Arts • Politics • Society & Space • UC Center London, 2017

THE LONDON MUSIC SCENE

Instructor: Justin Lorentzen

Course Outline
This course will contextualise London as a vibrant world centre of popular music innovation. To do this, the inter-cultural dialogue between Britain and America will be explored to examine the history of popular musical forms.

To understand the impact of genres such as Blues, Jazz and Rock ‘n’ Roll, concepts such as the Black Atlantic will emphasise music as a medium of cultural exchange, and the importance of investigating the wider political and social dimensions in which music is made.

Post-World War II revolutions in popular music made London and the UK a creative hub in global music culture because of the settlement of diasporic peoples. The course will therefore explain the cultural frameworks for the emergence of Pop, Punk, Ska, Reggae and Hip Hop. An examination of contemporary London’s dynamic musical effervescence will also be investigated.

This is an interdisciplinary course examining the historical, sociological, aesthetic, technological and commercial elements of contemporary (mainly North American and British) popular music. Therefore, the course deals specifically with the origins and development of USA and UK popular music, particularly in the post-1945 era, and focuses upon topics including the relationship between style, subculture and music, in addition to the impact of new technologies on music production and marketing. Audio–visual resources and a field trip are combined with lectures and in-class discussions.

Learning Outcomes
Students do not require a background in music or music studies. The course will enable students to understand the links between the sociological settings in which music is made and produced. Popular music will be considered as a medium of social change and renewal with the major focus being on music’s political significance.

The aim of this interdisciplinary course is to trace the historical development of Anglo-American popular music in its social, economic and cultural contexts. Within a broad survey framework, the objective of the course is to help students develop a critical understanding and appreciation of the ways in which popular music in its various generic forms has reflected, commented upon and helped shape culture. Considering music as a cultural practice that provides not merely entertainment but a communal space for personal, social and political expression, the course links popular music to broader issues of power. Thus it asks – What is permitted or forbidden? Who is included or excluded? Who speaks and who is silent? And students will discover, some forms of popular music have functioned as vital expressive media for diverse, often politically and economically disadvantaged groups. The course also analyses music as a business – a crucial component of those “cultural industries” which are vitally important to the economic performance of post-industrial societies such as Britain and the United
States. The course examines the development of the music industry since the late 1940s and focuses particularly upon recent challenges to the global hegemony of the multinational corporations which control the music industry.

Methods of Study
A variety of instructional methods will be used. Lectures, seminars and presentations will focus on visual and audio experiential learning. A concert report enables students to link up class based learning with direct experience of the London music scene and the diverse venues to be found in the city. Emphasis is placed on exploring the alternative, outside the mainstream venues. Essay titles will be circulated relating to topics exploring the popular musical US/UK intercultural dialogue. Titles are provided but flexibility will be exercised to reflect students tastes and interests.

COURSE POLICIES

Contact and Office Hours
Justin is available directly after class between 1 -2 if you wish to make an appointment please email johanlorpheejus@aol.co.uk

Course Etiquette
Students should seek to actively take part in discussions, whilst respecting questions and answers from others. Please arrive punctually for all classes and learning activities. Mobile phones must be turned off during class. Computers can be used during class, but this should only be to facilitate note taking.

Attendance Policy
The attendance policy is written in full in your academic handbook. In short, attendance at ALL sessions and excursions is obligatory, failure of which will result in an automatic grade deduction.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment outline
1. Class Participation 20 %
2. Concert Report 20 %
3. Term Essay 30 %
4. Exam 30 %
COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1:


Class 2:

High vs. Low Culture; Vertical vs. Horizontal Definitions of Culture; The 'Legitimisation' of the Popular. Blues Britannia. *The Black Atlantic*. Reading: *Youth Culture and Popular Music*. *Andy Bennett*

Class 3:


Class 4:


Class 5:


Class 6:


Class 7:


*Hand in Concert Report.*

Mid-term break:

Class 9:

Consuming the Popular. London and Fashion. Youth Identities, Subcultures; Punk, Skins Ska and Reggae. The Body; Leisure; Desire in Pop and the pleasures of resistance. *Fashioning Music*
and Gender Ambivalence. (Glam and Bowie) 


Class 10:


Class 11:

Post Punk, UK Indie and the Rise of Brit Pop. The London of Brit-Pop. The recycling of the 60s. Reading: Youth Culture and Style: Jo Croft

Class 12:


Class 14:


Class 14:


Hand in Term Essay.

Class 15:

UK and USA. A special musical relationship? Revision and evaluation.

EXAM:

UC London Bloomsbury Center 
The London Music Scene 
Justin J. Lorentzen

Required Reading (found in the ACCENT Library)

Tara Brabazon, Topics in Popular Music (Sage 2011)
Janice Miller, **Fashion and Music** (Berg 2011)  
Larry Starr, & Christopher Waterman, **American Popular Music: The Rock Years** (OUP 2005)  
Joe Boyd, **White Bicycles: Making Music in the 1960s** (Serpents Tail Press 2005)

**RECOMMENDED READING LIST: MUSIC AND POPULAR CULTURE:**

Iain MacDonald, **Revolution in the Head** (Pimlico 1998).  
Ruth Padel, **I'm a Man. Sex, Gods and Rock 'n' Roll** (Faber and Faber, 2000).  
Paul Gorman, **In their own Write, Adventures in the Music Press** (Sanctuary, 2001.)  
Richard Meltzer, **A Whore just like the Rest** (Da Capo Press, 2000).  
Dave Thompson, **The Dark Reign of Gothic Rock** (Helter Skelter 2002).  
Louis Barfe, **Where Have All the Good Times Gone** (Atlantic Books 2005).  
Iain McKell & Liz Farrelly, **Fashion Forever** (Imprint 2005).  
Joe Kerr & Andrew Gibson, **London From Punk to Blair** (Reaktion Books, 2003).  
Roger Scruton, **An Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture** (Duckworth, 1998).  
Paul Gilroy, **After Empire** (Routledge 2004).  
Steve Redhead, **The End of the Century Party** (MUP 1990).  
Terry Eagleton, **The Idea of Culture** (Blackwell, 2000).  
Gary Valentine, **New York Rocker** (Sidewick and Jackson 2002).  
Gary Valentine, **Turn Off Your Mind** (Sidewick & Jackson 2003).  
Christopher Cox, **Audio Culture** (Continuum 2004).  
David Toop, **Haunted Weather** (Serpent’s Tail 2004).  
David Toop, **Rap Attack** (Serpent’s Tail 2000, has just been reprinted and updated).  
Pat Gilbert, **Passion is a Fashion** (Aurum 2005).  
Bill Harry, **The Beatles Encyclopedia** (Virgin 2000).  
Greil Marcus, **Dead Elvis** (HUP 1991).  
Michael Bracewell, **England is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie** (London: Flamingo 1998).  
A Lewens, **Walk on By: The Story of Popular Song** (BBC Books 2001).  
The Politics and Sociology of Pop

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D. Clarke. The Rise & Fall of Popular Music

A. De Curtis (ed). The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock ‘n’ Roll

A. De Curtis. Present Tense: Rock ‘n’ Roll & Culture

R. Denselow. When the Music’s Over: The Story of Political Pop

P. Ennis. The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of Rock ‘n’ Roll in American Music

P. Friedlander. Rock and Roll: A Social History

S. Frith. Music for Pleasure: Essays in the Sociology of Pop

S. Frith & A. Goodwin. On Record: Rock, Pop & the Written Word

S. Frith. Performing Rites: The Value of Popular Music

S. Frith. Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure & the Politics of Rock ‘n’ Roll

G. Gaar. She’s A Rebel: The History of Women in Rock ‘n’ Roll

R. Garofalo (ed). Rockin’ the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements

R. Garofalo & S. Chapple. Rock ‘n’ Roll is Here to Pay: The History & Politics of the Music Industry

C. Gillett. The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll, ed

P. Guralnick. Feel Like Goin’ Home: Portraits in Blues & Rock ‘n’ Roll

P. Guralnick. Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley

D. Hebdige. Cut ‘n’ Mix: Culture, Identity & Caribbean Music

D. Hebdige. Subculture: The Meaning of Style

D. Hesmondhalgh & K. Negus eds. Popular Music Studies

C. Heylin. Dylan: Behind the Shades


C. Heylin. From the Velvets to the Voidoids: A Pre-Punk History for a Post-Punk World

G. Lipsitz. Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism & the Poetics of Place

B. Longhurst. Popular Music & Society

I. MacDonald. Revolution in the Head: The Beatles Records & the Sixties ed

G. Marcus. In the Fascist Bathroom: Writings on Punk, 1977-92

G. Marcus. Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century

G. Marcus. Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock ‘n’ Roll Music, ed

G. Melly. Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in Britain, ed

K. Negus.  Music Genres & Corporate Cultures
R. Palmer.  Dancing in the Street
T. Polhemus.  Street Style: From Sidewalk to Cawalk
Pountain, Dick & David Robbins  Cool Rules : The Anatomy of an Attitude
J. Savage.  England’s Dreaming: The Sex Pistols & Punk Rock
S. Sayres (ed).  The 60s Without Apology
A. Seago.  Burning the Box of Beautiful Things
C. Shaar Murray.  Crosstown Traffic: Jimi Hendrix & the Post War Rock ‘n’ Roll Revolution
J. Shepherd & P. Wicke.  Music & Cultural Theory
R. Shuker.  Understanding Popular Music
J. Street.  Rebel Rock: The Politics of Popular Music
D. Szatmary.  Rockin’ in Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll
D. Toop.  The Rap Attack
K. Verney.  African Americans & US Popular Culture
B. Ward Just My Soul Responding : Rhythm & Blues, Black Consciousness & Race Relations
N. Whiteley.  Pop Design : From Modernism to Mod
P. Wicke.  Rock Music: Culture, Aesthetics & Sociology

CONCERT REPORT INSTRUCTIONS: Write the name and artist or group you went to see, and the date of the show in bold. Staple the ticket stub to the back of the report.

Questions To Consider And Answer When Writing Your Report:

• In what musical genre(s) or styles would you place this music? What tradition does this music come from?
• Name the instrumentation & number of performers.
• Were the electric or acoustic instruments used, or a mix?
• Is this instrumentation characteristic of the genre? Why or why not?
• Describe the repertoire. Did you know some of the songs? (give examples)
• What was the function of the music? Was it for dancing, was it meant to be listened to attentively or was it background music, or?
• Describe the audience. Be observant but avoid judgements.
• Approximately how many people were at the show?
• Can you make any generalizations about the audience demographic?
• Was there a sense that this band was associated with a certain musical community or geographical ‘scene’?
• Describe the venue (intimate, smoky, crowded, seated audience, dance floor, lighting...).
• Was this venue appropriate for this performance? Why or why not?
• How was this music financed? Admission fee, sales or other?
• How did this music affect you?
• Other observations?
JAZZ, ROCK AND POP MUSIC VENUES IN LONDON:

- Ain't Nothing but The Blues Bar. 20 Kingly St Soho. Nr Oxford Circus Tube. Recommended.
- Jazz Cafe. 5 Parkway, Camden Town. Cutting edge Jazz and Fusion. A trendy, young venue. Many big name stars.
- 606 Club. Lots Road Chelsea. Jazz 7 Nights a week.
- Ronnie Scott's. Frith Street Soho. The oldest Jazz Club in London. Traditional, excellent but very expensive.
- For club nights with a difference try Notting Hill Arts club. 21 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 3JQ, tube: Notting Hill Gate (2min). Wednesday night: A cutting edge club that features many new bands and recent signings.

Instructor's Biography

Justin teaches Modern Popular Music for Richmond The American University in London. He has taught Sociology and Cultural Studies at Goldsmith's College and The London College of Fashion.