**Seminar: Music 218r (Fall 2012)**

**The Fromm Foundation and**

**Contemporary Music in the United States**

Prof. Anne C. Shreffler

Mondays and Fridays, 2-4

(first meeting in the Merritt Room of the Loeb Music Library)

**Instructor**: Anne C. Shreffler  
Office Hours: Wed. 12-2, Music Building 301S; signup sheet at:  **[http://tinyurl.com/ShrefflerOfficeHours](http://tinyurl.com/ShrefflerOfficeHours" \t "_blank)**  
Course website: http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k87868

**Team:**

Faculty/staff:

Sarah Adams (sjadams@fas.harvard.edu), Acting Richard F. French Librarian, Loeb Music Library

Patricia O'Brien (obrien2@fas.harvard.edu), Administrative Coordinator, Loeb Music Library

Michael Heller (mheller@fas.harvard.edu), Isham Curatorial Associate, cataloguer of the Fromm archive. Mike will be our Loeb Library liason for the project.

Jean Moncrieff (moncrief@fas.harvard.edu), Director of Events and Administrator of the Fromm Foundation at Harvard

PITFs/LITFs (Presidential/Library Instructional Technology Fellows):

Luci Mok (lymok@fas.harvard.edu), PITF (summer and fall semester)

Emerson Morgan (emorgan@fas.harvard.edu), LITF (fall only)

Bill O’Hara (williamevanohara@fas.harvard.edu), PITF (summer and fall semester)

Other cataloguers:

Louis Epstein (epstein@fas.harvard.edu)

Emily Richmond Pollock ([richmondpollock@gmail.com](mailto:richmondpollock@gmail.com)) (currently Assistant Professor, MIT)

**Description:** The seminar will collaborate to produce an exhibition in the Loeb Music Library, entitled **Composing the Future: The Fromm Foundation and the Music of Our Time.**

The subject is Paul Fromm, an influential patron of contemporary music, and the Fromm Foundation, which was founded in 1952 and still exists. Working with Harvard’s museum curators, librarians, and archivists, we will draw on the extensive Fromm Foundation archival holdings in the Department of Music, Houghton Library and the Harvard University Archives. Since an exhibition about music without sound would be dry and lifeless, it will be accompanied by multimedia presentations of sound and moving images. Students will learn how to work with archival material to achieve a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how music history is written. Through the exhibition, they will also learn to communicate the results of their research visually and audibly to a broader audience.

Many thanks to Michael, Luci, Bill, and Louis, who worked hard over the summer to prepare the materials!

**Why study the Fromm Foundation?**

Paul Fromm (1906-1987) was one of the most significant patrons of contemporary art music in the U.S. in the second half of the twentieth century. He was an emigrant from Nazi Germany, and after he re-established himself in Chicago, dedicated the resources from his successful wine-importing business to his passion for new music. Fromm (and later, his foundation) commissioned hundreds of composers for new works, including major figures such as Elliott Carter, Milton Babbitt, Luciano Berio, and Gunther Schuller. At a time when few women composers received major commissions, Fromm supported the work of Joan Tower, Betsy Jolas, and Shulamit Ran, and let it be known that supporting female creativity was one of the Foundation’s goals. Although Fromm commissioned composers ranging from Ornette Coleman to John Cage, his special focus was on European and American modernism. Over the years, his focus shifted more and more to music in his adopted homeland.

Fromm’s other activities in support of contemporary music include his launching of the influential journal, *Perspectives of New Music*, in 1962, his initiative for a week of contemporary music at Tanglewood (which still continues), and his unstinting support for practically all the notable new music ensembles in the U.S. The American musical landscape of the second half of the twentieth century would have been much the poorer without Paul Fromm.

Paul Fromm moved his Foundation to Harvard in 1972 (fifteen years before his death in 1987). Since then, the Fromm Foundation, under the guidance of an independent board (led by the Chair of the Department of Music), has continued to commission new works from 12-15 composers a year, as well as supporting many other activities relating to new music in the United States. The Fromm Foundation has been based at Harvard for 40 years, and this anniversary is one of the reasons to undertake this project. In addition to the seminar and exhibition, there will be two professional concerts in the spring of ’13 focusing on Fromm’s musical legacy.

There are (approximately) 100 boxes of archival material relating to Paul Fromm and the Fromm Foundation at Harvard, including autograph scores, printed scores, letters, financial records, concert programs, photographs, reel-to-reel tapes, LPs, typescripts of lectures, interviews, and many other items. The scores are in Houghton Library and have been largely catalogued. The rest is in Loeb Music Library and the Harvard University Archives, and is still being catalogued.

With the exception of a booklet published after Fromm’s death, and a doctoral dissertation in progress from UC Berkeley, there has been virtually no scholarly work on the impact of this important patron of new music, in large part because the archive is practically unknown. There is a chance for students to make real discoveries here.

**Useful reference (available on the course website):**

“Fromm Archives User Guide,” prepared by Michael Heller (under “Archive Catalogs”)

“Fromm Docs Master Catalog,” prepared by Michael Heller (under “Archive Catalogs”)

David Gable and Christoph Wolff, eds. *A Life for New Music: Selected Papers of Paul Fromm* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Department of Music, 1988). (under “Paul Fromm – biographical”)

Obituaries of Paul Fromm (under “Paul Fromm: biographical”)

Recordings from Paul Fromm’s series, “Twentieth Century Composer” (under “Sound”)

**Course requirements:**

The class will be divided into working groups, each responsible for one or more exhibit cases and the accompanying multi-media component for that case. Each group will select, research, label, and position the materials. With the assistance of the PITFs, they will also create short (1-2 min.), attractive presentations including music, video, score examples, and background information that can be accessed on an iPad or smart phone.

The class relies heavily on collaborative work, both within and among the working groups. The members of each group should divide the tasks among themselves, making sure that the work is evenly distributed. While the process is collective, the individual accomplishments (for example, a blog entry, response paper, inventory contribution, label text, and multi-media project) are prepared and signed by their authors. Grades are based on *individual* contributions. Everyone should be aware of their own contribution as well as recognizing and respecting those of others, giving ample credit to everyone who participated in a particular facet of the research.

Since Fromm’s passion was new music, we will listen to and discuss some relevant repertoire: works commissioned by or dedicated to Fromm and those recorded on his “Twentieth-Century Composer Series.” A listening assignment is given most Fridays (see schedule). You may, of course, do this in advance. It is best to listen repeatedly (once is emphatically not enough!) In some cases, there will be published scores on reserve. In other cases, the scores are unpublished and you will have to listen without a score. It may also be helpful to consult the Grove Online article about the composer. For **three** of these assignments (your choice), please write **a short response paper** (250-300 words) recording your reactions to the piece. This is not meant to be an analysis paper; you may use any approach or writing style that best communicates your reactions to or questions about the piece (see details below). Please read your classmates’ responses, and we will discuss them on Mondays.

Specifically, the course requirements for groups and individuals are:

* Each group will post a short blog entry on the course website **by Thurs. afternoon at 5 most weeks** (specified in the schedule) describing what they’ve done, any obstacles they’ve encountered, etc. Please read your classmate’s blog entries.
* Each individual will post **three** short response papers (1-2 pages, 250-300 words) over the course of the semester. You may choose which pieces to write about. Listening assignments are given on Fridays. Please post your responses **by the following Monday morning at 10,** and please read your classmate’s responses. Given the schedule, it would make sense to do these early in the semester.
* Each group will hand in a concept (1-p. summary of topic and aims) and inventory of potential objects for each case (short descriptions and images): these will be presented orally in class on 10/19 and 10/26, and are **due Oct. 29**.
* Label texts for physical items to be exhibited (discussed with the group, written by individuals).
* Short (1-2 min.) multi-media presentations to accompany the exhibit (coordinated with the group, written by individuals).

The due dates for label texts and multi-media projects are: Nov. 12: first drafts (presented in class); Nov. 19: second drafts (presented in class); **Nov. 26: final label texts and multi-media projects due**.

There is no final paper requirement for this class. Given the amount of research that you will do, however, and the likelihood that your original research may prove to be interesting and valuable, you may wish to write up your results for presentation at a conference or for publication. These papers may (and probably will) be co-authored, reflecting the collaborative nature of the research. A student-organized conference in the spring might be an option here.**Schedule**

MR = Merritt Room, Loeb Music Library

H = Houghton Library

HUA = Harvard University Archives

D = Davison Room, Loeb Music Library

R = Reading

L = Listening

Please note: L and R assignments are to be prepared for the following week.

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| Date | Room | Guests | Class topics | Outside of class |
| F 9/7 | MR | Team | Introduction. Who was Paul Fromm, and why is he important? The aims of the exhibit. Work with selected materials. | R: Articles and brochure from “Paul Fromm – biographical” section of the course website. L: Copland and Sessions CD from Fromm’s “Twentieth-Century Composer Series” (on course website) |
| M 9/10 | MR | Team + Louis Epstein | Paul Fromm and contemporary music. Patronage. Topics. Inventories, objects. Working groups designated. | R: *Paul Fromm: A Life for New Music*, introduction by D. Gable and the Memorial Tributes.  -Working groups meet outside of class or email about possible topics for their exhibit case. |
| F 9/14 | MR | Emily Richmond-Pollock and Mike Heller | Navigating the collection: what do I find where? | Working groups go into the archives and start work. Each group posts a **short blog entry** most weeks describing what they’ve done, any obstacles they’ve encountered, etc.  -Look through inventory of scores on Oasis catalogue for those related to your group’s topic.  R: *A Life for New Music*, pp. 15-41.  L: Babbitt, *Vision and Prayer*, Berio, *Circles* |
| M  9/17 | H Green Room | Andrea Cawelti, Ward Project Music Cataloger | Focus on Fromm Foundation scores in Houghton | R: *A Life for New Music*, pp. 42-76.  -Look through list of Fromm commissions, ditto. |
| F 9/21 | HUA | Timothy Driscoll, Senior Reference Archivist; Barbara Meloni, Public Services Archivist | Focus on the commissioning process: how was the selection made, who did the selecting? | **Blog posting from each working group due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Carter, *Double Concerto* (compare performances on website)  R: The Carter-Fromm correspondence (my transcriptions) |
| M 9/24 | H Green Room | Leslie Morris, Curator, Modern Books and Manuscripts | Tour of Amy Lowell exhibition.  Look at Carter-Fromm correspondence. |  |
| F 9/28 | Museum TBA | TBA | Tour of current exhibition | **Blog posting due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Gunther Schuller, *Tre Invenzioni,* Leon Kirchner, *Concerto for violin, cello, 10 winds and percussion* |

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| Date | Room | Guests | Class topics | Outside of class |
| M 10/1 | H Seminar Room |  | Focus on Fromm’s corr. with Kirchner and Schuller. |  |
| F 10/5 | MR | Rachel Vandagriff, Ph.D. candidate, U C Berkeley |  | **Blog posting due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Bruno Maderna (1920-73), *Giardino Religioso*  R: Arthur Berger chapter on PNM  -Each group prepares a summary of its case and a list of potential exhibits. |
| M 10/8 | NO | CLASS | COLUMBUS | DAY (no listening response due) |
| F 10/12 | D |  | *Perspectives of New Music*:  vision and reality | **Blog posting due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Lee Hyla (b. 1952), *Pre-pulse Suspended;* Michael Gandolfi, Fantasia for Alto Saxophone and orchestra |
| M 10/15 | D |  | The Fromm Contemporary Music  Week at Tanglewood: Successes  and conflicts |  |
| F  10/19 | D |  | Short presentations of proposed  exhibit cases by the working  groups: the class can help to make  decisions and solve problems. | **Blog posting due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Shulamit Ran, Concerto da Camera II (Bridge – online access) |

*(Half-way point) 2nd half:* *Finalize choice of exhibit items, work on labels, permissions, multi-media components, website, program notes*

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| M 10/22 | MR | Carly Weggeland, Book Conservation Technician, and Catherine Badot-Costello, Book Conservator in the University Library | Preparing and exhibiting material |  |
| F 10/26 | D |  | Presentations of proposed  exhibit cases by the working  groups (continued) | **Blog posting due Thurs. 5 pm**  L: Lukas Foss, *Elegy for Anne Frank* (Lamdeni) |
| M 10/29 | D |  | Label-writing workshop with TBA | Concept (1-p. summary of topic  and aims) and inventory of  potential objects for each case  due. (no listening response due) |
| F 11/2 | NO | CLASS | AMS |  |
| M 11/5 | D |  | Finalize list of materials to be exhibited.  Discuss labels and multi-media projects | **(**no listening response due) |
| F 11/9 | D |  | Finalize exhibit: measurements,  placement, permissions,  mounting, labels. | Permissions and requests to Houghton and HU Archives; student exhibition request form due from each group today  L: Liza Lim, *Shimmer Songs;* Barbara White, *Third Rule of Thumb* |
| M 11/12 | D |  | Discuss labels and multi-media projects | Labels – first drafts due  Multi-media projects – first drafts due (no listening response due) |

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| F 11/16 | D |  |  | (no blog posting due)  L: Ralph Shapey [violin music] |
| M 11/19 | D |  | Present labels and multi-media projects | Labels – 2nd drafts due  Multi-media projects – 2nd drafts due |
| F 11/23 | NO | CLASS | THANKSGIVING |  |
| M 11/26 | D |  |  | Labels – final texts due  Multi-media projects – final versions due |
| F 11/30 | D |  |  | L: Gunther Schuller, recent work |
| M 12/3 | D |  | (last class meeting) Finishing touches, future plans |  |
| *Spring semester* |  |  | - Mount exhibition between mid-Feb. and mid-March, 2013.  - Reception on April 11 at 5 pm in the Spalding Room |  |

**Exhibit title:**

**Composing the Future: The Fromm Foundation and the Music of Our Time**

**Possible topics for exhibit cases**

* + New York, Town Hall (1959): Robert Craft conducted American premieres of Berg’s *Altenberg Lieder* and Stravinsky’s *Threni*
  + Fromm’s association with *Perspectives of New Music* (correspondence with Benjamin Boretz, Arthur Berger, Carter, and others)
  + Concert at the New York International Musicological Society in 1961: premiere of Carter Double Concerto and Babbitt *Vision and Prayer*.
  + Celebration of Contemporary Music marking the American bicentennial in 1976 (with Juilliard and the NY Philharmonic/Boulez)
    - UAV 406.495.1 f - Scrapbook for Celebration of Contemporary Music, 1976. 0.1 cubic foot in 1 container. <http://hollis.harvard.edu/?itemid=|library/m/aleph|003303966>
  + Fromm Contemporary Music Week at Tanglewood – origins and early years; breakup.
  + The Contemporary Chamber Players in Chicago (Ralph Shapey): origins and early years.
  + 1957 Festival of Contemporary Music at the University of Illinois/Champaign-Urbana
  + The Aspen Festival in the late 1980’s
  + The Fromm Players at Harvard
  + “Composers on Composers” radio program for WFMT Chicago
  + The Princeton Seminars on contemporary music in 1959 and 1960 (created as a counterpart to the Darmstadt festival)
  + The Aspen music festival in the late 1980s
  + The Fromm Players at Harvard

II. Documenting the works to be performed on the Fromm concerts at Harvard on April 12 and 13, 2013. Correspondence, reviews, information about first performance, recordings sponsored by Fromm, posters, programs, etc. Note: Fromm died in 1987; after that point, correspondence would be with the Foundation only.

**The Fromm Players at Harvard: Concert Friday, April 12, 2013:**

Liza Lim (b. 1966), *Shimmer Songs* (2006) for string quartet, harp, 3 percussion 14’

Luciano Berio (1925-2003), *Circles* (1960, on poems by e.e. cummings) for voice, harp, percussion 23’  
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Leon Kirchner (1919-2009), *Concerto for violin, cello, 10 winds and percussion* (1960) 19’

Bruno Maderna (1920-73), *Giardino Religioso* (1972) for strings, brass, 2 pianos, 2 harps and percussion 17’

**Saturday, April 13, 2013:**

Gunther Schuller (b. 1925), *Tre Invenzioni* (1972, winds and brass with harpsichord, piano, and harp, 25 players 15’

Lee Hyla (b. 1952), *Pre-pulse Suspended* (1984) for ensemble and piano 13’

Karola Obermüller (b. 1977), world premiere (for clarinet, piano, and electronics) 20’

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Barbara White (date?), *Third Rule of Thumb* for percussion quartet (1999) 13’ min.

Elliott Carter (b. 1908), *Double Concerto* (1961) 23’