**Field Recording Technology and Sound Design**

Instructor: Michael John Ahearn, [mjahearn@syr.edu](mailto:mjahearn@syr.edu)

Wednesdays, 8:30-10:00 PM EST

In this creative and engaging workshop, students will learn the fundamentals of field recording and sound design. Topics include, but are not limited to microphone techniques, proper use of field recording equipment, Foley art, sound design for film, creating soundscapes, and editing. The techniques that students will acquire in becoming familiar with this technology have use in real world applications such as film, animation, gaming, music, and more.

This workshop introduces students to the tools and practices of sound design. Students will experience the full production process, from microphone technique and sound creation, to editing sounds for use in video.

Students will investigate different techniques of sound design. They will see and hear for themselves how these techniques influence the material we produce and ultimately affect an audience. The world of sound design and field recording is a vast and fascinating place. Whether you’re interested in finding and recording sounds in the field, designing sounds for visual media, recording voiceovers, or diving deeper into audio production, this is the course for you!

If you do have the means, feel free to use your own projects, ideas, instruments, voice, and equipment for your work. This workshop runs on your creativity. You may also use your own videos, films, animations, songs, and game projects, if you would like to work on sound for those or to even just show the class your work. I’m happy to consult with you before this course begins if you’re still not entirely sure what equipment or software you need.

Students who have previously taken Studio Recording Technology and Production will be able to strengthen their knowledge and further develop more skills in Sound through this course.

### Program Objectives

* Learn how to properly use field recording equipment
* Develop skills in Logic Pro X or your DAW of choice and various sound design plug-ins
* Work with other students to come up with new and collaborative ideas
* Record unique sounds that can later be manipulated
* Create interesting sounds using the tools in your DAW
* Utilize the editing software to sync your sounds up with video

### Required Technology and Supplies

* A laptop or desktop computer (Mac or Windows) with a webcam
* Reliable internet connection
* Software required: A Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), such as Logic Pro X, Pro Tools, Ableton Live, Reaper, Adobe Audition, etc. Free trials may be available. This course will be using Logic Pro X for the purposes of instruction. *Feel free to email me if you have questions about required software!*
* Zoom H1n Handy Recorder and SD Card **OR** Zoom H4n Pro AB Handy Recorder and SD Card **OR** Tascam Recorder and SD Card of Equivalent Quality (Buy from Sweetwater or Amazon)
* I would also suggest getting a MIDI keyboard for you DAW’s built-in software instruments, such as an Akai MPK Mini **Or** a Launchkey MINI. There are options for all price ranges. Feel free to contact me with any questions and for recommendations.

Students should be on the lookout for free trials for software. Logic Pro X and Ableton Live are offering 90-day free trials during the pandemic and Reaper always has a 60-day free trial available. Try to make sure your preferred DAW has a video player built-in. This will allow you to add and edit sound to video in real time.

Students and parents can reach out to the Summer College office for any questions on technology and gear recommendations.

### Recommended Textbook (not required)

Sound Design: The Expressive Power of Music, Voice and Sound Effects in Cinema, 1st **OR** Reprint Edition (The Reprint Edition has some extra information included)  
ISBN: 9781615932023  
Available at Amazon or Barnes & Noble

## Faculty Bio

Michael Ahearn is a prolific Sound Engineer, specializing in live sound, sound design, audio production, recording, mixing, and mastering. Michael was previously a teaching assistant for this course for four summers in a row, before taking lead as the Instructor in the Summer of 2018. He has also taught multiple semesters of the Intro and Advanced courses of ‘Audio Production and Recording’ at Syracuse University, through the Computer Art and Animation program in VPA’s Department of Transmedia. He was the live Sound Engineer of the Turquoise Tiger night club at Turning Stone Resort Casino for over three years. He is currently putting his skills to use as the Sound Engineer and Lighting Technician of the Events Department at Mohawk Valley Community College in Utica, NY. He enjoys writing his own music, such as electronic music, soundscapes, and indie pop rock. Along with coding his own instruments and effects in Max, a node-based audio/visual programming language, he has also been known for turning his Xbox 360 controller into a MIDI effects controller for live performances, and plans on doing the same with Switch Joy-Cons.