Course Description

This course will look at Contemporary Jewish Music. “Contemporary” for this class is defined as music created from the 1950s to the present. The thrust of this investigation will be Jewish music in America and Israel since the 1970s. In order to contextualize Jewish music in America the music prior to this period, the music of Jews with roots in Europe, will begin our discussion.

Issues such as Jewish identity, authenticity, religion and culture will be ongoing in our discussion. One overarching topic is the ongoing nature of tradition and innovation. An ethnographic approach will inform the issues to see your culture plays a role in shaping, informing and intrinsically a part of music in Jewish life. Contemporary music in Israel will also be examined and will highlight some similarities to music in America as well as illustrate key differences.

The course will be divided into three almost equal sections: contemporary Jewish music in America in Religious contexts (Orthodox, Conservative and Reform); klezmer music; and, Israeli music. The readings assigned for each course will provide a good deal of historical and contextual information as related to musicians and musical genres. At each class sessionsmusical examples (both audio and video) will demonstrate key musical selections. Historical, informational and cultural background of Jewish life will be part of the readings for each session.

For each session prepare the indicated reading and bring the material to class.

Learning Goals:

Students will acquire an overview of Jewish music in America since 1970s and situate the music in a broader cultural context. Through analysis of the music students will learn to make connections to issues of identity, revival and innovation. Ethnographic approaches to contemporary culture will be the main approach, emphasis will be given to the ethnographic experience.

There will be three books used in this class that are available for purchase at the Rutgers Bookstore:


A few additional readings, various articles, will be provided.

I also provide further readings. If a topic piqued our interest these readings are to aid your investigation. One study I refer to is:

Emanuel Rubin and John H. Baron, *Music in Jewish History and Culture* (Sterling Heights, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2006). [referred to below as MJHC]

Grading: There will be five components to the final grade:

1) Essay #1 (3-4 pages) covering the first half of the class material (music of religious communities)—ESSAY #1 DUE MARCH 8 at 6PM

2) An Ethnographic Report (3-4 pages) on the celebration of a Jewish holiday (Purim or Pesach seder or life cycle event). Ethnographic guidelines will be handed out several weeks prior to the assignment due date—ESSAY #2 APRIL 12 at 6PM

3) Report (2 pages) on attendance of Jewish music event (concert or program)—DUE May 2 at 6PM

4) final essay (8 pages) on contemporary trends in Jewish music, a essay comparing different styles of Jewish music—FINAL DUE on MAY 10 at 6PM

5) class participation, this includes one posting during the semester of musical material and questions the class should consider. This will be posted to sakai, more information below

Calculation of Final Grade:

1) Essay #1 20%
2) Essay #2 20%
3) Report 10%
4) Final Essay 30%
5) Class participation 20%

ALL essays will be posted to Sakai. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Attendance is required. Since the course meets once a week attendance is important.

Class participation is expected and makes the learning experience rich and interesting. Students are required to come to class on-time and expected to complete the readings and assignments. Use of cell phones and checking email and website is a distraction to all members of the class. Students with three unexcused absences during the semester will have the grade reduced by one full letter grade (from an A to a B). Students with six or more unexcused absences will receive an F for the course. Students who are unable to attend class regularly for some pressing reason must notify their dean as well as the instructor.
CLASS SCHEDULE

1) Jan. 22  Introduction to Jewish Music and Jewish Culture
  Topics: Origins and Developing Traditions
  Reading: DJM: Ch. 1 and Ch. 2;

2) Jan. 24  Eastern Europe Music and History
  Topics: Tradition and Innovations
  Reading: DJM: Ch. 4; LJ Ch. 1
  Further Reading: JMHC, Chapter 11, “The History and Development of Jewish Liturgical Music in America”, pp. 231-266

3) Jan. 29  American Liturgical Music
  Topics: Innovations in a New Context
  Reading: DJM: Ch. 7

4) Jan. 31  Understanding the Present: Ethnographic Approaches
  Topics: How to Look at Jewish Culture
  Reading: Barbara Myerhoff, Number Our Days

5-6) Feb. 5, 7  Jewish Music in the Concert Hall
  Topics: Art Music and Identity
  Reading: DJM: Chapter 8 and then 6

7-9) Feb. 12-19  Yiddish Theatre and Early American Jewish Pop Music
  Topics: Retaining the Old Way and Adapting to the New
  View film: Yidl Mitn Fidl

10-12) Feb. 21-28  Carlebach and Orthodox Music
  Topics: Bold New Steps, Innovating in America
  Readings:
  Yitta Halberstam Mandelbaum, “Biography Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach (1925-1994),” Holy Brother: Inspiring Stories and Enchanted Tales About Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc., 1997), pp. xxiii-xxv; Kligman CJM, pp. 104-129, 133-147; (these readings will be posted to Sakai)
  DJM Ch. 7, Ch. 11; LJ: Chapters 4-7.

13-14) Mar. 5-7  Sephardic Communities in America
  Topics: Alternative Experiences from Ashkenazic European Jews
  Readings:


(these readings will be posted to Sakai)

**MARCH 8—ESSAY #1 DUE at 6PM (POST TO SAKAI)**

15-16) Mar. 12-14  **Klezmer Music**  
Reading: EK: Introduction, Ch. 1, Ch. 2, Ch. 3 75-82.  
Film: *Jumpin Night in the Garden of Eden*

March 16-24  **SPRING BREAK**

March 16- April 2  ***PASSOVER NO CLASSES***

17-18) Apr. 4-9  **Klezmer: Renaissance and the New Klezmer**  
Reading: EK: Ch. 3, pp. 83-105, Ch. 4 and Ch. 5, view film  

**APRIL 12--ESSAY #2 DUE at 6PM (POST TO SAKAI)**

19-22) Apr. 11-23  **Israeli Music: Classical Music in the Jewish State, the Early Settlers**  
Songs of the Land of Israel [*Shire Eretz Israel*]; folk songs, rock, pop and musika mizrachit  
Reading: DJM: Ch. 9 & 10 (portions);  
PMNCl: Introduction, Ch. 3, 7, 8, 9  
LJ: 12,13  
Various films and clips of Israeli Music  
Further Reading: DJM Ch. 9; PMNCl: Chapter 1 and 2

23-24) Apr. 25-30  **New Trends in Jewish Music; Radical Jewish Culture**  
25) May 2      FINAL PRESENTATIONS

MAY 2       CONCERT REPORT DUE (POST TO SAKAI)

May 10      FINAL ESSAY DUE by 6pm (POST TO SAKAI)

POSTING OF MUSIC MATERIAL:
In preparation for each class I will ask you to listen to one or two musical example (audio clip or youtube/online video). We will coordinate through the semester for each of you to post one clip on the Monday prior to a class for everyone to view prior to our Wednesday class. This will be submitted in the discussion tool on Sakai. In addition to posting the clip you will also submit a question for us to think about when viewing the clip.

Academic integrity. Please see the following link Rutgers' current academic integrity policy: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Students with disabilities. students with disabilities who request accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at: http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html