against the backdrop of the traditions which gave rise to it – including broad cultural and social background which inform it, and the specifically musical traditions which inspired it. Among other things, we will discuss Bach's music in general – and his *Passions* in particular – as sources of inspiration for Britten and Seter.

דרישות הקורס

לכל הסטודנטים: השתתפות, קריאה, משימות במהלך הקורס

לסטודנטים הלוקחים את הקורס כשיעור: הגשת רפרט

לסטודנטים הלוקחים את הקורס כסמינר: הגשת עבודה סמינריונית

דרישות קדם או תנאי קבלה לשיעור (במידה ויש): לא רלוונטי

מרכיבי הציון הסופי :

לסטודנטים הלוקחים את הקורס כשיעור: 25% משימות במהלך הסמסטר, 75% עבודת רפרט

לסטודנטים הלוקחים את הקורס כסמינר: 100% עבודה סמינריונית

Course Requirements

For all students: Participation, reading, course assignments

For students taking the course as a lesson: Written presentation of a topic

For students taking the course as a seminar: Seminar paper

Prior requirements: n/a

Final grade components:

For students taking the course as a lesson: 25% coursework, 75% final paper (written presentation of a topic)

For students taking the course as a seminar: 100% seminar paper

Topics of the course

Note: the list below does not necessarily reflect the order of presentation, but does intend to reflect the spectrum of topics which this course aims to cover. Some of the topics will be covered by guest lecturers; details will be provided later.

1. **Religiously-inspired music in secular ages:** In the period between the composition of Bach's *Passions* and the present day, many liturgical works were transformed into concert works, and composers began to create non-liturgical 'sacred' music (i.e., works based on religious texts, yet conceived expressly for the concert hall). In these contexts, religious texts were re-interpreted by musicians who did not share the beliefs that inspires them – including both interpreters (e.g., performers of Bach's *Passions* who do not share the religious views of Bach and his congregation) and creators (e.g., composers who set religious texts without adopting the beliefs expressed in these texts). A related phenomenon is the emergence of heterogeneous works, bringing together texts from different traditions and placing them in dialogue with one another.

2. **Bach's *Passions* – historical background:** Bach's *Passions* are the culmination of a long development, and this is reflected in their own heterogeneous character, their mixture of three different textual layers, each set in a different musical style: scriptures (Gospel accounts of Jesus's capture, trial and death), set mostly in recitative; chorales (traditional Lutheran hymns); and reflective poetry, written expressly for the *Passions* and composed in a style clearly influenced by contemporaneous opera. Within this course, we will discuss the various traditions that feed into Bach's *Passions*: the introduction of music into the reading of the Passion at Easter, and its evolution alongside other sacred and liturgical genres – particularly the oratorio, which also concerned itself with sacred narratives; the history of the Lutheran chorale from Luther to Bach; and the Neumeister reform, which introduced operatic music into the Lutheran church.
3. **The afterlife of Bach's *Passions*:** An account of the reception and performance of Bach's passions since their revival by musicians like Mendelssohn and Schumann in the 1830s and 1840s, after almost a century of neglect. Among the developments to be discussed here: the transformation of the *Passions* into concert works – and the controversy surrounding this; the gradual move from incomplete, re-orchestrated versions (some in the local vernacular, rather than German) to performances of the complete original text; the *Passions* on film and on the operatic stage; the impact of the historical performance movement and especially of the Bach choir debate, and the subsequent revival of Bach's original, soloistic performance forces – and its impact on the work's meaning. I will also discuss the appeal of Bach's *Passions* in a sceptical, secular age; I will argue that some seeds of doubt and conflict, some questioning of innocent, naive faith, can be already be found within the text and music of the *Passions*, and will investigate how these have been seized upon and highlighted in the reception and performance of these works.
4. **Britten's *War Requiem*:** This work was originally composed to celebrate the rebuilding of a church (the re-consecration of Coventry Cathedral, rebuilt after its destruction during World War II, 30 May 1962); but it was conceived as a concert work, and its questioning attitude is already apparent in its libretto – which brings together the traditional Catholic Mass for the

Dead and the poetry of Wilfred Owen, protesting against the horrors which Owen experienced as a soldier in World War I (he died in action towards the end of the war). The two texts sometimes support and sometimes question each other. Britten's setting owes much to the long tradition of Requiem settings, but its debt to Bach's music in general, and his Passions in particular, is also apparent. Britten's own position *vis-a-vis* musical tradition is also complex: his music, including the *War Requiem*, is clearly the product of the 20th century, yet it was deemed 'old-fashioned' by many avant-garde composers who broke with tradition far more strongly than he did. His own musical style does not ignore avant-garde innovations, but it does seek to integrate them with older traditions.

5. **Israeli concert music – between sacred and secular, east and west:** An introduction to some of the aesthetic and ideological issues which inform Seter's *Midnight's Vigil*. Seter was one of the founders of Israeli art music; he, and other composers of his generation, attempted to create in Israel a new type of music – one which relies on the European traditions which most of them grew up with, yet also reflects the Zionist ideology of creating a new, vibrant Jewish culture, rooted in the Land of Israel and inspired by its local landscape and traditions; many artists sought, in this context, to study the traditions of mid-Eastern Jewry, which they believed came closer to preserving the old, pre-Diaspora Jewish traditions. These artists also had an ambivalent attitude towards the Jewish religion. On the one hand, Zionism was inspired by distinctly secular ideals of national liberation and revival, and rejected much of the religious tradition; on the other hand, these traditions, especially the more ancient ones, were viewed as inextricably linked with Jewish nationality and with the nation's revival in its ancestral land. Thus, even the most secular Israeli composers found it vital to study the musical traditions of various Jewish communities, and incorporate them into their compositions. Their method of handling these materials, however, was often inspired by European forms, textures and techniques. In this context, I will particularly note the continued dissemination of Bach's music in Israel (both before and after the foundation of the State), and its impact on Israeli composers.

6. **Seter's *Midnight Vigil*:** Background and “paradoxes”; the dramatic, large-scale presentation of a psychological drama taking place inside the mind of one individual and inspired by an essentially individual, contemplative-mystical ritual; the combination of ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, religious narrative with a modern, Zionist narrative
7. **Dialogue between generations:** All three works combine (by contemporaneous standards) the old and the new, the traditional and the innovatory. Their texts also place ancient, communal traditions in dialogue with the response of individuals – the individual worshipper and believer in Bach and Seter, the soldiers in Britten (yet the soldiers, no less than Bach's and Seter's believers, invite the most identification from the composers' intended audience).
8. **Narrative and contemplation:** In all three works, there is a dialogue between narrative, dramatic texts and contemplative passages that relate to the narrative and reflect upon its meaning. This distinction is underscored – yet sometimes also undermined and blurred – by the music; the setting of a “contemplative” passage can be no less dramatic than that of a “narrative” one. All of them have a complex relationship with contemporaneous genres of musical drama, which all three composers were familiar with (though, of all three, Britten was the only opera composer).
9. **Polyphony and heterogeneity:** There can be two visions of polyphony: the harmony between voices (most automatically associated with imitative polyphony, in which all autonomous voices share the same thematic materials), and confrontation and conflict between voices (most automatically associated with textures in which the different voices have different thematic materials). In texted music, the different parts can all articulate the same text – or they can have different texts, brought into dialogue and conflict with one another. Examples of all these can be found in all three works; in all of them, we are confronted on some occasions with dialogues between different styles. I will discuss here, *inter alia*, how these issues affect the projection of confidence and doubt, belief and scepticism, in all three works.
10. **Elitism vs. Populism:** All three works rely, to some extent on “folk” traditions, familiar to ordinary, “unsophisticated” listeners of the time, yet

treated in the most sophisticated and complex techniques known at the time (though combined also with more popular modes of composition – Seter's, for instance, evokes the heterophony of normal synagogue singing). In Bach's case, the tension between elitism and populism can also be sensed in the works' subsequent reception, both in writing and in actual performance.

רשימת ספרות (נתון לשינויים)

NOTE: The distinction between mandatory and recommended readings will be drawn at later stage. An updated reading list will be made available through MOODLE and/or Dropbox prior the start of the course. Wherever possible, mandatory readings will be made available electronically through the above-mentioned repositories.

In addition to the readings listed below, students will also be provided with excerpts from a forthcoming book on Seter's oratorio (in Hebrew), written and edited by Ronit Seter and Uri Golomb. Excerpts may include chapters by Oded Assaf, Josef Goldenberg, Uri Golomb, Michal Grover-Friedlander and Ronit Seter.

Butt, John. *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity: Perspectives on the Passions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Cooke, Mervyn. *Britten: War Requiem*. Cambridge Music Handbooks. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Evans, Peter. *The Music of Benjamin Britten*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Golomb, Uri. "Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion". *Goldberg Early Music Magazine* 39 (April 2006), pp. 48-59.

Golomb, Uri. "Tikkun Hatzot: Earthly and Heavenly Visions in Mordecai Seter's 1961 Oratorio". Accepted for publication in a forthcoming anthology on Israeli music (ed. Malcolm Miller).

Grover-Friedlander, Michal. "Echoed Above" [on Seter's *Midnight Vigil*]. *Opera Quarterly* 21/ 4 (Autumn 2005), pp. 675-712.

Melamed, Daniel. *Hearing Bach's Passions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Seter, Ronit. "CHAPTER IV: Mordecai Seter – Myth and *Midnight Vigil*: Seter's *Tikkun Hatzot*". In *Yuvalim Be-Israel: Nationalism in Jewish-Israeli Art Music, 1940-2000* (doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 2004), pp. 249-339.

ליטוין, רינה. **וילפרד אוון-בנג'מין בריטן: רקוויאם המלחמה – טקסטים ומכתבים**. רעננה: אבן חושן, 2009.

חומר עזר נוסף

Scores and recordings of all three works are available at the School of Music library; recordings are also available on Youtube and (for Bach and Britten) on Naxos Music Library. A list of recommended recordings will be made available prior to the start of the course; some recordings and other audio-visual materials might also be made available through MOODLE and/or Dropbox.

הערות נוספות

The course will be held in English. However, students will be allowed to submit written assignments in Hebrew. Reading materials will be provided in both languages wherever possible.