

Music Appreciation & Performance II

Spring 2012, A Block Classroom: Room 212

Instructor: Eric de Lora Office Hours: Friday Lunch

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I know I'm no glamour girl, and it's not easy for me to get up in front of a crowd of people. It used to bother me a lot, but now I've got it figured out that God gave me this talent to use, so I just stand there and sing... and the only thing better than singing is more singing.

ELLA FITZGERALD, singer

Music is everybody's possession. It's only publishers who think that people own it.

JOHN LENNON, composer

Music doesn't lie. If there is something to be changed in this world, then it can only happen through music.

JIMI HENDRIX, guitarist

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about experiencing music: thinking it, creating it, rehearsing it and performing it as well as listening to it, reading about it, and talking about it. Enjoy!

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Goals:

1. To fully understand and participate in the process of music-making.
2. To engage in an active, critical inquiry into the nature and role of music and its place in history.
3. To gain an increased understanding of the nature and the interpretation of primary and secondary musical and historical sources.
4. To evaluate effective musical choices by watching professional music performances.

Outcomes

Performance Skills:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to read and notate music.
2. Map musical events in a piece of music.
3. Working in small groups, students will organize, compose, perform and record one or more piece(s) for instrumentalists.
 - a. Students will demonstrate musical skills to perform a varied repertoire.
 - b. Students will demonstrate the skills to compose, arrange and/or improvise music for others.
4. Working in small groups, students will organize, compose, perform and record one or more piece(s) for vocalists.
 - a. Students will demonstrate musical skills to perform a varied repertoire.
 - b. Students will demonstrate the skills to compose, arrange and/or improvise music for others.

Appreciation Skills:

1. Identify and explain the musical eras: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modern .
2. Identify and explain different arrangement of instrumental pieces.
3. Identify and explain different period styles and their characteristics.
4. Identify and explain different styles of vocal music.
5. Identify and explain the role of the music in popular culture of the era.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Instrument
- Music, as assigned
- One blank notebook with ample supply of lined notebook paper
- Pencil, pen or other writing instrument

COURSE OUTLINE

- Week 1: Musical Elements
- Week 2: The 21st century and new technology.
- Week 3: The 20th century: 1945-2000
- Week 4: The 20th century: 1900-1945
- Week 5: Impressionism: 1888-1918
- Week 6: The Romantic: Vocal Forms
- Week 7: The Romantic: Instrumental I: Small Forms
- Week 8: The Romantic: Instrumental II: Large Forms
- Week 9: The Classic: Vocal Forms
- Week 10: The Classic: Instrumental I: Small Forms
- Week 11: The Classic: Instrumental II: Large Forms
- Week 12: The Baroque: Sacred: Vocal vs. Instrumental
- Week 13: The Baroque: Secular: Vocal vs. Instrumental
- Week 14: The Renaissance: Vocal vs. Instrumental
- Week 15: The Medieval: Sacred vs. Secular

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The only way to improve as a performer is to perform, and that also includes composers and improvisers. Everyone performs something—either a solo or as a small group.

With that in mind:

1. Perform at one (1) *Wednesday All School* meeting a solo or group piece of your choice.
2. Perform at the *March brown bag concert* during lunch, March 2 at 11:45 AM.
3. Perform at the *April brown bag concert* during lunch, April 20 at 11:45 AM.
4. Perform as a member of the Band for the Theatre Production *Godspell*, May 11-12 at 7 PM, extra rehearsals 330-530 PM May 7-8-9-10-11.
5. Perform at the *Film & Arts Night Concert*, June 1 at 7PM. (Extra credit only.)

The only way to improve as an appreciator is to spend time thinking, reading, listening about music, and that also includes composers and improvisers. Everyone will “heighten their understanding” and perception of music by:

1. Write a **10-12 page research paper** on a composer from a musical era (Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modern). See guidelines below.
2. Attend **two (2) professional concerts** outside of class over the course of this semester and write a **1-2 page concert review on each one** (similar to what you read in the New York Times). Please ask me if you have questions about suitable concerts or events.

RESEARCH PAPER

The Research Paper consists of an 10-12 page paper focusing on one composer from music history (1000 CE-2012 CE) with an introductory essay of 3-5 pages as to why this composer’s work is significant, important, etc. and a 1-2 page analysis/review of each of five (5) pieces from the composer’s body of work. The paper should include footnotes from several sources (not only Wikipedia), as well as a bibliography with a minimum of 10 references (including recordings, scores, articles, etc.). *The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (available online through public libraries is THE place to begin). **The paper is due Friday, June 8 at 5 PM in my mailbox in the Maybeck Office.** Good Luck!!

The composer essay should speak to what the five (5) musical works have in common, so you should know them thoroughly (meaning repeated listening). Through comparison you should be able to discern the composer’s style (those traits and/or characteristics that make his/her work unique from every other composer). Obviously, you will need to review the musical works first, and then write the essay after you have had time to process all the information you have collected. Analyze the works on all levels: the sociocultural influences on the music; the function of the music (sacred, secular, church vs., court; and the use of all the elements of music (melody, rhythm, harmony, texture, form, genre, instrumentation, etc.) to create the composer’s style. If there is time, you could/should listen to as many of the composer’s other works to broaden the scope of your paper and deepen your understanding of your chosen “auteur.”

Task Breakdown (courtesy of Michael Ditmore):

- Choose the Composer
- Choose the 5 Works and master them through repeated listening
- Assemble detailed notes of each work as it is played
- Listen to other works by same composer as available
- Gather articles or information (book) about the composer
- Assemble notes on the articles, book and sources
- Begin writing reviews of the 5 Works
- Form a provisional thesis
- Continue writing reviews and revising thesis as necessary
- Write the opening essay and/or finish the body of the paper
- Rewrite your thesis about the composer and/or the opening paragraph of the paper
- Print the paper
- Turn in the paper

EVALUATION

Your final grade will come from:

25% Classroom participation/discussion

40% Performance activities (10% for each of 4 events)

25% Research Paper

10% Concert critiques

PRACTICES (*thanks to Dave Ramin*):

I hope you feel welcome in this class and help make others feel welcome too. It should be an intriguing class and I hope you have a positive, rewarding and even exciting time this semester. If not, please let me know. Never hesitate to talk with me before or after class, during office hours or any other time we can arrange. My email is at the top of this syllabus for you to use. With this in mind, the primary rule in class is: Everyone, Everything Treated with RESPECT. Meaning:

- No personal put downs or purposefully hurtful comments.
- You can sit next to who you want to unless you get distracted.
- Do not disrupt the class. Comments on topic are cool – conversations off to the side and random comments are not.
- No one should have to raise their voice to be heard.
- Take care of the room and of each other.

Please come to class prepared. Meaning:

- Have your music, notebook, and a pencil or pen in hand, ready to learn.
- Go to the bathroom, eat snacks and get a drink before or after class. Our time together is limited and leaving the class will be disruptive and will often mean missing something important.

Always remember: Understanding something is not necessarily agreeing with it.