The Music of The Beatles

Music 0844
Dept. of Music
University of Pittsburgh
Fall 2009
Mondays 6-830
Music Building

Instructor: Andrew Weintraub
Teaching Assistant: Alec Summers

This course will focus on the life and music of the Beatles within the social and cultural context of the 1960s. We will consider the band’s formative influences; stylistic cross-influences with contemporary artists; song-writing and musical styles of individual members of the band; and the social and cultural conditions that shaped their music. Most importantly, we will pay close attention to the songs, numbering nearly 200 in commercial releases and astonishing for their variety and innovation. Music majors are encouraged to register, but there are no prerequisites for the course.

Resources (all on reserve in the Music Library)

• Required Text (available at the Book Center)

• Beatles Albums

  1. Please Please Me-CD 4940
  2. With the Beatles-CD 4949
  3. A Hard Day’s Night-CD 4944
  4. Beatles for Sale-CD 4943
  5. Help!-CD 4947
  6. Rubber Soul-CD 4937
  7. Revolver-4939
  8. St. Pepper’s Lonely Heart’s Club Band Band-CD 4938
  9. The Beatles – CD 4935
  10. Yellow Submarine-CD 4948
  11. Magical Mystery Tour-CD 4941
  12. Abbey Road-CD 4946
  13. Let it Be-CD 4942
  14. Live at the BBC-CD 4936
  15. Anthology 1-CD 4929
  16. Anthology 2-CD 4930
  17. Anthology 3-CD 4931
  18. Let it Be...Naked-CD 6861
• DVD’s

1. The Beatles Anthology [videorecording] 5 videodiscs DVD 350 Pt 1-2; 3-4; 5-6; 7-8; bonus disc
2. Hard day’s night [videorecording] DVD 42
3. Help! [videorecording] 2 videodiscs DVD-11839
4. Yellow submarine [videorecording] DVD 183

• On-line Music Dictionary
  New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Database (University Library System Digital Library—“find articles”)

• Additional on-line resources

List of websites
<http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/rock/beatles.html>

The Beatles in England
<http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/rock/england.html>

Mapping the Beatles <http://www.beatlesmap.com>

The Beatles: A Recording Chronology
<http://www.discoq.info/beatles-recording-chrono.html>

Month-by-month chronology <http://beatles.ncf.ca/timeline.html#26>

Day by Day <http://www.beatles-discography.com/day-by-day>

People <http://www.beatlesbible.com/people>

Albums <http://www.thebeatles.com/core/music>
Schedule of Topics and Assignments
[Reading, Viewing and Listening Assignments are due in class on the date of the lecture]

L=lecture
LA=Listening Assignment

August
31 Roots (L1)

September
7 No Class—Labor Day
14 Formation and early recordings (L2)
Read: 1-150
Listen: Early Rock ‘n’ Roll
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode One (July '40 to March '63) - 1:18:53
Assignment: LA 1 (Roots and Routes)

21 Beatlemania (L3)
Read: 150-303
Listen: Please Please Me
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Two (March '63 to February '64) - 1:11:43
Assignment: LA 2 (Please Please Me)

28 British Invasion (L4)
Read: 304-380
Listen: With the Beatles, A Hard Day’s Night
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Three (February '64 to July '64) - 1:12:56
Assignment: LA 3 (With the Beatles, A Hard Day’s Night)

October
5 New Musical Directions: Rubber Soul (L5)
Read: 383-485
Listen: Beatles for Sale, Help!
Watch: Help!
DVD Anthology Episode Four (August '64 to August '65) - 1:10:33
Assignment: LA 4 (Beatles for Sale, Help!)

12 Fall Break (Classes normally scheduled to meet Monday, October 12th will meet on Tuesday the 13th. Tuesday classes will not meet this week)

13 Even more New Musical Directions: Revolver (L6)
Read: 486-592
Listen: Rubber Soul
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Five (August '65 to July '66) - 1:11:47
Assignment: LA 5 (Rubber Soul)

19 Review for Midterm and Sgt. Pepper’s (L7)
Read: 593-657
Listen: Revolver
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Six (July '66 to June '67) - 1:10:49
Assignment: LA 6 (Revolver)

26 Midterm and Sgt. Pepper’s (L8)

November
2 Magical Mystery Tour and Yellow Submarine (L9)
Read: 658-708
Listen: Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Seven (June '67 to July '68) - 1:13:40
Assignment: LA 7 (Sgt. Pepper’s)

9 The White Album (L10)
Read: 709-765
Listen: Magical Mystery Tour, Yellow Submarine
Watch: DVD Anthology Episode Eight (July '68 to The End) - 1:21:59
Assignment: LA 8 (Magical Mystery Tour, Yellow Submarine)

16 Abbey Road (L11)
Read: 766-823
Listen: The Beatles (The Beatles)
Watch: DVD Anthology Special Features (DVD 5)
Assignment: LA 9 (The Beatles)

23 Let it Be (L12)
Read: 824-856
Listen: Abbey Road
Watch: TBA
Assignment: LA 10 (Abbey Road)

30 Solo careers and The Beatles’ legacy (L13)
Read: --
Listen: Let it Be
Watch: Let it Be
Assignment: LA 11 (Let it Be)

7 Final exam (during class)
Course Requirements

1. **Listening identification and listening assignments (LA).** For recordings by the Beatles you will be expected to know the following information: (1) title of song; (2) title of the original U.K. LP on which the song appeared (if applicable); (3) name(s) of the songwriter(s) (in the case of original songs); (4) date of the record release. For recordings by artists other than the Beatles, you should be able to identify both the title of the song, the name of the recording artist or group, and the approximate date of the record’s release. Students who complete the listening assignments *at the proper time* should have no difficulty with this requirement.

2. **Material presented during lectures.** Take notes in class and you’ll be fine.

3. **Essential biographical, contextual, and stylistic information given in the textbook** (not all of which will be covered in lecture). Note: if you find apparent inconsistencies between Spitz, other sources, and the lecture material, I invite you to ask me about them, either privately or at the beginning of class.

4. **Ability to correlate verbal “stylistic characteristics” (involving rhythm, melody, harmony, form, texture, and so on) with the actual sound of the music in question.**

Evaluation

10 Listening Assignments @ 5% each (50 %); Midterm exam (20%); Final exam (20%); participation and additional assignments (10%)

*ALL REQUIREMENTS, DATES, AND DEADLINES ARE FIRM: THERE CAN BE NO "MAKE UPS" OR END-OF-THE-SEMESTER WORK FOR EXTRA CREDIT. EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE ONLY RARELY AND ONLY IN CASES OF SERIOUS HARDSHIP FOR WHICH DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN ADVANCE.*
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, I encourage you to contact both me and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union (412–624–7890) as early as possible in the term.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity, noted below from the February 1974, Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom report to the Senate Council, will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz or exam will be imposed.

The integrity of the academic process requires fair and impartial evaluation on the part of faculty, and honest academic conduct on the part of students. To this end, students are expected to conduct themselves at a high level of responsibility in the fulfillment of the course of their study. It is the corresponding responsibility of faculty to make clear to students those standards by which students will be evaluated, and the resources permissible for use by students during the course of their study and evaluation. The educational process is perceived as a joint faculty-student enterprise which will perforce involve professional judgment by faculty and may involve—without penalty—reasoned exception by students to the data or views offered by faculty.