The course

People have not only developed modes of thought, systems of belief, and diverse ways to organize themselves collectively into societies and cultures; in all cultures and traditions they have also engaged in creative activity of a more specifically aesthetic nature— they have expressed themselves through Art. One of the most potent modes of artistic expression is through music, a medium cultivated in one way or another by every human society throughout history. The Arts of Music will examine and compare the nature, purposes, and social functions of three different form of musical expression that have been cultivated in the cultural traditions of Europe and America. It will seek to raise fundamental issues about the nature and interpretation of the arts while developing a basic formal, critical, and historical vocabulary for discussion. And it will seek, directly and indirectly, to relate both of the above, the discussion of fundamental issues and the acquisition of a working vocabulary, to an appraisal of the state of the arts today. This course is not meant to be an introduction to the subject of music as such, since it is both more limited and broader in its reach. The first part of the course does nevertheless present and question the basic parameters of music and its uses. The second, third, and fourth parts offer case studies, three mini seminars, if you will, on seemingly contrasting musical repertories: music informed by a Platonic/Pythagorean aesthetic; Richard Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelungen; and jazz during its first half century, to ca. 1950. We will consider all three in terms of what it is that they seek to communicate and how they do it, and what the roles of the composer, the performer, and the audience are in that process.
A course like this one can be presented from a variety of vantage points. As offered here, it will devote a considerable amount of attention to European art music from the middle ages to the end of the twentieth century, and to three repertories that are considered “classical” in most respects, but it will also draw on the whole range of musics in the world today—classical, popular, and non-Western musics in all their diversities. No previous listening or performing experience with music of any kind, "classical" or other, is presumed. Throughout the semester, and in both the lectures and the preceptorial sections, students are encouraged to introduce the music with which they themselves are most familiar into the discussion where it is appropriate.

How the course works

Preceptorial sections: You have registered not only for the MW 9:30-10:45 class, but also for a separate preceptorial section that meets at another time once a week. Regular attendance at this preceptorial section is an integral part of the course; work done there will count 40% towards your final grade.

We will take a few minutes during the first class to try to balance the enrollment in these sections. If you have a scheduling problem involving the preceptorial section into which you are enrolled, see Mr Roesner or your preceptor immediately.

The class is likely to be full, and to have a waiting list. The instructor cannot admit you to the class if you are not already enrolled in it. You will need to clear enrollment through the MAP office, 903 Silver.

Once you are enrolled in a preceptorial section, you may not attend sections offered by the other preceptors, since they are likely to be different in content. There are other sections of this course, taught by a different instructor with different preceptors. They are completely different courses; you cannot make up material missed in this course by attending some other one.

The preceptorial sections will meet beginning with the week of 24 January.

Listening: You will be expected to listen critically to a quantity of music. CDs, listed under the call numbers, “Roesner CD MAP 1-8,” will be on reserve in the Avery Fisher Media Center, on the second floor of the Bobst Library. In addition, much of the music on these CDs will be available on line through Blackboard. See the List of CD recordings on reserve, below. They represent the heart of the course. You are expected to become very familiar with the music on these discs.

Reading: You will read a variety of materials gleaned from books and journals. See the List of Readings, below. Most of this material is included in the course packet for this class; other material will be passed out in class. You will also need to purchase one book.

To purchase:

- Course packet (available at New University Copy & Graphics, 11 Waverly Place)

Course requirements: Your grade will be based on the following:

1. Preparation for, and participation in the class. It is imperative that you do your listening and reading assiduously and on schedule. Your active participation in the class, not just in the preceptorial sections, is expected.

2. Two examinations. These may take any of a variety of forms, but they will certainly be in essay format and will examine your familiarity with and critical response to the music we discuss. Makeup examinations will only be permitted under extraordinary circumstances. Each exam will count 30% towards the final grade.
3. Participation in your preceptorial section, including whatever quizzes and papers are assigned. The grade will be based on attendance, participation, and the quality of your written work. As in the main class, late or makeup work will be permitted under extraordinary circumstances only. 40% of the final grade.

Conduct of the class

1. Regular--and punctual--attendance is presumed.
2. Turn off your cell phone before you arrive in class.
3. Please read and keep in mind the University's Statement on Academic Integrity, appended to this syllabus. The standards articulated there are the ones that will be followed in this class.

Schedule of classes (the details may be adjusted as the course unfolds)

- **Part 1.** Questioning assumptions, listening to, thinking and talking about music
  - Week 1. Introduction: “expressive culture,” what is "art"; basic assumptions about music
    - Reading: Titon and Slobin, “The Music-Culture as a World of Music”; Babbitt, "Who Cares if You Listen?"
    - Listening: Roesner CD MAP 1
  - Week 2. Form: how does music hold together in time?
    - Listening: Roesner CD MAP 2
  - Week 3: Content: what does music “say,” "express"?
    - Reading: Meyer, “Meaning in Music and Information Theory”; Frith, "What is Good Music?"
    - Listening: Roesner CD MAP 3
  - Week 4. Music in performance, music written down. Where/what is the "piece"?
    - Listening: Roesner CD MAP 4

- **Part 2, Case study I.** Musica: The Musician as Philosopher and Priest; music as SCIENCE, music as RELIGION, music reflecting the ordered Universe; prayer and praise in the medieval Church
  - Week 5. The aesthetic background: Pythagorean mathematics, Plato, Boethius
    - Reading: excerpts from Plato, *Republic* and *Timaeus*; Boethius, chaps. 1-3 of *The Fundamentals of Arithmetic*; Boethius, Book 1 of *The Fundamentals of Music*
  - Weeks 6, 7. The realization in music of the aesthetic premise
    - (a) Medieval liturgical song: Scripture recitation, prayer, acclamation, the hymn
    - (b) Gothic polyphony: performance in the monastery and cathedral; music for the learned
    - Reading: Wright, “Dufay’s *Nuper rosarum flores*"
    - Listening: Roesner CD MAP 5

**Midterm examination**

- **Part 3. Case study II.** The Composer as Artist, Politician, God; Music as ART: Richard Wagner, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (This part of the course involves listening to a very long work, Wagner’s *Ring*, a cycle of 4 music dramas lasting some 14 hours. It is available in several versions on CD and VHS, DVD, and laser disc; the. Several
versions are in the Avery Fisher collection. You should start listening to it and/or watching it as soon as possible. Try to get in a few different performances.)

- **Weeks 8, 9, 10, 11.** Introduction: opera--concert in costume, dramatic entertainment, political act; Italian bel canto and French grand opera; Romantic ideology, the synthesis of the arts; *Der Ring des Nibelungen*: sources and content. Analysis of the *Ring*.
  
  Reading: Magee, “Wagner’s Theory of Opera”; Wagner, *The Ring of the Nibelung*
  
  Listening: *Der Ring des Nibelungen* ("The Ring of the Nibelung")
  
  *Das Rheingold* ("The Rhine Gold")
  
  *Die Walküre* ("The Valkyrie")
  
  *Siegfried*
  
  *Götterdämmerung* ("The Twilight of the Gods")

- **Part 4. Case study III:** The Performer as Creator and Tradition Bearer, Early Jazz

- **Weeks 12, 13, 14, 15.** Origins of jazz: blues, Dixieland; jazz as American popular music: Swing; jazz as high art: bebop. From Jelly Roll Morton and Louis Armstrong through Duke Ellington and Count Basie to Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Thelonius Monk; from a folk music to a classical tradition.
  
  Reading: Gridley, *Concise Guide to Jazz*, chaps. 3-7
  
  Listening: Roesner CD MAP 6 and 7

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**Final examination as scheduled**

**List of CD recordings on reserve**

- **Roesner CD MAP 1:** Some examples for discussion
  1. Giacomo Puccini, "Nessum dorma," from *Turandot*
  2. Igor Stravinsky, *Le Sacre du printemps*, Dance of the Adolescents
  4. Roosevelt Sykes, “44 Blues”
  5. Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony no. 6, in F Major, 4th movement
  6. Johann Strauss Jr., *An der schönen blauen Donau*
  8. “Because”
  9. “Let Me Off Uptown”
  10. Ludwig van Beethoven, Piano Sonata no. 30, in E Major, op. 109, 1st movement
  12. "Old Alabama" (prison work gang song)

- **Roesner CD MAP 2:** Form--how does each of the following pieces hold together?
  1. Franz Schubert, String Quartet in D Minor (“Death and the Maiden”), movement 2
  2. Philip Glass, *Music in Similar Motion*
  3. Johann Sebastian Bach, “Brandenburg” Concerto no. 2, in F Major, movement 1
  4. Franz Schubert, Sonatina no. 1 for Violin and Piano, in D Major, movement 1
  5. Anton Webern, Piano Variations, op. 27, movement 1

- **Roesner CD MAP 3:** The meaning of music: what does each of the following pieces communicate?
  1. Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony no. 5, in C Minor (in 4 movements)
  2. Richard Strauss, *Don Juan*
  3. “Strange Fruit” (Billie Holliday)
  4. Duke Ellington, "Isfaham"

- **Roesner CD MAP 4:** Performance and Performers
  1. Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony no 5, first movement, exposition
  3 performances: John Eliot Gardiner, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Arturo Toscanini
2. Gustav Mahler, Symphony no. 4, in G Major, first movement, exposition
   3 performances: Bernard Haitink, Willem Mengelberg, Otto Klemperer

   3 performances: Sarah Vaughan, Frank Sinatra, Thelonius Monk

4. E. Heyman, “Body and Soul”
   5 performances: Benny Goodman, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Sarah Vaughan, Thelonius Monk

5. Duke Ellington, "Solitude"
   3 performances: Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holliday, Sarah Vaughan

• Roesner CD MAP 5: Medieval Christian sacred song, Gothic polyphony of the 12th-15th centuries

  Early Christian chant
  1. Coptic chant: Chen efron in tetnas (Hymn sung on Good Friday to introduce the Gospel reading)
  2. Syrian (Maronite) chant: Amal-unu-l-hazina (Good Friday Hymn, the lament of Mary at the foot of the Cross)
  3. Byzantine chant: Christos anesti (Antiphon from the Easter liturgy)
  4. Roman chant: Resurrexi (Introit of the Mass for Easter Sunday)
  5. Frankish chant: Dilecte deo (Sequence for the Mass for the feast of St. Gallus [Notker])

  Gregorian chant: the Mass for Easter Sunday: Synaxis
  6. Introit: Resurrexi
  7. Kyrie eleison
  8. Gloria in excelsis deo
  9. Collect (prayer)
  10. Epistle (reading)
  11. Gradual: Haec dies
  12. Alleluia Pascha nostrum
  13. Sequence: Victime paschali laudes
  14. Gospel (reading)
  15. Credo in unum deum

  Gothic polyphony
  16. Perotinus, Sederunt principes
  17. Philippe de Vitry (?), In nova fert/Garrit gallus/Neuma
  18. Guillaume DuFay, Nuper rosarum flores/Terribilis est locus iste

• Richard Wagner, Der Ring des Nibelungen [The Ring of the Nibelung]: 4 music dramas (Das Rheingold ["The Rhine Gold"], Die Walküre ["The Vakyrie"], Siegfried, Die Götterdämmerung ["The Twilight of the Gods"])

Some recommended recordings (the Avery Fisher Media Center will have some of these, but not all) [+ = recording of live performance])
  +Barenboim (Teldec): competent singing, good conducting
  +Böhm (Phillips): some great singing, pedestrian conducting
  +Boulez (Phillips): idiosyncratic conducting, uneven singing
  +Furtwängler (EMI): great singing and conducting, poor orchestra, from a 1953 radio broadcast;
  inexpensive (the 1954 Furtwängler recording of Die Walküre, with the Vienna Philharmonic, also
  on EMI, is one of the best available. There is also a +Furtwängler Ring from Milan,
  1951, on Fonit Cetra, that is very interesting.)
  Karajan (DG): slick, much great singing
  +Knappertsbusch (Melodram, Music & Arts): magnificent singing and conducting, fairly good sound for
  1956 (there are other Rings conducted by Knappertsbusch available as well, from +1955, +1957
  and +1958, but they do not compare with this one; his +1951 recording of Götterdämmerung, on
  Testament, is superb and recorded in good sound)
  +Krauss (Gala): great singing and conducting, from a 1953 radio broadcast, very inexpensive
  Levine (DG): some great singing, apart from the bad Siegfried, good conducting
Sawallisch (EMI): ok, relatively inexpensive
Solti (London): great singing, overdrawn conducting, technicolor sound (also available on a CD-ROM: Ring Disc, which includes a score, some analysis, and commentary)
(The Boulez, Barenboim, Levine, and Sawallisch Rings are also available on VHS, DVD, or laser disc.)

- Roesner CD MAP 6. Early Jazz, 1900-1930
  Roots
  1. Robert Johnson, "Sweet Home Chicago"
  2. Bessie Smith, "Sobbin' Hearted Blues" (1925, with Louis Armstrong)
  3.-4. Scott Joplin, "Maple Leaf Rag" (2 performances by Jelly Roll Morton, in the "original St. Louis" style and the "Morton" style)
  5. Jelly Roll Morton, "King Porter Stomp"
  6. The Young Tuxedo Brass Band, "Bourbon Street Parade" (return from the cemetery)
  New Orleans and beyond
  7. Original Dixieland Jazz Band, "Dixie Jazz Band One-Step" (1917)
  8. King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, "Dippermouth Blues"
  9. "Canal Street Blues"
  10. "Cakewalkin' Babies from Home"
  11. Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five, "Potato Head Blues"
  12. "West End Blues" (1928, with Earl Hines)
  13. "St James Infirmary"
  14. "Weather Bird" (Rag)
  15. Bix Beiderbecke, "Clarinet Marmalade" (1927, with the FrankTrumbauer Orchestra)
  16. "In a Mist"
  17. Sidney Bechet, "Four or Five Times" (1940, with Mugsy Spanier et al.)
  Roesner CD MAP 7: Early Jazz, 2: 1930-50
  1. Duke Ellington, "East St Louis Toodle-oo" (1926, DE and His Kentucky Club Orchestra)
  2. "Mood Indigo" (1930, DE and the Cotton Club Orchestra)
  3. "Cottontail" (1940)
  41. "Take the A Train" (1942, by Billy Strayhorn)
  5. "The Blues," from "Black, Brown, and Beige" (1946)
  6-7. "I Got It Bad" (2 performances, Ivy Anderson, Ella Fitzgerald)
  8. Count Basie, "One O'Clock Jump"
  9. "Lester Leaps Im" (1939, featuring Lester Young)
  10. "Taxi War Dance"
  11. Benny Goodman, "Moonglow" (1936, with Leonel Hampton)
  12. "Sing, Sing, Sing" (Carnegia Hall, 1938)
  13. Glenn Miller, "In the Mood"
  14. Billie Holliday "Back in Your Own Back Yard" (1938, with Lester Young, Count Basie, etc.)
  15. Ella Fitzgerald, "Solitude" (by Duke Ellington)
  16. Sarah Vaughn, "Lullabye of Birdland"
  17. Art Tatum, "Tiger Rag" (1938)
  Aside: Europe
  18. Django Reinhardt, "How High the Moon" (1947, with Stephane Grappelli, Quintet of the Hot Club of France)
  Bebop, small ensemble jazz, Art
  19. Dizzy Gillespie, "52nd Street Theme" (by Thelonius Monk)
  20. "Night in Tunisia"
  21. Charlie Parker, "Koko" (by Dizzy Gillespie, 1945)
  22. "Salt Peanuts " (DG 1946)
  23. "Marmaduke" (1948, with Miles Davis, John Lewis, Max Roach)
  24. "Steeplechase"
  25. Thelonius Monk, "Round Midnight"
List of readings


Some basic reference books


For further reading...
The Pythagorean tradition


Wagner


Jazz


