

Introduction to Music

Wherever we are, what we hear is mostly noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating.—John Cage

Music is the one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge which comprehends mankind, but mankind cannot comprehend.—Beethoven

Music is prophecy. Its styles and economic organization are ahead of the rest of society because it explores, much faster than material reality can, the entire range of possibilities in a given code. It makes audible the new world that will gradually become visible, that will impose itself and regulate the order of things; it is not only the image of things, but the transcending of the everyday, the herald of the future.—Jacques Attali

One good thing about music, when it hits you feel no pain.—Bob Marley

SYLLABUS

About This Course:

Music is one of the most—if not *the* most—varied and ubiquitous of art forms. It is created, performed and used in every culture around the world for every occasion and in a variety of day-to-day contexts. Its presence is such that it is often taken for granted and sometimes is even considered to be “noise.”

So, what does the student of music stand to learn by studying music? The study of music imparts an understanding of different cultures, not just from a musical perspective, but as an entry point into a culture’s history, traditions, beliefs, philosophy, and economics. It is a mirror that reflects a culture and simultaneously feeds a culture.

In this course we will examine music mainly from the European and American traditions to develop an understanding of music’s component parts, and as a whole, the social roles music plays within cultural contexts. We will also develop listening skills and build a vocabulary that allows us to describe the different styles, structures and meanings we perceive from this visceral and magical art form.

Learning Goals:

1. To develop listening skills through close examination of various types of music in order to identify what we hear.
2. To develop a working vocabulary in order to describe the components/forms of the music we examine.
3. To understand how music is created/performed/used within social contexts and how this relates to networks of cultural transmission.
4. To develop writing skills that incorporate a base of knowledge with personal experience and perception.

Required Text:

Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson, *Listen*, sixth edition.

Additionally, students have the option of buying the six-compact-disc set that accompanies the text. I highly recommend their purchase as a major component of our study will focus on the listening examples. However, the CD’s will be on reserve in the music library (Sheppard 160) for listening *in* the music library.

Requirements for the successful completion of this course:

Attendance: Students may miss no more than two classes, and missing two classes is not advisable. Upon a third absence the student can be asked to withdraw from the class as per the CCNY attendance policy. Only in the case of a documented illness or other serious emergency will exceptions be considered.

Promptness: The class begins at 2 pm sharp. Two late arrivals to class will be considered a full absence.

Participation: Students must bring their textbook, *Listen*, to every class as we will frequently refer to it. And students are expected to be able to answer and discuss the key questions raised in class and to actively listen and respond to in-class listening exercises.

Self-Directed Field Trips: As part of the written assignments (briefly described below), students will be required to visit a museum and to attend a musical event for the purpose of responding to those places and events in writing. A list of required/suggested places and events will follow.

Written Assignments: We will be doing four short papers this semester (approx. 2600 words total.) For an assignment to be accepted and graded, it must be submitted on time and in the specified form (word processed, for example.) I will always make clear what the assignment is, how it is to be prepared and when it is due. Late papers will be marked down one (1) letter grade for each week that a paper is late. The definition of late: not physically handing me the paper on the day it is due. **I will not accept papers by email!**

Listening Assignments: In this course listening is the central focus. If you listen to the assigned pieces (usually multiple times), you will be able to connect the important concepts to the music.

Exams: **There will be a mid-term and a final exam. Do not miss these exams as I will not allow students to make them up. Therefore, plan on being in town and available through the end of the final exam week. Also, it is possible that I will give occasional short quizzes on the reading assignments depending on the overall level of class participation.**

Grading:

Students' final grade for the class will be based on the following elements:

Participation	10%
Papers	40% (10% each x 4 short papers)
Other assignments and quizzes	10%
Mid-Term	20%
Final Exam	20%

Additional Questions or Concerns Not Covered in Class:

I will normally be available to meet briefly with students immediately after class either in the classroom or in my office. The best way to reach me during the week is via email. During the week I will normally respond within 24 hours. On the weekends you may expect a response on Monday.

Classroom Protocol:

Food and drink: No eating or drinking in the classroom. We will be taking a short break in the middle of each class, so please consider this your time to refresh yourself.

Talking during class: Please be considerate of your fellow students. If you have a question or a comment, please raise your hand. I will address your concern.

Group work: We will occasionally divide into small groups or pairs to work together in forming our ideas about the topics at hand. You are encouraged to get to know your fellow students and to listen to one another.

Pluralism: A learning environment is one that has space for all points of view. We will make that space in our class which means that we will sometimes agree to disagree.

Policy on Academic Integrity:

“Academic dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion...”—From the CUNY policy on academic integrity. Please see this link for the full policy concerning the matters of cheating and plagiarism: <http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/upload/academicintegrity.pdf>

Some Important CCNY Informational Links:

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/> -- CCNY's homepage and portal to all things CCNY (all links below accessible through this link.)

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/library/> -- Links to CUNY-wide library resources including library catalogs.

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/acis/emailshortcuts.html> -- CCNY's email interface.

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/humanities/> -- Department of Arts and Humanities homepage.

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/music/> -- Department of Music homepage.

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/current/registrar/> -- Registrar's homepage; includes links to academic calendars, transcripts, bills and other important student business.

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/current/registrar/calendar/Academic-Calendar-Spring-10.cfm>-- a direct link to the 2010 Spring semester academic calendar

SCHEDULE
(subject to change)

Friday, January 29	<p>“Course Syllabus and Class Schedule” review. “What is music?” Review the basics of college paper writing. Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapters 1-2 Write: Paper 1—“Music in My Life”</p>
Friday, February 5	<p>Paper 1 Due (Music in my Life) Discuss: Chapters 1-2 “What is music?” ...continued Assign/Discuss Papers 2 and 3 – “Met Museum and Concert Report” Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapters 3-5 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday, February 12	NO CLASS (Lincoln’s Birthday)
Friday, February 19	<p>Discuss: Chapters 3-5 Return Paper 1—brief discussion and Q&A Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 6-7 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday, February 26	<p>Discuss: Chapter 6-7 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 8-9 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday, March 5	<p>Discuss: Chapter 8-9 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 10-11 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday, March 12	<p>Discuss: Chapters 10-11 REMINDER: Paper 2 Due Next Class—3/19! Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 12-13 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday March 19	<p>Paper 2 Due (Met Museum) REMINDER – Paper 3 Due 4/23 Discuss: Chapters 12-13 Midterm Review Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 14 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>
Friday, March 26	<p>MIDTERM EXAM (Chapters 1-13) Discuss Chapter 14 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapters 15-16 Listen: All Listening Examples</p>

Friday, April 2	NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)
Friday, April 9	Return/Review Midterm and Paper 2 Discuss: Chapters 15-16 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Chapter 17-18 Listen: All Listening Examples
Friday, April 16	Discuss: Chapters 17-18 Discuss/Assign Paper 4 – “Applied Terms” REMINDER: Paper 3 Due Next Class—4/23! Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Read Chapters 19-20 Listen: All Listening Examples
Friday, April 23	Paper 3 Due (Concert) Discuss: Chapters 19-20 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Read Chapter 21 Listen: All Listening Examples
Friday, April 30	Discuss: Chapter 21 Return/Review Paper 3 Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Read Chapters 22 Listen: All Listening Examples
Friday, May 7	Discuss: Chapter 22 REMINDER: Paper 4 Due Next Class—5/14! Assignment: Read: <i>Listen</i>, Read Chapter 23 Listen: All Listening Examples
Friday, May 14	Paper 4 Due (Applied Terms) Discuss: Chapter 23 Review For Final (Chapters 14-23)
FINAL EXAM	TBA, May 19-25

Other Important Dates:

Thursday, February 18 – Last day to withdraw from class before “W” grade begins
 Friday, February 19 – “W” grade begins for withdrawal from classes
 Thursday, April 8 – Last day to withdraw to receive “W” grade

AND FINALLY...

You may be asked throughout the semester to visit my blog to find various class related items. The url is: www.jonnyfarrow.net. Click on the header “Teaching” and then find Music 101, or you may follow this direct link: http://jonnyfarrow.net/?page_id=121.