

Semester Spring 2021
Professor Simeon Marsalis
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Class Jazz Poetry: An Introduction
Course Numbers 21:352:376:01 / 21:526:295:01
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 2472 9031
Date and Time MW 4: 00 pm - 5:20 pm
Office & Hours W 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Course Description

This course will survey Jazz Poetry from the Harlem Renaissance to its present iteration. We will seek to define the genre by analyzing the works of authors such as Jack Kerouac, Sonia Sanchez, Amiri Baraka, and Nathaniel Mackey – as well as music by John Coltrane, Billie Holiday, Geri Allen, Jon Batiste, and others. By the successful completion of this class, students should be able to identify jazz and poetic terms as well as the way they interact to create a jazz poem.

Learning Goals

By the successful completion of this class you should be able to identify poetry, jazz and jazz poetry. Students should have a working knowledge of the development and history of these categories, as well as practice experimenting with one or more of these forms.

Texts

The Jazz Poetry Anthology Sascha Feinstein, Yusef Komunyakaa

Assignments

You will be asked to complete three formal papers, and two creative projects.

Attendance

We will begin each class with a discussion board post to blackboard. Failure to complete this assignment will earn you an absence. It will be near-impossible for you to complete this course if you miss more than four classes.

Grading

Essays

1 – 15%

2 – 20%

3 – 25%

Creative assignments

1 – 15 %

2 – 25%

Participation

- 10%

Academic Integrity Honor Pledge

All students must include the following academic integrity honor pledge and their signature on all of their formal essays:

On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

Students with Disabilities

Rutgers University is committed to providing equal educational access for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. An individual with a disability who is qualified for admission will have the same access to programs, services, and activities as all other students. Any student requiring special consideration should contact Allen Sheffield, the Director of Disability Services. The office is located in Suite 219 of the Robeson Campus Center. The phone number is [973.353.5375](tel:973.353.5375), and the email address is ODSNewark@Newark.Rutgers.edu.

Writing Center Support

The Writing Center is eager to continue to support undergraduate students in achieving academic success. To ensure that students have safe access to the full range of support opportunities, the WC will offer services remotely in the Fall 2020 semester. Students and tutors will meet for "real time" virtual appointments. Writing Center tutors will provide remote one-on-one tutoring that is designed to strengthen students' reading, writing, and research skills. The Writing Center will also continue to offer writing workshops that provide instruction and practice to foster students' confidence and ability in achieving the demands of writing at and beyond the University

UNIT ONE: Renaissance and its antecedents

Week 1

1/20

Introduction to the course

Go over syllabus

Music on My Mind excerpt

HW: Read Michael Afaa Weaver, “Willie ‘The Lion’ Smith,” and listen to Willie “The Lion” Smith’s “Echoes of Spring” and “Pork and Beans.”

Week 2

1/25

In-class:

What is Jazz Poetry?

Read the Preface to Jazz Poetry Anthology.

HW:

Read: Aristotle’s Poetics, review course documents.

Listen: Louis Armstrong’s *Hot Fives* recordings, “Hotter Than That” and “St. James Infirmary.”

1/27

Listen to Music.

Analyze Poem

Introduce Essay 1

HW:

Read: Read LeRoi Jones’ “Blues People” (pg. 17-49)

Week 3

2/1

Listen

Analyze poems:

Listen: Ma Rainey’s “See See Rider,” Son House “Death Letter Blues,” and Son House’s “Pearline.”

HW: “Ma Rainey” By Sterling Brown,
“A Dance for Ma Rainey,” Al Young.

2/3

Inclass creative writing

HW: Excerpts from Tyehimba Jess’ *Leadbelly*. Listen to Leadbelly’s “C.C. Rider,” and “Looky Looky Yonder.”

Week 4

*2/8

Read Georgia Douglass Johnson’s “My Little Dreams,”

Read: Excerpts from Farah Jasmine Griffin’s *Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Power During World War II*

2/10

Essay Review

Suites

HW: Listen: "La Vie En Rose," by Edith Piaf
"Solitude," by Billy Holiday.

Read: "Strange Fruit" by Cyrus Cassells,
"Piaf and Holiday Go Out," by Carol Bergé

UNIT TWO Bop Era

Week 5

2/15

Introduce Creative Assignment 1

Rough Draft Due

HW: Bebop and the recording industry (PDF) and Coleman Hawkins *Rainbow Mist*.

2/17

PBS documentary 1

Essay 1 Due

Listen to Diz'N'Bird at Carnegie Hall

HW: Charlie Parker Dial recordings and *Ancient Rains*, Bob Kaufman.

Week 6

*2/22

Charlie Parker

Jack Kerouac Ft. Steve Allen.

Introduce Essay 2

HW: Finish creative assignment. Listen to Ornette Coleman's *The Shape of Jazz to Come*.

2/24

Creative Assignment 1 Due

Read from Ingrid Monson's "Saying Something."

Listen to Miles' Quintet "Kind of Blue."

HW:

Listen: "Live at the Filmore East."

Read: Finish Monson selection.

Week 7

3/1

Creative Assignment

Listen to Coltrane's Sounds.

HW:

Listen: "A Love Supreme."

Read: "Dear John, dear Coltrane" Michael S. Harper.

3/3

Analyze poem of your choosing

HW:

Read: Sonia Sanchez “a/coltrane/poem”

Listen: Monk and Trane

Week 8

*3/8

HW: Finish Essay 2

3/10

Essay 2 Due

UNIT 3 The Civil Rights Movement

WEEK 9

3/21

HW:

Listen: Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln’s *Freedom Now Suite*.

Read: “The Constitution of a Jazzman” Nat Hentoff

3/23

HW:

Read: New Black Voices (1972) – Kalamu Ya Salaam “The Blues in Two Parts.”

WEEK 10

3/29

HW:

Listen: Ginsberg “The Grey Monk”

3/31

HW: The Last Poets

WEEK 11

4/5

HW: Amiri Baraka “JA ZZ : (The “Say What?”) IS IS JA LIVES”

*4/7

HW: Elizabeth Alexander “Omni-Albert Murray” and Albert Murray “Omni-Americans”

UNIT 4 Contemporary

WEEK 12

4/12

Assignment 2 Due

HW: Linda Hull “Lost Fugue for Chet” and Chet Baker’s “Old Devil Moon.”

4/14

HW: A Tribe Called Quest "Excursions" and Art Blakey's "A Chant for Bu."

WEEK 13

*4/19

HW: Finish Essay 3

4/21

Essay 3 Due

WEEK 14

4/27

HW:

Read: Excerpts from Nathaniel Mackey's *Bedouin Hornbook*

Listen: Craig Taborn *Junk Magic*.

4/29

HW:

Listen: Robert Glasper and Erykah Badu's "Afro Blue"

9th Wonder and Kendrick Lamar's "Duckworth."

WEEK 15

5/3

HW:

Read: "Lester Leaps In" by Cheswayo Mphanza.

Listen: "Lester Leaps In" by Count Basie and "These Foolish Things" by Lester Young.

*5/5