SCHOOL OF MEDIA ART
BACHELOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA

SESSION 2, 2004
STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

SOUND MEDIA ONE
SOMA2602

TEACHERS:	PANOS COUROS / NIGEL KERSTEN			
CLASS CODES:	2959	2965	2960	2958
TIMES :	Wed 9-12	Thu 9-12	Thu 12-3	Fri 4-7
LOCATION:	F115 lab			

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course covers all aspects of audio production relating to art works, soundtracks for film, video, performance and multimedia computing. Students are introduced to various conceptual, stylistic, aesthetic and philosophical approaches to the use of sound within art, with attention also being paid to the relationship of sound to other mediums. A screening and listening lecture program examines various sound/music pieces, installations and soundtracks.

COURSE CONTENT:
The following are covered: Protools hard disk recording; sound editing and mixing; Spirit mixing desks; DAT recording and microphone use; sound file conversion and manipulation; audio/visual synchronisation; an introduction to rhythmical structures; synthesis, sampling and MIDI sequencing; and the use of sound in audio/visual contexts.

COURSE AIMS / OBJECTIVES:
Students will gain the technical, artistic and conceptual skills to develop studio-based sound works as related to their practice. Students will be expected to gain full proficiency in at least the use of the Protools application by the end of the semester, and have the ability to work across audio aspects of related audio/visual programs. An understanding of the relationship(s) of sound to other art practices will be gained. It is understood and expected that students will specialise in particular areas of the broad range of practice offered, whether that be via soundscape, experimental sound practice or that which might be regarded as traditional "musical" form.

ASSESSMENT:

To qualify for a passing grade all students must complete all set work, which is to be submitted on time.

Where absences in excess of three (3) classes occur, students may be given a fail grade (UF). We enforce this.

Students must be punctual and participate in all class activities. The student should be expected to show evidence of the achievement of the course's objectives.

One formal evaluation of Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory will be made mid-session and students will be informed by their class lecturer of this determination.

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ASSESSMENT TASKS

Amount	Item	Date
10 %	WRITTEN TEST ON FILE MANAGEMENT	Week 6
20%	SOUND PROJECT 1	Week 7
10%	PROJECT 2 PLAN delivered on time	Week 8
50%	SOUND PROJECT 2	Week 15
10%	CLASS ATTENTIVENESS and PUNCTUALITY	full semester

ASSESSMENT TASK DESCRIPTIONS :

WRITTEN TEST ON FILE MANAGEMENT – *Week 6* – 10%

This will be a brief in-class written test about the FILE MANAGEMENT within Protools. Once you've successfully passed this test, you'll never have to worry again about losing your files, disappearing icons, unexplained error messages, dandruff, and hard drives full of unwanted files that you're afraid to erase in case there's a region in there that you're using. You will be happier. More detail on this in class.

SOUND PROJECT 1 – *Week 7 – 20%*

In the first class you'll all be given a Protools session which includes a particular collection of sounds. You're encouraged to use these in classes over the first few weeks for class exercises. In week 7 you will present a 60-90 second sound piece made entirely from these sound sources. You can use as few or as many of them as you like. The format of this piece is entirely up to you. How different can your piece be from the other twenty students in the class? How can you alter these sounds into something new? *Hint :* if you just choose the ones that you think sound good in their unaltered state, chances are that at least half the class will use them as well. Create something new from them. You'll be graded on your exploration, your ability to structure a piece over time, and your ability to look after your File Management (see above) so you don't lose all of your sounds.

PROJECT 2 PLAN *Hand in week 8* - 10%

Minimum 1 x A4 page typed.

While it is difficult to write "about" sound, the purpose of the outline is to help inform the lecturer as to your needs and interests in relation to this subject and your plans for your Sound Project 2 (see below). *Things you might cover (not a comprehensive list)* : What have you done already to prepare ? What sounds have you collected already ? What have you done with them? What do you envisage as being the 'structure' of the piece , i.e. how will it change over time? What technical problems are you having? What do you need revision in?

This assessment item is graded simply : Delivery on time gets you the full 10%; late delivery gets you 0%. Prepare it BEFORE the due date. If you're ill, it must be emailed to the lecturer. If you're in hospital, get the nurses to email it for you ☺

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SOUND PROJECT 2 : *Due week 15 - 50%*

You will record or appropriate a human voice or human voices (spoken and/or sung) and construct a soundscape, a sound/music piece or sound installation that either alters or enhances a narrative, meaning or style initially suggested by the original source.

Other sounds : The other elements of the sound piece are completely up to your own discretion. They might be 'musically' arranged sounds, they might be a collection of manipulated atmospheres. They do not have to be "musical" in the traditionally understood sense. They do not have to be voice sources.

Your "voice" source could be, for example, a monologue or single line of dialogue from a film, a poem read by yourself, an acapella singer, someone recorded from the street, etc. It might be a single word manipulated in hundreds of different ways. It might be a children's lullaby. Interpret the brief creatively.

The final piece will be between two and four minutes in length.

This is *not* to be an audio/visual work, i.e. not a soundtrack lifted from your video class. The idea is for you to construct a piece only using sound.

It is recommended that you begin gathering and experimenting with sounds immediately, so that you can experiment with them during class exercises.

Two people can work together on a project, but you must let the teacher know in advance.

CLASS ATTENTIVENESS and PUNCTUALITY – *over semester* - 10%

In order for large lab-based classes to function properly, it's imperative that the time available is used effectively. People arriving late, taking extra break time, surfing the web, sending/reading SMS messages and checking email once class has begun, talking while teaching is taking place, and working on projects from other classes or other non-audio activity, will be graded down.

NEXT PAGE : COURSE SCHEDULE

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: The schedule is intended purely as a guide to the probable order of the **technical teaching** in the sound course; but may change according to the learning pace of the class. Screenings, listening and discussions will be woven throughout.

Weeks 1-3 : Protools operations : revision and expansion

Sound basics – Volume, frequency and spatial relationships.

* PROTOOLS BASICS REVISION :
Terms and definitions. Creating a session. Bit sizes. Sample rates. File types. Transferring sessions between Protools formats. Mono and stereo, "multiple mono".

* AUDIO INPUT
Analogue recording / Mixing desks / Importing and converting files.

* SOUND EDITING
 "Files" vs "regions", tools, region editing , Groups, crossfades, Display options
Audiosuite functions, equalisation and layering.

* FILE MANAGEMENT
File compacting, removing regions, file deletion. Backup. Copying between computers and partitions. Disk allocation. How not to lose things.

* AUDIO OUTPUT
Bouncing. File conversion. Master Faders.

* TRACK INSERTS / SENDS
Inserts and sends introduction : types; recording audio from inserts, saving settings, track automation.

Week 4 (starts Aug 16)

RHYTHM. Protools : Grid mode editing. Beats per minute (BPM). Delays. Automation.

Week 5 (starts Aug 23)

MIDI, **SAMPLING and EFFECTS**: samplers (samplero), relationships to Grid Mode, drum machines, MIDI files, MIDI recording and editing, real and virtual keyboards, types of effects. *Continues Week 6.*

Week 6 (starts Aug 30)

* BRIEF WRITTEN TEST ON FILE MANAGEMENT*
MIDI, **SAMPLING and EFFECTS** continued.
Revision of textural basics – volume, frequency, spatial relationships.

Week 7 (starts Sept 6)

SOUND PROJECT ONE due - Play pieces in class.
Introduction to **SYNTHESIS** – analogue, FM, granular etc.
More **effects**.

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COURSE SCHEDULE *continued ...*

Week 8 (starts Sept 13)

* SOUND PROJECT TWO OUTLINES HAND IN*

DATs (Digital Audio Tape recorders), **MICROPHONES** : Recording techniques, microphone types and use.

Week 9 (starts Sept 20)

SYNTHESIS : Analogue, FM, granular. Waveforms, envelopes etc.
Individual discussions on project plans.
You must have collected some of your own sounds in a Protools session by this class.

Note : Mid-session break Sept 27th – Oct 3rd

Week 10 (starts Oct 4th)

 "RESEARCH WEEK" – no class. Lab available for project work.

Weeks 11-14 (starts Oct 11th –Nov 1st)

Revision, project work, consultations.
Other techniques and software.
Includes : Week 12 : AUDIOVISUAL RELATIONSHIPS. Importing and synchronisation of Quicktime videos into Protools; sound post-production methods; Audiovisual techniques; foley.

Week 15 (starts November 8th)

In-class Presentation of final work.

ASSESSMENT NOTES / CHOOSING PROJECTS :

- As the use of sound varies significantly across various student practices in this course, a large part of your **grading** is based on your **development** of an initial idea and your **effort** towards the **progression** of your **skills and ideas**, i.e. your willingness to learn and experiment with something new over time, rather than producing something at the last minute using parameters that you are already comfortable with.

- As you will note in the COURSE SCHEDULE, **a wide range of art practices and technology** are introduced within this sound course, some within a single class. You will not pick up everything you need simply by attending classes, but will need to follow the strands (and instructions for them) that interest you outside of class time. You are not expected to learn **ALL** of the available software (apart from Protools) and techniques, nor should you necessarily try to. Your lecturer(s) do not have time for private tuition if you suddenly gain an interest in a synthesiser that you ignored in class a month before. You should take notes on everything.

- **In regards to Project 2 : Sampling/appropriation** of musical elements, fragments, breakbeats, other artworks etc. is allowed in projects, but the guideline will be an assessment of whether or not a majority of sound information (or the *effect* of the *sum* of the various parts that occur at the time of sampled fragments) can be considered to be "your" composition. Check with your lecturer at any time if in doubt about this, but as a rule, compare it to your own concepts of visual ownership when presenting work as "yours" in other classes. Constructing an IKEA bookshelf does not give you a degree in carpentry. **CONTINUES ...**

ASSESSMENT NOTES / CHOOSING PROJECTS continued:

- **In regards to Project 2 : Proof of 'creative ownership'**. This follows on from the last section. Your lecturer, when consulting on or assessing your work, may ask for separate elements of any combined group of sounds to be provided, in order to ascertain the "degree of construction" you have undertaken in the work, particularly when sampled elements are involved. This is not about LEGAL ownership (if you wish to actually 'release' your work, you may deal with those concerns yourself), but is about the degree of 'creative ownership', which will be determined by the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask for this at any stage of the semester, however many times it is deemed necessary. If you are unable to satisfactorily provide this, your work may not be accepted for assessment. So if you're using sampled elements, keep track of your work and make a collection of files that "trace" your work.

- **Other software systems**. Students working on projects predominantly outside the university, using software systems and platforms that are not compatible with those used at the university, are still required to provide work-in-progress sessions at the required times. This means separate tracks of audio, imported into a Protools session BEFORE your consultation/assessment. **A single exported audio file is NOT sufficient.** This is for both reasons of ascertaining "creative ownership" (see the above paragraph) and also enabling your lecturer to be able to give sufficient feedback. If you are unable to satisfactorily provide this, your work may not be accepted for assessment. If you don't adequately provide separate tracks of audio at consultation times, you **will** be graded down. You are also expected to gain an understanding of the Protools software.

LECTURER CONTACTS
Panos Couros panos@ihug.com.au
Nigel Kersten nigel@cofa.unsw.edu.au

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS
Do not email the lecturers with technical questions, post them to the **Media Arts forum** at https://people.cofa.unsw.edu.au:443/discussions/viewforum.php?f=1 , where they will be answered by lecturers or other helpful people.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
C-block labs/studios : TBA technician's office (opposite the Resource Centre)
F-block labs: CSU help desk.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BACK UP ALL YOUR WORK.
By COFA regulations, extensions of time for assignments will not be granted to students who lose work through software/ hardware /operator error. Backup all work that is important to you at regular intervals.

SOUND RESOURCES

- Various **audio instructions** in : **Punk – Documentation - Audio**

- Your '**textbook'** is : **"Sound_Links.pdf"** in : **Punk – Documentation - Audio**

- COFA Library : **Sound effect CDs** kept at front desk, campus loan only.

- COFA Library : "Future Music" and "Computer Music" – monthly magazine/CD containing **software and music samples**, CDs are kept in the **audio/visual section**, magazines are upstairs.

COFA RESOURCE CENTRE

- See their site at http://www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/units/resource/

- Keep the staff there happy by learning the names for various **CONNECTORS** :
  http://www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/units/resource/equipment_guide/av_connectors/connectors.shtml

- … and by learning the names for various **ADAPTORS** :
http://www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/units/resource/equipment_guide/av_connectors/adapters.shtml

RECOMMENDED LIBRARY JOURNALS

The Wire
an independent, monthly music magazine dedicated to 'informed, intelligent coverage of a wide range of progressive, adventurous and non-mainstream musics.'

Straight No Chaser
"Interplanetary Sounds : Ancient to Future". Journal documenting current and historical strands and events within African-derived forms of music such as jazz, hiphop, soul, funk, reggae, latin and brazilian forms.

For an extensive online collection of journal articles, see the document
"Sound_Links.pdf" in **Punk – Documentation - Audio**

RECOMMENDED LIBRARY BOOKS (not textbooks)

Kahn, Douglas: *Noise, Water, Meat : A History of sound in the arts* , Cambridge, Mass : MIT Press 1999
Kostalanetz, Richard: *Sound Art.*
Nyman, Michael : *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond,* Studio Vista. 1974
Schaffer, Murray R.: *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* , Destiny Books, 1993
Chernoff, John Miller : *African Rhythm and African Sensibility* , Uni Of Chicago Press, 1979
Toop, David : *Ocean Of Sound :ether talk, ambient sound and imaginary worlds*, London : Serpent's Tail , 1995.
Weis & Belton (ed.): *Theory and Practice of Film Sound*, Columbia Uni Press, 1985.

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When using **headphones**, students must **ALWAYS** play a short segment of sound **BEFORE** putting headphones on in order to avoid **hearing damage**.

Students should be aware of their responsibility to avoid causing injuries to themselves or to others. These injuries could include; eyestrain, **hearing damage**, back, neck and repetitive strain injury (RSI), burns, chemical poisoning, inhalation damage, lacerations and the like. Students using, or planning to use, unorthodox materials, or materials/processes/performances in a potentially damaging manner in their class, or related work, ARE REQUIRED to complete a **Risk Assessment Sheet**. This form must be signed by the lecturer and lodged with the relevant Technical Officer. Unorthodox materials are considered to be material, solvents, chemicals, paints, electricity etc. not covered by standard practice or tuition within the area. All potentially dangerous materials MUST be used in consultation with the mandatory material safety data sheets (MSDS) available at the point of acquisition of such materials. It is UNSW policy that no bodily parts or fluids are used on any campus for any purpose.

EMAIL POLICY

You must check email often enough so that you do not miss urgent messages. Typically every other day would be a minimum, unless you are away from the university. If you use an email account somewhere else, for example in your school or outside the University, you *must* arrange to forward your email from your official address to the email account you use. If you use free web-based email such as Hotmail, you must also regularly delete old messages to ensure you will have space to receive any new messages from the University. This is your responsibility.
If you know your UNIPASS, you can set this up yourself via the web. Go to the "do-it-yourself" page at http://www.diy.unsw.edu.au If you don't know your UNIPASS (you should!), or you need help, contact DISConnect, who can arrange to provide your UNIPASS or set up the forwarding for you. The DISConnect desk is at the back of the Kensington campus Library and their phone number is 9385 1777.