

Expressive Culture: Sounds
Cuban Music: The Anatomy of Sounds and Structure

Instructor: Yunior Terry, Department of Arts and Science (yuniorterry@nyu.edu)

Office hours

Instructor: office hours Mondays & Wednesday by appointment

Recitations

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Class Location: in-person

Silver Building, Room 320 (32 Waverly Pl, 3rd floor)

Tue & Thurs (2 - 3:15)

Course Description

Without the influence of Cuban music, today's New York would be a completely different place. As Mario Bauza said, "we came here and changed your music from the bottom up! And nobody knows this". The rhythmic revolution that took place starting from Machito and his Afro-Cubans in the 1940's, changed the course of American music forever. It became an integral part of the American soundscape.

In order to understand the evolution of Cuban music, we will spend some time learning about Cuban social structures, complex immigration history, and cultural heritage. We will cover the many genres of Cuban music that grew out of this mixture of history and social conditions. Class will cover an anatomy of the sounds that identify the various genres and make up Cuban Music's DNA. Students will become acquainted with these different musical styles and traditions, and will develop an understanding of the role of beat, syncopation and melodic counterpoint in Cuban music. Class work will include a variety of readings, DVD's, recordings and, for those who read music, analysis of selected musical scores. When possible we will attend performances of Cuban music in the NYC area. Reading, discussions and collective music making will be part of the course. We will be using primary source materials in the form of recorded interviews, periodicals and videos.

Required reading:

Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to Mambo by Ned Sublette.

Selected articles from different sources will be provided on a weekly basis through NYU classes.

A brief two-paragraph summary of each week's readings will be due the night before class at 11:59pm. This summary needs to be e-mailed to the course website each week.

Required listening: Each week a list of music titles and composers by genres in the order presented in class will be provided. There is required listening of at least 20 min of music outside the class, each week. Students are encouraged to seek out live performances in order to experience the character of the music. (When possible listings will be given for performances)

It is highly recommended that students subscribe to **Spotify Premium** (\$4.99 a month) to have easy access to all the music and playlists of songs related to this class. We will discuss some of the assigned selections in class but not listen to all of those selections assigned, so you will need to access them out of class to complete the work.

Readings and listening for each week should be completed before the following Monday's lecture.

Grading:

Attendance/ Participation (15%)

You are expected to attend every lecture and seminar meeting. If you cannot make a meeting, please let us know in advance. Attendance will be taken and participation noted. If you miss two meetings, you will need to meet with the instructor or the TA to discuss where you stand in the course. If you miss three or more meetings, your final standing in the course will automatically drop one letter grade, and will continue to drop if additional classes are missed.

Short summary exercises (20% of total grade; no more than 1 page each)

These short papers will allow for more freely developed reflections on certain topics, following specific readings selection.

ONE writing assignments (25% of total grade; no more than 5-6 pages each)

The assignments will test your understanding of the assigned texts (key arguments), course knowledge (core issues, lecture discussions, etc.), and reflective/critical engagement (ability to identify issues across texts, ability to relate specific concepts to broader ideas, etc.).

Midterm (15%) In-class examination.

Final project (25%)

This will take the form of a research paper (5-6 pages); performance; or a creative work developed around ideas introduced in class.

Deadlines: Late papers will be penalized. If you have an emergency, please contact your TA before the due date.

Academic honesty: The University considers plagiarism to be a very serious offense. The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, defines plagiarism as follows: “*plagiarism* refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as ‘the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own’... Plagiarism involves two kinds of wrongs. Using another person’s ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person’s work constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person’s ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get better grades or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud” (New York: MLA, 2003, p. 66).

For more information on NYU’s policies regarding academic integrity, please refer to this website:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html>

Status of the Recitation Instructors:

The recitation instructors for this course are brilliant graduate students who will soon be professors themselves. The recitation sections they lead are a central part of this course, and their evaluations of your written work and classroom participation will constitute the bulk of your grade. More importantly, they are on hand to answer your questions, help you learn how to become better writers and thinkers, and to make sure that your experience this semester is rich and positive. I trust that you will work closely with them, learn from them, and treat them with respect.

Etiquette

All conversations during lectures and recitation sections are distracting, so please refrain from talking (this also holds for when video and audio examples are being played). Your individual behavior goes a long way in setting a positive tone for the class. Your questions, comments and insights are more than welcome during lectures; just raise your hand and make your comments available to the entire class. Respect your peers and fellow students by not disrupting the class. Please do not use your computer or telephone during lectures or sections, not even discretely.

Syllabus Updates

During the course of the semester updates and changes to the readings and other assignments as well as due dates, may be made. The updates will be announced in class and will be posted on the course website.

Week 1.

Lecture (Jan/ 25)

Introduction: Themes and Requirements.

-What are your thoughts about learning a new culture and aesthetic?

Homework

Ada Ferrer. Freedom's Mirrors: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution, Introduction, pp.1- 16.

Lecture (Jan/ 27)

Week 2.

Lecture (Feb/ 1)

The Haitian Revolution: It's influence and impact in Cuba. Becoming the Jewel of the Caribbean.

Homework.

Alejo Carpentier. Musica in Cuba. Saumell and Nationalism, chapter 10, pp.185-193 & Ignacio Cervantes, chapter 12, pp. 204-213.

Lecture (Feb/ 3)

Early years. The main ingredients in the formation of the Cuban musical identity at the turn of the century: African Rhythms and sensibility in popular music. La Contradanza y la Danza.

Homework.

The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World; Michele Reid -- The Yoruba in Cuba: Origins, Identities and Transformation. chapter 6, pp 111- 124

Week 3.

Lecture (Feb/ 8)

The African Legacy: trans-cultural experiences and the needs of expression.

Visiting Artist: Oro de Igbo: Tambores y Cantos

Lecture (Feb/ 10)

Afro-Cuban Tradition and its Influence.

Homework.

Ned Sublette. Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to the Mambo. The Western and Central Sudanic Blues, Chapter 12, pp. 159- 174.

Week 4

Lecture (Feb/ 15)

Cuban Music on Film.

Film. They are we

Homework.

Ned Sublette. Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to the Mambo. The Romance of Revolution, Chapter 16, pp. 235- 256.

Lecture (Feb/ 17)

Week 5.

Lecture (Feb/ 22)

The Composers and styles that flourished around the first half of the 20th Century: El Danzon, Musica Campesina and Trova Santiaguera.

Homework.

Ned Sublette. Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to the Mambo. Rumba, Chapter 17, pp. 257- 272.

Lecture (Feb/ 24)

Understanding the clave. The RUMBA as a natural expression

Homework.

Robin Moore. Nationalizing Blackness. Echale Salsita, Sones and Musical Revolution, chapter 4, pp. 87- 113.

Week 6.

Lecture (March/1) (First writing assignment due)

El Son

Homework.

Ned Sublette. Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to the Mambo. Marti's Monster, Chapter 19, pp. 287- 295.

Lecture (March/ 3)

The New Republic. Exploring sounds and forms: Collective music making.

Homework.

Paul Austerlitz. Machito and Mario Bauza; Latin Jazz in US Mainstream. Chapter 3, pp. 42- 81.

Week 7.

Lecture (March/ 8)

Latin Jazz

Homework

Leonardo Acosta. Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One hundred years of Jazz in Cuba. Bebop Feeling and Mambo, **Chapter 4**

Lecture (March/ 10)

Guest Dancers: **TBA**

Exploring the different genres and the connection of body, mind and spirit with the clave.

Homework.

Listening assignment. Analyze three songs from different lists and write a short description and observation about the music.

SPRING BREAK (14- 20)

Week 8.

Lecture (March/ 22)

Cuban Music on film. **Nosotros la Musica**

Homework.

The Kingsmen and the Cha-cha-chá by Ned Sublette

Lecture (March/ 24)

Mambo King & The Cha-cha Craze: Analysis of Rhythms and their impact across the world

Homework.

Listening and analysis: Take one song from each playlist studied until now and describe in detail the music, genre, instrumentation and performance.

Week 9.

Lecture (March/ 29)

Overview and music

Lecture (March/ 31)

Midterm.

Homework

David F. Garcia. Arsenio Rodriguez and the Transnational Flows of Latin Popular Music. **Chapter 2.**

Week 10.

Lecture (April/ 5)

Visiting Artist. Benjamin Lapidus

Arsenio Rodriguez's Conjunto and Son Montuno Style.

Homework

Leonardo Acosta. Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One hundred years of Jazz in Cuba. Havana in the 1950s, **Chapter 6.**

Lecture (April/ 7)

El Bolero Filin

Homework ?

Week 11.

Lecture (April/ 12) (Research paper topic submission due)

Cuban music on films: Old Man Bebo

Homework

Ned Sublette. Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drum to the Mambo. Mambo Number Five, **Chapter 35**, pp. 547- 566.

Lecture (April/ 14)

Benny More

Homework.

Leonardo Acosta. Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One hundred years of Jazz in Cuba. Irakere and the takeoff of Cuban Jazz, **Chapter 9.**

Week 12.

Lecture (April/ 19)

El Jazz en Cuba

Homework.

Listening assignment. Analyze three songs from different lists and write a short description and observation about the music.

Lecture (April/ 21)

Understanding of the music: Collective exploration, and music making.

Homework.

Robin Moore. Music & Revolution: Cultural Change in Socialist Cuba. **Chapter 2**, pp. 56- 79.

Week 13.

Lecture (April/ 26)

The Revolution

Homework.

Robin Moore. Music & Revolution: Cultural Change in Socialist Cuba. **Chapter 5**, pp. 135-169.

Lecture (April/ 28) Guest Speaker Ned Sublette

The Composers and styles that flourished around the second half of the Twentieth Century: LA NUEVA TROVA.

Week 14.

Lecture (May/ 3)

Mercedes' presentation

Homework.

Vincenzo Perna. Timba: The Sound of the Cuban Crisis. **Chapter 2**, pp 54- 73

Lecture (May/ 5)

Music in Havana at the Dawn of the periodo especial: the emergence of Timba. Overview of what we have covered and class- wrap

Homework.

Watch the film: Cuba and the Camera Man

Week 15

Lecture (May/ 10)

Film discussion, overview of the semester, and class- wrap.

Lecture (May 12)

Final Class. (Final writing assignment due)

Listening material:

Danzon:

Arcaño y Sus Maravillas, Orquesta Aragon, Belisario Lopez

Rumba: Yambu, Guaguanco and Columbia:

Munequitos de Matanzas, Clave y Guaguanco, Yoruba Andabo, AfroCuba de Matanzas

Musica campesina:

Celina Gonzales, El Indio Nobori

Son:

Ignacio Piñeiro and Septeto Nacional, Septeto Boloña, Septeto Santiaguero, Jovenes Clasicos del Son, Sierra Maestra, Los Naranjos

Charanga:

La Aragon, Orquesta Jorin, Orq. Sublime, Orq. America, Marvillas de Floridas, La Aliamen, La Original de Manzanillo, La Ritmo Oriental

Conjuntos:

Arsenio Rodriguez, Conjunto Chapottin, Conjunto Rumabavana. Conjunto de Roberto Faz,

Bolero:

Jose Antonio Mendez, Cesar Portillo de la Luz, Martha Valdes, Elena Burke, Pepe Sanchez, Sindo Garay, Manuel Corona.

Jazz Cubano:

Frank Emilio Flyn, Emiliano Salvador, Chucho Valdes and Irakere, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Yosvany Terry, Dafnis Prieto

Nueva Trova:

Silvio Rodriguez, Pablo Milanés, Santiago Feliu, Carlos Varela, Xiomara Laugart.

Timba:

NG La Banda, Los Van Van, Puppy y Los Que Son Son, Issac Delgado, Paulo FG. Banboleo.