

MUS 78A, History of Jazz, Summer 2008
Michael Dessen, University of California, Irvine
Extension Program, Glion, Switzerland
Syllabus

Course meets: 10:30-12:30, M/T/W/Th, Room 2-013

Course webpage: <http://music.arts.uci.edu/mdessen>

Instructor email: mdessen@uci.edu

Course description

A broad overview of how jazz traditions developed during the 20th century, this course invites you to learn new ways of listening to music, while also exploring its changing roles and meanings within society. From its origins in African American culture barely a century ago, jazz has often challenged existing distinctions between "art" and "popular" music, and today is an internationally respected art form that is revered by classical musicians and hip hop artists alike. This course will introduce you to a wide range of key innovators from jazz' multifaceted histories, as we survey musical evolutions and the debates and aspirations that surrounded them.

Required materials

There is one required book which you must purchase in advance. It is a small, inexpensive paperback book that will cost roughly \$10-\$15 and is available through the major online booksellers:

Title: *Jazz 101: A complete Guide to Learning and Loving Jazz*

Author: John Szwed

Publisher/date: New York: Hyperion, 2000.

ISBN: 0-7868-8496-7

In addition, you will be given access to the recorded music selections that will be required listening for the course and exams.

Assignments and exams

Listening and reading assignments will be given as we go. Here are some general guidelines for how to approach them:

Listening: The listening assignments are a crucial part of this class, and a good portion of each exam will focus on identifying and discussing the assigned tracks. It is important to take good notes on the tracks we listen to in class, and to spend time outside of class listening to them in a focused way. The midterm and final will cover roughly 20 tracks each. In addition to the required listening assignments, there will also be optional tracks available that may be briefly discussed and sampled in class, but will not be part of the identification section on the exams.

Reading assignments: The readings are important background for lectures and discussions, but you are not expected to know every single name or detail mentioned in the book. Lectures (and at times handouts) will clarify the terms, people and ideas from the readings that you should focus on. Taking careful notes in class and keeping up with the reading and listening assignments is all crucial preparation for the exams.

Exams: On the midterm and final exams, you will have to identify the musical examples we studied by ear, as well as answer short answer or identification questions related to the listening examples and other topics we covered.

Grading

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Concert report assignment (pass/fail): 20%

Midterm exam: 40%

Final exam: 40%

In addition, please note the attendance policy outlined by the Glion staff and posted with the program documents.

Concert attendance and concert report assignment

As announced in detail already over email, we will be attending one concert at the nearby Montreaux Jazz Festival. The concert is on Monday, July 14 and the concert report is due by 9am on Thursday, July 17. Because of the time limitation the length requirement is only 1.5 to 2

pages, double spaced. Specific questions to address will be listed on a handout you'll receive prior to the concert.

Special needs

If you have a disability that affects your ability to complete the assignments or tests on time, you must come see me at the beginning of the semester to make advance arrangements.

Office hours and getting help

If you have any trouble with the course, it is important to seek help early rather than wait until the end of the quarter. Please [email me](#) some times you are free.