MUSC275: MUSIC AND DOWNTOWN NEW YORK

WINTER SESSION 2018

Instructor: Eric Charry, MS201, ext. 2579, echarry@wesleyan.edu
Course hours: Jan. 8-22, every other day, 10:00am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-4:00pm
Office hours: TBA and by appointment
Course website: http://musc125.blogs.wesleyan.edu/

SYLLABUS

Course Description: This course will explore the history and simultaneous flourishing of four distinct music communities that inhabited and shaped downtown New York City during two especially rich decades, the 1950s and 60s: urban blues and folk revivalists; an African American jazz-based avant-garde; Euro-American experimentalists; and Lower East Side rock groups. These four vanguard musical movements, at the heart of dramatic cultural shifts at the time, with reverberations and legacies that remain relevant up to the present day, are an essential part of American history. Much of the course will be devoted to discovering their points of convergence and divergence, especially in conversation with broader contemporaneous currents, including the civil rights movement and related notions of freedom, shifting youth cultures, music and politics, and avant garde aesthetics. Drawing from primary sources, we will read about and listen to recordings of a wide variety of musicians, view a broad cross section of film from the era, identify aesthetic and cultural trends, and study the local industry that supported them, including record labels, coffee houses, clubs, and concert spaces.

Students will carry out a variety of projects throughout the semester including written papers, individual and group presentations, and adding content to an interactive google map of the neighborhood.

Required book (available at https://www.wesleyanrjjulia.com/)
David Hajdu. 2001. *Positively 4th Street: The Life and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña, and Richard Fariña*. New York: North Point Press. ISBN-10: 0312680694

Course Requirements
Reading: Reading the required book, articles, and chapters (online at E-Res) is required as indicated in the syllabus and announced in class.

Listening: Class Spotify playlists (under user echarry) contain the required listening for each of the four components. Additionally, audio and video links will be used extensively on the course blog. Students should listen to and study the pieces discussed in each class.

Assignments:
1) Four projects (one on each of the four music communities), to be chosen in consultation with the instructor, which can include any of the following:
   - Map content (on a venue, artist, or record label)
   - Podcast
   - Reacting to the Past (group role playing presentation)
   - Research paper (5-7 pages)
   - Other relevant creative endeavor
2) Short quizzes on the reading assignments for each of the four music communities.
3) Occasional Moodle forum responses to the readings.

Oral Presentation: Students will give one solo presentation on their projects to the class.

Attendance and Other Policies: Consistent class attendance is required and students are expected to arrive on time. Any problems should be discussed with the instructor as unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade. Laptops should be closed unless being used for research that is directly relevant to the class discussion.

Grades: Your grade will be determined as follows:

60%: the four projects (4 x 15%)
20%: quizzes (4 x 5%)
10%: Moodle forum posts
10%: class participation and presentations

Students with Disabilities

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Accessibility Services, located in North College, rooms 021/022, or call 860-685-5581 to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS WORK

(Subject to change)

Day 1
Mon. 1/8 **Introduction**
Mapping the History of the Neighborhood
Charry (in progress), "Introduction"

Day 2
Weds. 1/10 **Urban Folk Revival**
Charry (in progress), "The Urban Folk Scene"
Hajdu (2001), *Positively 4th Street*
Dylan (2004: 15-22, 243-248, 261-264, 272-288), *Chronicles* (excerpts)
DUE: Moodle post

Day 3
Fri. 1/12 **Jazz**
Charry (in progress), "The Jazz Scene"
L. Jones/Baraka (1962: 21-24; 1963: 92-98),
"Minton's," and "New York Loft and Coffee Shop Jazz"
Szwed (1998: 183-185, 190-191, 193-198, 202-211, 218-237, 243, 253-256, 262-266),
Space is the Place (excerpts)
Spellman (1966: 6-27, 36-37, 67-68), "Cecil Taylor" (excerpts)
Kelley (2009: 225-239), *Thelonious Monk . . .* (May 1957-December 1957)
H. Jones (1990: 33-37, 172, 187-189), *How I Became Hettie Jones* (excerpts)
DUE: Moodle post; Preliminary urban folk revival project proposal

Day 4
Sun. 1/14 **Experimental Music**
Charry (in progress), "The Experimental Scene"
Banes (1993: 1-11), "Introduction"
Bernstein (2002: 113-133), "John Cage and the Aesthetic of Indifference"
DUE: Moodle post; Preliminary jazz project proposal

Day 5
Tues. 1/16 **Rock Underground**
Charry (in progress), "The Rock Underground"
Heylin (1993/2005: xi-xv, 3-31),
"Preface," "Happiness is a Warm Drone," and "All the Needles are on Red!"
Henderson (1981: 68-81), *The Life of Jimi Hendrix* (chapter 3)
Sanders (1994a, 1994b),
CD liner notes to *The Fugs First Album* and *The Fugs Second Album*
Willis (1979/1997: 70-81), "Velvet Underground"
DUE: Moodle post; Preliminary experimental music project proposal

Day 6
Thurs. 1/18 **Urban Folk Revival (morning) and Jazz Projects (afternoon) Workshops**
QUIZ: Urban Folk Revival; Jazz
DUE: Urban Folk Revival and Jazz project drafts; Preliminary rock project proposal

Day 7
Sat. 1/20 **Experimental Music (morning) and Rock Projects (afternoon) Workshops**
QUIZ: Experimental music; Rock
DUE: Experimental music and Rock project drafts

Day 8
Mon. 1/22 **Project Presentations**

All Project Write Ups DUE: 4:30pm Tuesday January 23, 2018

REFERENCES

Banes, Sally
1993 *Greenwich Village 1963: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Bernstein, David
2002 "John Cage and the Aesthetic of Indifference," in Steven Johnson (ed.), *The New York Schools of Music and Visual Arts*, New York: Routledge, 113-133.
Charry, Eric
in prog. *Four Cultural Vanguards: Music and Downtown New York in the 1950s and 60s*. Manuscript in progress.
Dylan, Bob
2004 *Chronicles*. Vol. 1. New York: Simon and Schuster.
Hajdu, David
2001 *Positively 4th Street: The Life and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña, and Richard Fariña*. New York: North Point Press.
Henderson, David
1981 *'Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky: The Life of Jimi Hendrix*. New York: Bantam.
Heylin, Clinton
1993 *From the Velvets to the Voidoids: A Pre-Punk History for a Post-Punk World*. New York: Penguin. New ed. 2005, Chicago: Chicago Review Press.
Jones, Hettie
1990 *How I Became Hettie Jones*. New York: Grove Press.
Jones, Leroi (aka Amiri Imamu Baraka)
1962 "Minton's," in Jones/Baraka (1967: 21-24).
1963 "New York Loft and Coffee Shop Jazz," *Downbeat*. In Jones/Baraka (1967: 92-98).
1967 *Black Music*. New York: William Morrow.
Kelley, Robin D. G.
2009 *Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original*. New York: Free Press.
Sanders, Ed
1994a Notes to *The Fugs First Album*, (reissue of *The Village Fugs*), Fantasy, FCD-9668-2.
1994b Notes to *The Fugs* (reissue of *The Fugs Second Album*), Fantasy, FCD-9669-2.
Spellman, A. B.
1966 *Four Lives in the Bebop Business*. New York: Pantheon. Reprinted with new Introduction, 1985, New York: Limelight; new edition and Introduction, 2004, published as *Four Jazz Lives*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Szwed, John
1998 *Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra*. New York: Da Capo.
Willis, Ellen
1979 "Velvet Underground," in Greil Marcus (ed.), *Stranded: Rock and Roll for a Desert Island*, New York: Knopf. Reprinted in Albin Zak (ed.), *The Velvet Underground Companion: Four Decades of Commentary*, 1997, New York: Schirmer, 70-81.