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MUS 498

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### MUS 498 Learning Outcomes

Over the course of MUS498, popular music students are assigned with completing a project that aligns with the Popular Music Student Learning Outcomes. For my project, I took on the task of spearheading my own senior recital for flute performance. I was responsible for coordinating aspects of the project and finding necessary help to make the project come to life. Within this summary, I will go into the process of how I prepared for the recital and the steps that I had to take in order to achieve my goals for the performance. I will be also discussing the achievement of the learning outcomes that I sought to achieve at the beginning of the semester during the planning period.

The recital took place on Friday, April 21st, 2023 at 3:30pm in The Spitz Theater. Over the course of the spring semester, I had to coordinate a rough timeline so that each aspect of the recital could be planned out and executed throughout the spring. The recital contained works from several different styles and genres to make up a total of seven pieces all together. The program consisted of two classical works, two contemporary works and three jazz works. The flute pieces that I performed within the first half of the program were some of the ones that I studied within my Applied Flute lessons throughout my time at Rider. Under the instruction of John Lane within the Westminster Conservatory of Music, I was able to receive one-on-one flute lessons, studying the implications of classical and contemporary works across a wide array of time periods. These works include Sonata in F Major by Georg Philipp Telemann, Madrigal by Phillippe Gaubert, and Yuhwa by Adolphus Hailstork. I met for flute lessons once a week on

Wednesdays for an hour, sometimes twice a week depending on scheduling conflicts, to practice these works. One week before the recital performance and during the week of, I also held two rehearsals with the piano accompanist for the recital, Ms. Kathy Shanklin, at the Westminster Conservatory in Princeton.

I also was responsible for coordinating and running my own rehearsals for the jazz ensemble. The members consisted of bandmates that were also within Rider Pep Band and previously performed a jazz-like performance for Off The Clock with Dean Kutcher in December 2022. The group consisted of alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, trumpet, trombone, electric guitar, bass guitar, drumset, and I was featured on piano and flute. I had to make sure that the instrumentalists understood the rhythms, articulations, dynamics and melodic ideas of each chart in order to make sure the song sounded cohesive. We started rehearsals with the instrumental group in December, where we first learned Blues by Five and Chameleon. Then, we met up again within April to review the previously learned songs and then learn St. Thomas and The Journey So Far to rehearse up until the final performance on April 21.

Outcome 1 states that popular music students by the end of their senior year should be able to “Analyze both the musical and technological elements of music. Compare stylistic elements of composition and production across a variety of popular genres.” Through my creation of the program notes, I was able to study more in-depth about the stylistic differences across genres that I previously studied within classes. For example, I had learned within the Survey of Music History class about the aspects of the Baroque and Romantic periods and the cross-comparisons of the various eras of classical music. Since I have learned that many Baroque pieces are broken up into movements that each contain two sections that are each repeated, I wanted to make sure that my audience was aware of that important aspect of the music. That

way, they would be informed of the Baroque style of composition, but in a way that could be easily understood. I also learned in class that within the Romantic period, stylistic embellishments and fantastic sounding melodic ideas were of utmost importance to composers within the time period. Through these areas of knowledge, I was able to become more informed in educating my audience about the time periods in which these works are from.

By completing this assignment, I also had to do more research into the songs that were included within my program in order to provide accurate information for my notes. Through several different sources, I was able to learn more about the origins of artistry behind each piece or performance implications when it comes to studying the works. For example, the article that I found about Madrigal gives some insights into who Gaubert is as a Romantic composer and also some insights into how to practice and perform the piece (North Bridge). Another example includes the article that I found about St. Thomas, as it explains the Caribbean origin story of the song based on a traditional English song “The Lincolnshire Poacher” (Kuvo).

Outcome 2 explains that students should be able to “Convey music analysis through writing and conversation to experts and non-experts in an accessible manner, demonstrating a familiarity with technical language as well as an ability to translate technical language into understandable terms.” Throughout the preparations for my recital, I learned how to perform several different works in a way that was comprehensible to an audience of varying musical skill levels. After I researched in depth about the various musical and technical implications of each piece, I then had to find ways to synthesize that information so that it could be understood and enjoyed by an audience of varying musical abilities. I provided verbal descriptions out loud in between each piece during the recital in order to help the audience better understand the implications behind each piece. Within my programs for my recital, I wrote out program notes

that gave insights into the songs chosen. These descriptions contained sonic analysis of the important features of the songs, background of the composer or the time period that the piece was written, and any other further information that would propel the overall message for performing the song.

The program notes were written so that those who were unfamiliar with the music would be able to understand the general ideas and purposes surrounding the piece. In the program notes, I provided language that seeks to guide the listener through certain aspects of the song if they are unfamiliar with how to analyze music on their own. For example, in my description for Sonata in F Major by Georg Philipp Telemann, I stated, “Each movement of the sonata is broken up into two musical ideas that each repeat one time. I am taking a unique approach to the second movement instead of doing exact repeats of each of the two sections. I encourage listeners to look out for the embellishments and changes the second time around, as they really add to the beauty and virtuosity of Telemann’s composition.” This description allowed for listeners to pay close attention to the structure of the song, and how the second movement will have a variation attached to it.

Outcome 4 states that students should be able to “Compose and perform popular music in multiple styles. Composition and performance will be informed by the musical, production, and cultural analysis students pursue alongside their technical training.” This project allowed me to compose an original piece while also performing pieces across a variety of genres. The composition of The Journey So Far involved writing for several different wind, percussion and string instruments. The song was inspired by elements of jazz, funk, rock and pop. I wrote the piece knowing the strengths of the ensemble and what was necessary in order to provide a good basis for the song. I was able to write this song through the training that I received from classes

such as Music Theory and Pop Songwriting, where I gained a better understanding in conventional chord structure.

When I was running the musical group for the jazz portion of the program, I was informed on musical pedagogy by my previous experiences within ensembles at Rider, such as the Rider Pep Band, the Pop, Rock and Hip-Hop Ensemble, and the Skills Ensemble. One of the contemporary works was an original composition that I wrote for the jazz ensemble to perform at the end of the program. The program consisted of original compositions of popular music along with covers of popular music in styles of classical, jazz, contemporary and rock. The recital contains selections that range from the Baroque period, the Romantic period, the era of big-band jazz, the jazz-funk revival and modern eras. The production of the pieces for the recital will also be taken into consideration in order to arrange high-quality pieces for the performance. I gained an understanding of the greater implications surrounding these works through my Rider coursework, such as the Applied Lessons, Skills Ensemble, Survey of Music History I and II, and History of Pop and Rock I and II.

There were some unexpected issues that arose when planning and executing the recital. For one, the original intended date for the performance, April 28th 2023, was unavailable to schedule for the performance in any of the intended performance spaces: The Yvonne Theater, The BLC Theater, The Spitz Theater and The Gill Chapel. There were other performances and shows happening that weekend where most of the rehearsal and performance times would be unavailable throughout that weekend. There was also only availability on the previous week from 3-5pm in The Spitz Theater on April 21st. The time was not entirely ideal, as there are currently classes and work still going on at that time, which prevents many students, faculty and family members from coming at that particular point in the day. I also had a musician within the

jazz ensemble unexpectedly fail to show up for the performance. There were also unexpected errors and communication issues when it came to gathering the necessary equipment from Events and Facilities. The equipment that was expected to be in the venue, such as the microphones, the music stands and the sound system, were not provided by Facilities. Therefore, I had to consult with Rider Faculty and students to help with the sound and provide necessary equipment for the performance. The only asked-for accommodation that was provided was the tuning of the piano, but it had to be moved to an area of the stage that would be feasible for a performance.

Throughout the course of the semester, I have achieved the expectations of several popular music learning outcomes and have synthesized information, resources and management in order to put on my own senior recital performance. I was able to facilitate my own production by coordinating and executing the necessary steps in order to do so. The issues that arose helped me to understand further implications that I had not otherwise realized. This project showcased the importance of providing accessible materials for students who are wishing to put on performances, as the resources that are currently available within the department were not readily accessible for this performance. I hope through performances like this one will show that many resources students need to put on performances within an arts college are not readily available for those students to use. Hopefully, through this project, more awareness and understanding is highlighted for the need to provide adequate resources to students that are wishing to put on performances like this one that are commonplace within other colleges.

## Works Cited

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