

Classical Goes Pop

190S - 01

Duke University, Spring 2017

Biddle 102, WF 1:25PM-2:40PM

Instructor – Scott Lee - scott.lee@duke.edu

Office Hours by appointment

Course Description:

In this course, students will explore a wide range of music that defies categorization. Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, musicians have straddled the fine line between popular and art music. From George Gershwin to Phillip Glass to Ornette Coleman to the Punch Brothers, students will discover how these artists challenge the distinctions between high and low art and question the concept of genre.

We will begin with readings introducing students to some theoretical concepts surrounding the aesthetics of music. The majority of the course will use case studies of significant artists and pieces to apply these concepts while continuing to expand our knowledge of aesthetics with further readings. Papers and presentations will offer students the opportunity to explore the wider breadth of the field, focusing on other significant artists and pieces that complement the primary course material.

Students will develop their academic writing skills in this course through a number of assignments, including both short responses and term papers. Through in-class writing assignments and peer review exercises, students will gain the skills necessary to write clearly and logically for their intended audience, participate in scholarly discourse, and formulate effective arguments in their own voices. No prior music classes are needed for this course, just an open mind and willingness to engage with unfamiliar art in an inquisitive fashion.

Course Goals:

1. Develop a nuanced understanding of the issues surrounding art classification, including the concepts of genre, high/low art, and aesthetics.
2. Develop the ability to compare and critique pieces of music using the appropriate vocabulary.
3. Encourage personal and intellectual growth through receptivity to new aural experiences.
4. Enhance writing skills and critical thinking through the application of course concepts in a number of writing assignments.

Course Materials:

Coursepack of readings

Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated by in-class participation, short writing assignments, two short papers, a presentation, and one final paper.

In-class participation:	15%
Short Writing Assignments	15%
Short Paper 1 (3-4 pg):	15%
Short Paper 2 (5-6 pg):	15%
Final Presentation	10%
Final Paper (10-15pg)	30%

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes. If for any reason a student must miss a class for an emergency, he/she is responsible for determining what material was covered, and what assignments were given. If a student knows in advance that they will miss a class, they must contact me beforehand either in class or via email. Each unexcused absence over four will result in a final grade penalty of one letter grade per absence. Any student with eight or more unexcused absences will fail the course.

Final Paper Progression

- 3/8 Topic Due
- 4/5 Abstract and Annotated Bibliography Due
- 4/12 Introduction, First Paragraph, and Outline Due
- 4/19 First Draft Due
- 4/21 & 4/26 Presentations
- 5/1 Final Paper Due

TWP Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is an excellent resource for you to get help with your writing assignments. Please plan on making at least one appointment over the course of the semester. Below are the Spring 2017 hours and locations:

West Campus in Perkins 112	East Campus in Bivins 107	East Campus in Lilly Library
Mon-Thurs 9am - 9pm	Mon-Thurs 9am - 5pm	Mon-Thurs 6pm - 9pm
Sun 6pm - 9pm		Sun 6pm - 9pm

Course Schedule (Readings subject to change):

Introduction/Aesthetics (Weeks 1-2)

In the first week we will introduce general concepts surrounding the aesthetics of music and the historical dichotomy of high vs. low art.

- 1/13 (Friday) – Course Introduction
- 1/18 (Wednesday) – Introduction to Concert Music
 - Read (before coming to this class)
 - Cohen, Ted. “High and Low Thinking about High and Low Art.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 51, no. 2 (Spring, 1993): 151-156.
- 1/20 (Friday) – Introduction to Jazz
 - Read
 - Shusterman, Richard. “Entertainment: A Question for Aesthetics.” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 43, no. 3 (July 2003): 289-307.
 - Write
 - Summary of different possible positions on distinction between art and entertainment. Specify the author’s position as well as your own personal opinion. 1-2 pages double-spaced. **Due in class on 1/20.**

Concert Music (Weeks 3-6)

In this unit we will explore how composers of concert music on both sides of the Atlantic have incorporated jazz and popular music into their own musical languages. First we will explore early jazz-classical fusions through the music of Gershwin and Milhaud. Next we will examine how Ives and Adès borrow from popular music as a means for creating narrative in their work. Finally we will look at how Bernstein's *West Side Story* straddles the line between musical theatre and opera. To complete the unit students will write a short paper on a composer of their choosing from the world of concert music that also engaged with popular music (see "Further Study" section for some possible choices).

Unit Assignment: Short Paper on composer of choosing (3-4 pg) with peer review, **due in class on 2/17.**

Further Study: Aaron Copland, Maurice Ravel, Kurt Weill, Hindemith, William Bolcom, Michael Daugherty, Mason Bates, Tania León, Milton Babbitt, Gabriel Prokofiev, etc.

Early Fusions of Jazz and Concert Music

- **1/25 (Wednesday) – George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue***
 - **Read**
 - Oja, Carol J. "Gershwin and the American modernists of the 1920s." *The Musical Quarterly* 78. No. 4 (Winter 1994), 646-668.
 - **Listen**
 - George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*
- **1/27 (Friday) – NO CLASS**
- **2/1 (Wednesday) – Darius Milhaud, *La Création du Monde***
 - **Read**
 - Miller, R Ward. "Defining Jazz Elements in Darius Milhaud's *La Création du Monde*." *Journal of Band Research* 50, no. 1 (Fall 2014), 1- 13.
 - **Listen**
 - Darius Milhaud, *La Création du Monde*
 - **Write**
 - Compare Milhaud's *Creation du Monde* to Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* in terms of their relations to concert music and jazz, their origins in different locations (USA vs. Europe), and their relation to distinctions of high and low art. 1-2 pages double-spaced. **Due in class on 2/1.**

Concert Music, Popular Music, and Narrative

- **2/3 (Friday) – Charles Ives, *Holiday Symphony: III. The Fourth of July***
 - **Read**
 - San Francisco Symphony, Keeping Score:
<http://keepingscore.org/interactive/pages/ives/score-playing>

- Kramer, Lawrence. “Music and the Politics of Memory: Charles Ives’s ‘A Symphony: New England Holidays’” *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2.4 (Nov 2008): 459-475.
 - **Listen**
 - Charles Ives, *Holiday Symphony: III. The Fourth of July*
- **2/8 (Wednesday) – Thomas Adès, *Asyla: III. Ecstasio***
 - **Read**
 - Venn, Edward. “Narrativity in Thomas Adès’s *Ecstasio*.” *Res facta nova: Teksty o muzyce współczesnej* 11, 60-78.
 - **Listen**
 - Thomas Adès, *Asyla: III. Ecstasio*
 - **Write**
 - Invent a narrative plot to accompany *Ecstasio*, the third movement from Adès’s orchestral work *Asyla*. Be creative. 1-2 pages double-spaced. **Due in class on 2/8.**

West Side Story, Musical Theatre or Opera?

- **2/10 (Friday) – Introduction to Musical Theatre/Opera**
 - **Write**
 - Begin work on short paper #1.
- **2/15 (Wednesday) – Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story***
 - **Read**
 - Lovensheimer, Jim. Review of *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical*, by Elizabeth Wells and *Leonard Bernstein: “West Side Story,”* by Nigel Simeone. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2012), 285-291.
 - **Watch/Listen**
 - Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story*
 - **Write**
 - Continue working on short paper #1.

Minimalism/Bang on a Can/Indie Classical (Weeks 5-7)

In this unit we will focus on the progression from Minimalism in the 60s and 70s to Bang on a Can in the 80s and 90s (and onward), and on to Indie-Classical in the aughts up to the present day. Of particular interest will be the ideas of performance venues, instrumentation, and “scene” as markers of genre. Our studies will include music by Philip Glass, Steve Reich, David Lang, Julia Wolfe, yMusic, Nico Muhly, and Sarah Kirkland Snider. The unit will finish with another short paper (see “Further Study” section for some possibilities).

Unit Assignment: Short Paper (5-6 pg) on composer, performer, or ensemble of choosing (3-4 pg) with peer review, **due in class on 3/24.**

Further Study: Terry Riley, David Lang, Meredith Monk, Bryce Dessner, the NOW Ensemble, Missy Mazzoli, Caroline Shaw, Gabriel Kahane, Sufjan Stevens

Minimalism

- **2/17 (Friday) – Phillip Glass/Downtown Music**

- **Read**

- Gann, Kyle. “Minimal Music, Maximal Impact.” *New Music Box*. Introduction and “Minimalists Defined” <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/minimal-music-maximal-impact/>
- Goldstein, Richard. “Heart of Glass: Summing Up the Sound of America's Most Successful Composer.” *The Village Voice*, December 16, 1997, 43-44, 47-48.
- Gann, Kyle. “Breaking the Chain Letter: An Essay on Downtown Music.” <http://www.kylegann.com/downtown.html>

- **Listen**

- Phillip Glass, *Music in Fifths*
- Phillip Glass, *Einstein on the Beach* (Excerpts)

- **Write**

- Short Paper #1 **due in class on 2/17.**

- **2/22 (Wednesday) – Steve Reich**

- **Read**

- Rutherford-Johnson, Tim. “The Influence Engine: Steve Reich and Pop Music.” <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/the-influence-engine-steve-reich-and-pop-music/>

- **Listen**

- Steve Reich, *Music for 18 Musicians*

Bang on a Can

- **2/24 (Friday) – David Lang**

- **Read**

- Sandow, Greg. “Not Your Father’s Classical Music.” *The Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 1997.
- Kozinn, Allan. “Music Review; Bang on a Can Uptown Cultivates Crossover.” *The New York Times*, May 23, 1995.

- **Listen**

- David Lang, *Cheating, Lying, Stealing*

- **3/1 (Wednesday) – Julia Wolfe**

- **Read**

- Ziporyn, Evan. “Who Listens if You Care?” In *The Twentieth Century*, vol. 7, edited by Robert P. Morgan, *Source Readings in Music History*, edited by Oliver Strunk and Leo Treitler. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.

- **Listen**

- Julia Wolfe, *Steel Hammer*

- **Write**

- Write a one-page response to Evan Ziporyn’s article either agreeing or disagreeing with his premise, with support. **Due in class on 3/1.**

Indie Classical

- **3/3 (Friday) – The (new) New Music Ensemble**
 - **Read**
 - Robin, Will. “A Scene Without a Name: Indie Classical and American New Music in the Twenty-First Century.” Excerpts.
 - Robin, Will. “Bridging Genres And Generations On the Fly”. *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/arts/music/ymusic-to-bring-its-versatility-to-ecstatic-music-festival.html>
 - Kraft, Tristan. “Instant Message.” *Opera News* 78, no. 4 (October 2013), 20-25.
 - **Listen**
 - yMusic, *Balance Problems*
- **3/8 (Wednesday) – Sarah Kirkland Snider**
 - **Read**
 - Robin, Will. “A Scene Without a Name: Indie Classical and American New Music in the Twenty-First Century.” Excerpts.
 - Greene, Jayson. Review of Penelope. *Pitchfork*. <http://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/14934-penelope/>
 - **Listen**
 - Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Penelope*
 - **Write**
 - Final Paper Topics due **in class on 3/8**.

Third Stream/Avant-Garde/Contemporary Jazz (Weeks 8-10)

In this unit we will explore the ways in which jazz artists have tried to incorporate ideas from classical music, the avant-garde, and pop into their music. First we will examine the Third Stream, a conscious combination of jazz and classical music begun in the 50s, as exemplified by the music of Gunther Schuller. Next we will encounter the ultimate genre-blender, Miles Davis, as well as free and avant-garde jazz with Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor. Finally we will explore two contemporary groups with a penchant for fusing jazz with popular music, The Bad Plus, and The Robert Glasper Experiment.

Further Study: Dave Brubeck, Modern Jazz Quartet, John Coltrane, Vijay Iyer, EST, Joshua Redman, Darcy James Argue’s Secret Society, Esperanza Spalding

- **3/10 (Friday) – Third Stream & Gunther Schuller**
 - **Read**
 - Schuller, Gunther. “Third Stream.” *Musings: The Musical Worlds of Gunther Schuller, A Collection of His Writings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
 - Kaliss, Jeff. “Mid-Century Breakthrough: ‘Third Stream’ Music.” <http://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/mid-century-breakthrough-third-stream-music?page=0,3>

- **Listen**
 - Gunther Schuller, *Concertino for Jazz Quartet and Orchestra*
- **Write:**
 - Begin working on Short Paper #2.
- **SPRING BREAK (No Class on 3/15 or 3/17)**
- **3/22 (Wednesday) –Miles Davis/Avant-Garde Jazz**
 - **Read**
 - Tingen, Paul. “Miles Davis and the Making of Bitches Brew: Sorcerer’s Brew”
<http://jazztimes.com/articles/20243-miles-davis-and-the-making-of-bitches-brew-sorcerer-s-brew>
 - **Listen**
 - Miles Davis, *Bitches Brew*
 - **Write**
 - Continue working on Short Paper #2
- **3/24 (Friday) – Avant-Garde Jazz**
 - **Read**
 - Welding, Pete and John A Tynan. “Double View of a Double Quartet.” *Down Beat*. January 18, 1962, 28.
 - Excerpt from Chap. 15 of Scott Deveaux and Gary Giddins’ *Jazz*.
 - **Listen**
 - Ornette Coleman, *Free Jazz*
 - Cecil, Taylor, *Bulbs*
 - **Write**
 - Short Paper #2 **due in class on 3/24.**
- **3/25 (SATURDAY) – ACME Drone Mass Soundcheck Attendance**
 - **Read**
 - Da Fonseca-Wollheim, Corinna. “Johann Johannsson’s ‘Drone Mass’ Bridges Ancient and Modern at Temple of Dendur.” *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/17/arts/music/johann-johannssons-drone-mass-bridges-ancient-and-modern-at-temple-of-dendur.html>
 - **Watch/Listen**
 - Drone Mass MET Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/128378771>
- **3/29 (Wednesday) –The Bad Plus**
 - **Read**
 - Clarke, David. “Elvis and Darmstadt, or: Twentieth-Century Music and the Politics of Cultural Pluralism” *twentieth-century music* 4.1 (March 2007), 3-45.
 - Farber, Jim. “GETTING UNDER THE COVERS. The Bad Plus finds the depths of songs in a variety of styles.” *New York Daily News*. February 1, 2009, 20.
 - **Listen**
 - The Bad Plus, *For All I Care*

- 3/31 (Friday) – Robert Glasper
 - Read
 - Wilson, Calvin. “Robert Glasper conducts a successful ‘Experiment.’” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. April 16, 2015.
 - Listen
 - The Robert Glasper Experiment, *Black Radio*

Rock and the Avant-Garde (Weeks 12-14)

In this unit, we will explore the connections between rock and the avant-garde, focusing on the Beatles, Brian Eno, the Velvet Underground, and Björk. First we will examine how the Beatles’ interaction with experimental composer Karlheinz Stockhausen left lasting impressions on their songs. Next we will explore Brian Eno’s ‘ambient music’ that is meant to be as “ignorable as it is interesting,” and how the Velvet Underground and Björk opened up new avant-gardes front in the world of rock and pop. We will also take a look at the Punch Brothers from the world of bluegrass, a genre not usually associated with high art aspirations. During this unit, students will also begin working on their final papers.

Further Study: John Zorn, Frank Zappa, Yoko Ono, Pink Floyd, King Crimson, Meshuggah, Béla Fleck, Edgar Meyer, Yonder Mountain String Band etc.

- 4/5 (Wednesday) – Stockhausen and the Beatles
 - Read
 - Worby, Robert. “Crackle goes pop: how Stockhausen seduced the Beatles.” *The Guardian*. December 26, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/dec/26/beatles-revolution-9-stockhausen-hymnen-avant-garde-pop>
 - Excerpt from: Gendron, Bernard. *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
 - Listen
 - Stockhausen, *Hymnen*
 - The Beatles, *Tomorrow Never Knows*
 - The Beatles, *Revolution Number 9*
 - Write
 - Abstract and Annotated Bibliography for Final Paper **due in class on 4/5**.
- 4/7 (Friday) – Brian Eno, *Music for Airports*
 - Read
 - Eno, Brian. Music for Airports liner notes http://music.hyperreal.org/artists/brian_eno/MFA-txt.html
 - Miller, Brian. “Brian Eno.” *Omni* (November 1980). http://www.moredarkthanshark.org/eno_int_omni-nov80.html
 - Madden, Blake. “Brian Eno – ‘Ambient 1: Music For Airports’” <http://www.trustmeimascientist.com/2014/03/03/brian-eno-ambient-1-music-for-airports/>
 - Listen
 - Brian Eno, *Music for Airports*

- **4/12 (Wednesday) – The Velvet Underground**
 - **Read**
 - Introduction and Chapter 11 from: Greene, Doyle. *Rock, Counterculture and the Avant-Garde, 1966-1970*. Mcfarland & Co Inc Pub, 2016.
 - **Listen**
 - *The Velvet Underground and Nico*
 - **Write**
 - Introduction, First Paragraph, and Outline of Final Paper **due in class on 4/12**.
- **4/14 (Friday) – Björk**
 - **Read**
 - Gunn, Joshua. “Gothic Music and the Inevitability of Genre.” *Popular Music and Society* 23.1 (Spring 1999), 31-50.
 - Ross, Alex. “How Björk broke the sound barrier.” *The Observer* (February 14th, 2015). <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/feb/15/bjork-delta-archives-alex-ross>
 - **Listen**
 - Björk, *Biophilia*

Bluegrass

- **4/19 (Wednesday) – The Punch Brothers**
 - **Read**
 - Himes, Geoffrey. “Punch Brothers: A Little of Everything Makes a Lot.” *Sing Out! The Folk Song Magazine* 52, no. 3 (Autumn 2008), 34-39.
 - **Listen**
 - The Punch Brothers, *The Phosphorescent Blues*
 - **Write**
 - Complete First Draft of Final Paper **due in class on 4/19**.

Final Paper Presentations

- **4/21 (Friday) – Presentations**
 - Students will present their final paper topics to the class.
- **4/26 (Wednesday) – Presentations Continue**
 - Students will continue presenting their final paper topics to the class.
- Final Papers will be **due in my box by 5pm on May 1**.