MEREDITH 188  Sec. 1  American Popular Music: Jazz
J. Dornenburg
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Fall 2009
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Recommended DVD viewing: Ken Burns Jazz (PBS TV, 2001, ten 2-hour DVD segments); 'Round Midnight (music by Herbie Hancock, starring Dexter Gordon, with Wayne Shorter, Chet Baker, Bobby Hutcherson, John McLaughlin, Billy Higgins, etc., 1986); Straight, No Chaser, (Thelonious Monk documentary, 1988).

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a survey course of jazz history. Emphasis is on the evolution of different jazz styles and trends, through the study of recorded examples and videos by some of the major artists of the 20th century. Discussion of the social conditions surrounding the evolution of jazz will be included.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will acquire a general familiarity with the basic musical structures and stylistic developments of jazz, as well as becoming familiar with some of its major artists and innovators. Through attendance at live jazz performances, students will have the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge to current issues and practices in jazz music. Aural identification of the basic jazz forms, styles, and artists is a major objective.

PREREQUISITES: This is an upper division General Education class from area C4. There are no musical prerequisites. Students will be required to learn some basic music terminology, and will need to apply themselves to acquiring the skill of serious listening.

2 CONCERT PAPERS: Students must attend 2 live jazz concerts (no videos or tv) during the semester and submit a 2-page typed evaluation for each concert experience: please use 12-point type, 1-inch margins, and double spacing. Do not add an extra cover sheet or put the papers in any kind of folder. Type your name and Music 118B at the top.

Try to identify the jazz styles that are performed (e.g. Dixieland, big band/swing, bebop, free, post-bop, fusion, etc.) and give your reasons for your conclusions. For example, was it a soloist, combo, or big band? How much was being read from lead sheets or charts, and how much was improvised? Try to link the style of the performers to a style or individual artist we have studied in class or one you have heard on your own. It is sometimes possible to speak with the artists and ask them directly about their style and influences. Spend some time listening for structural form, especially the 12-bar blues and 32 bar song forms.

There are jazz concerts here at the music department by the CSUS jazz bands and guest groups; CSUS concerts will often have a printed program which should be stamped at the end of the concert and stapled to your paper. You are not restricted to campus events; commercial concerts, other college groups, and restaurant/bar/clubs are all acceptable (note: programs will not usually be available in these circumstances, and this is still acceptable for credit.).

Papers may be turned in anytime during the semester, but not later than Dec 3. Concert papers are not given letter grades but failure to turn in both papers in satisfactory form (plus = satisfactory, minus = unsatisfactory) will result in the final grade being lowered one full letter grade. Students may submit an extra concert paper to correct an unsatisfactory (-) mark, but there is no "extra" credit.

2 FILM PAPERS: Students must submit a 2-page typed critique/reaction to each of the films on Louis Armstrong and Thelonious Monk that will be shown in class. Do not summarize the film material, but rather focus on some aspect(s) of the information presented that is new to you or made you see the artist, jazz music, or American society in a different light. Film papers are due in the class following the viewing. Internet plagiarism will receive no credit, and could affect the student’s general standing in the class.

EXAMS: There will be three non-cumulative exams given according to the class schedule. Each exam will feature multiple choice/true-false questions as well as five aural identification questions taken from the CDs which accompany the textbook. SCANTRON 882 test sheets are required. EXAMS CANNOT BE MADE UP. It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with proof that a personal emergency or illness prevented them from taking an exam; in these cases a neutral grade will be assigned and the course grade will be based upon the student's other exam results.
GRADING: Each of the three exams count for 25% of the final grade. The successful completion of the four required papers will make up the remaining 25%. The papers are assigned a combined point total equal to one exam. Zero points will be added if any papers are missing, which will effectively lower the final grade by at least one full letter grade. There is no "extra credit" work in Music 118B.

COURSE SCHEDULE: Topics may vary according to the progress of the class and unpredictable opportunities. Exam dates will not change.

Sept. 1  Music Fundamentals and Jazz  Chapter 1
Sept. 3  Roots of Jazz  Chapter 2
Sept. 8  Blues and song forms  Chapter 3
Sept. 10 New Orleans-Style Dixieland  Chapter 5
Sept. 15 Louis Armstrong film  pgs. 91-96
Sept. 17 Louis Armstrong (end of film and lecture)
Sept. 22 State-required “Furlough Day”  NO CLASS
Sept. 24 Chicago-Style Dixieland  Armstrong film paper due  Chapter 5
Sept. 29 Chicago-Style Dixieland  Chapter 5
Oct. 1  EXAM I
Oct. 6  Intro to Swing/Big Bands  Chapter 6
Oct. 8  State-required “Furlough Day”  NO CLASS.
Oct. 13 Duke Ellington  Chapter 7
Oct. 15 Jazz Singers: Holiday, Fitzgerald, Vaughan  pgs. 139-152, pg. 187
Oct. 20 Other swing bands and combos  Chapter 6
Oct. 22 Thelonious Monk film  Chapter 8
Oct. 27 Bebop  Monk film paper due  Chapter 8
Oct. 29 Bebop: Charlie Parker  Chapter 8
Nov. 3  EXAM II
Nov. 5  Cool Jazz and 3rd Stream  Chapter 9
Nov. 10 Hard Bop: Silver, Blakey, etc.  Chapter 11
Nov. 12 Miles Davis  Chapter 10
Nov. 17 John Coltrane  Chapters 11 and 12
Nov. 19 Hard Bop/Latin Jazz  Chapter 11, pgs. 189-191
Nov. 24 State-required “Furlough Day”  NO CLASS
Nov. 26 THANKSGIVING DAY:  NO CLASS
Dec. 1  Free Form Jazz  Chapter 12
Dec. 3  Jazz-Rock/Fusion  CONCERT PAPERS DEADLINE  Chapter 13
Dec. 8  Fusion
Dec. 10  Straight-Ahead, Acid Jazz, etc.  Chapter 14
Dec. 15 (Tues.)  EXAM III - 12:45-2:45pm