Expressive Culture: Sounds  
Course Number: V55.0730008  
Fall 2005

Instructors: Ana M Ochoa-Gautier  
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Office Hours:
All office hours are held weekly at 24 Waverly Place, Room 266F.

Ana M Ochoa-Gautier: Wednesday 2:00-4:00 or by appointment  
Bill Boyer: Monday 11-12:15 or by appointment  
Jessica Schwartz: Monday 9:30-10:45 or by appointment  
Tes Slominski: Monday 12:30-1:45 or by appointment

Lectures:
V55.0730008 Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00-3:15, Silver 320

Sections:
V55.0730009: Friday 11:00-12:15, Silver 318  
V55.0730010: Friday 11:00-12:15, Silver 218  
V55.0730011: Monday 8:00-9:15, Silver 318  
V55.0730012: Monday 9:30-10:45, Silver 318  
V55.0730013: Monday 11:00-12:15, Silver 318  
V55.0730014: Monday 12:30-1:45, Silver 320

General Objective:
Just as there are points of view, there are also “points of listening”. Even though music is a universal phenomenon, every culture listens and creates sounds in different ways. At the beginning of the twenty first century, one of the most pervasive musical experiences in different parts of the world is the possibility of listening and experiencing sounds from different cultures. The general objective of this course is to understand music as a communicative experience whose meaning is socially constructed and differs from one culture to another. We will do this by exploring mainly musics from South America, particularly Argentina and Brazil but we will also be making connections to musics from other areas of the world. We will be covering musics as different as tango or Brazilian funk and rap. At the same time, we will explore how sound is communicated across cultures, addressing not only the means of communication (the music industry, live performances, sound technologies) but also the problems and significance of blending musics from different cultures, a phenomenon that has intensified today due to the high transportability of sounds from different parts of the world.

The course will use reading, audio and audiovisual materials as well as invite guest musicians to perform.

Specific Objectives:
1. To understand music as a communicative phenomenon that is socially and culturally structured and experienced.
2. To explore the relation between sound technologies, the music industry and the social, aesthetic and ethical implications of the global circulation of sounds.
3. To gain an in-depth understanding of some of the popular musics from Argentina and Brazil and, through these, to musics of other parts of the world.
4. To explore the experience of listening and acoustic phenomena in general as a fundamental dimension of...
our everyday lives and as a critical arena of mediation between human beings, and between difference and sameness across cultures.

**Assignments:**

1. You will write weekly one-page papers whose content and topic will be defined at the beginning of each week or during your sections with the teaching assistants. The topics of the papers will vary from week to week. They are based both on the content of the class, on the reading assignments and on the listening assignments. For the realization of these papers it is important that you come to class, listen to the musical examples and do the readings. The totality of the one page papers add up to 45% of your total grade.

   *LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.*

2. Mid-term exam. The mid-term exam will be based on the readings, the listening examples, the audiovisual material and class discussions. The mid-term is worth 25% of your total grade.

   **Date of Mid-term exam: October 13**

3. Final exam The final exam will be based on the readings, the listening examples, the audiovisual material and class discussions. The final exam is worth 30% of your total grade.

   **Date of Final Exam: Tuesday, December 20 – 2PM – 3.50 PM**

**Books and Material for the Course:**

1. **Books and documents for reading:** Two books have been assigned for this course. These are:


   You can get these books at the NYU bookstore.

   Other documents for reading will be posted on the course blackboard site in the Folder Documents. Here you will also find the links to specific web pages which you need to read.

2. **Audio materials.** Listening to the music is just as important as the reading assignments. The music for the course will be posted on the blackboard site under the folder mp3s.

3. **Audiovisual materials** – All of the audiovisual materials will be seen during class sessions.

**Weekly Syllabus:**

**September 6-8 – Introduction: The Global Circulation of Sounds**

**September 13-15: Introduction to Argentina and the birth of tango**

**Readings:**


**September 20-22: Tango: What is tango? Socio-cultural context, early days.**

**READINGS:**


**September 27-29: Internationalization of tango and emergence of Carlos Gardel**
READINGS:


October 4-6 –Astor Piazzolla

[http://www.piazzolla.org/](http://www.piazzolla.org/)

October 11- Closure and review of Argentina and Tango
October 13- Mid-term