

UC Center Program Courses - Fall 2013
PCC 132. **Paris Jazz**
Prof. Lorraine Roubertie Soliman

contact: losoliman@orange.fr

Office Hours
By appointment

Lecture

Monday 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm
Wednesday 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an overview of the jazz phenomenon in Paris from a socio-historical and political perspective. Despite the warmest of welcomes jazz and its main American expatriate protagonists received during the 1920s and 1930s, this musical genre was controversial, to say the least. Replete with symbolic meanings, it greatly impacted the collective cultural imaginary at a time when French society was being reconsidered and redefined. Drawing on a wide picture of the jazz scene during the interwar years, and on several case studies centering on French writers and critics, such as Boris Vian, Jean Cocteau, and André Hodeir, students will discover and analyze the significance of the genre's Paris story and how French society responded to it. Through the study of historical events and individual accounts, they will explore the specific dynamics that surrounded jazz in Paris – the way this music attracted and brought together different spheres of a society separated by a host of issues, and the ambivalent feelings it revealed regarding America, which embodied, for many, an ideal of modernity, an ideal that was perceived by some as threatening. The course will then turn its attention to the decades following the Second World War, from the sixties until today, and to the different means through which jazz has been assimilated and re-appropriated. Among other aspects of this phenomenon, students will interrogate the French vision (and the mythology occasioned by it) of free jazz that crossed over the Atlantic in the sixties, as well as the unique crossover between local jazz and African popular or traditional musical genres. As part of the course, students will visit a site important to the Paris jazz phenomenon and will attend an evening performance at one of the historic landmark clubs. The course also hopes to include a guest lecture by a Paris jazz musician for both musical and testimonial purposes. **5.0 credits.** Suggested subject areas for this course:
Music/History/Sociology

Goals

The aim of this course is to provide students with a critical understanding of jazz – a musical genre that has been deeply assimilated and, in some ways, reinvented by French people. Through the examination of a wide array of case studies starting from Josephine Baker and the Revue Nègre to Michel Legrand, Michel Petrucciani and other “international” French jazzmen of the 1990s and 2000s, and centering on French writers and critics, the course seeks to provide students with the tools to understand not only the birth and life of a “French” version of jazz but also a French vision of jazz. In other words, the study of historical events and individual accounts exposes students to the specific dynamics that surrounded jazz in Paris and to the symbolic meanings that are conveyed by this musical genre.

In order to meet these goals, the course focuses on the following topics/texts/media:

Topics:

- the quarrel of the Ancients and the Modern (jazz hot vs bop)
- the birth of the French jazz critic: *Jazz Hot* (1935), *Jazz Magazine* (1954)
- the French re-appropriation of free jazz
- a dream of anti-conformism and permanent renewal
- the Parisian melting-pot: where jazz “meets” Africa

Texts:

Readings are selected to expose students to the various ways jazz has been re-appropriated by French society and include:

- studies on the topic by Jeffrey Jackson
- newspaper articles and editorials (disc reviews, interviews...)
- essays/articles by specialists in jazz history from a socio-historical perspective

Media:

Films selections are watched and discussed, seeking to engage students’ interest in the vibrant jazz scene in France:

- *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (Louis Malle, 1958)
- *'Round Midnight* (Bertrand Tavernier, 1986)

Musical selections from artists such as Ray Ventura, Stéphane Grappelli, Michel Portal, Martial Solal are used to illustrate the various stages of French jazz history.

Learning Outcomes

The course also seeks to develop students' written and oral rhetorical skills as well as their analytical skills through the following activities and assignments:

- Class discussion on readings, in which close attention is paid to the ways jazz is/was seen/perceived by French intellectual sphere and/or French society at large
- Collaborative preparation of an oral presentation on a topic of the students’ choice linked to the course’s problematic, showing how jazz has been re-appropriated by the French (musically, symbolically)
- Writing assignments in essay-format, which are evaluated in terms of students’ ability to develop a thesis and support it with well-chosen evidence, as well as coherent organization and attention to style
- Production of a critical report on an evening visit to a performance at a landmark jazz club

The mid-term exam tests both students’ knowledge of French jazz history based on the course content and their ability to provide a critical interpretation of the phenomenon of “French” jazz. The final exam tests both the knowledge they have acquired and their analytical ability to develop an argument in essay form in response to a statement on jazz by a prominent member of the French jazz community.

COURSE MATERIALS

Jeffrey H. Jackson, *Making Jazz French. Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris*, Duke University Press, 2003
Course Reader [CR]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at lectures and site visits is mandatory. It is essential that you attend all classes and participate actively. As per the UC Paris Attendance Policy, excessive absences and tardies will result in lowered final grade. Please refer to UC Paris Academic Handbook for the policy on absences and tardies.

Participation and reading assignments are critical. For the purposes of this class, participation means reading the material in advance, preparing material for discussions or oral presentations when asked, coming to class on time, staying for the entire class period, and actively taking part in discussions and other in-class exercises and activities. A large part of this portion of your grade is simply paying attention; in order to pay attention, you must be present! Any tardies or absences will have a strong negative effect on your participation grade.

Grade Breakdown:

Participation in class discussion	20%
Short Essay 1 (3-5 pages)	15%
Short Essay 2 (4-6 pages)	25%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

A Note on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense and could result in your dismissal from the program. All instances of suspected plagiarism will be reported to EAP for disciplinary action. If you borrow words or an idea from any source, whether it be a book, journal, magazine, the Internet, or a lecture, you need to indicate where the information came from. Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* identifies three different acts that are considered plagiarism: "(1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases [of other texts] into your own words" (Hacker 261). (By both citing the source of this definition of plagiarism and by "enclosing borrowed language in quotation marks," this syllabus has avoided charges of plagiarism.) If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please ask your instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE: THIS COURSE WILL HAVE AN EXCEPTIONAL COURSE MEETING ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH.

1920s-1930s: “The French invention of jazz”

Week 1

Session 1: Introduction

The Black Face Minstrels in Europe

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French, chap. 4 “The Meanings of Jazz. America, *Nègre*, and Civilization”, pp. 71-88

Session 2: Jazz in-between the issues of “race” and culture

(the background of decolonization and the renewal of anthropology)

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French, chap. 4 “The Meanings of Jazz. America, *Nègre*, and Civilization”, pp. 88-103

Week 2

Session 1: Josephine Baker, the *Revue Nègre* and the *Tumulte noir* (black turmoil)

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French: chap. 1 and 2, pp. 13-51 & chap. 5 “Making Jazz Familiar. Music Halls and the Avant-Garde”, pp. 104-115

Session 2: Jean Cocteau and the jazz “pulsation” — A dream of Renaissance

(“*I am surprised that jazz has not always existed*”)

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French: - chap. 3 “Jazz and the city of Paris”, pp. 52-70 & chap. 5 “Making Jazz Familiar. Music Halls and the Avant-Garde”, pp. 116-119

Week 3

Session 1: The first French jazzmen: Ray Ventura and The Collegians, Alix Combelle, André Ekyan, Krikor Kelekian, *Quintette du Hot Club de France* (1934)

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French, pp. 121-122, and chap. 6 “Making Jazz French. Parisians musicians and Jazz Fans”, pp. 123-142

Session 2: Django Reinhardt and the Belgian connexion

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Making Jazz French, chap. 7 “New Bands and New Tensions”, pp. 143-168

1940s-1960s: Hot vs Bop —*la querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*

Week 4

- Session 1: **First short Essay due**
Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]
Sortie Caveau de la Huchette
- Session 2: Hugues Panassié and Charles Delaunay: the battle between sour grapes and moulded figs (Boris Vian...)
Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]
Making Jazz French, chap. 8 “The Discovery of Hot Jazz”, pp. 154-190

Week 5

- Session 1: Birth of the French jazz critic: *Jazz Hot* (1935), *Jazz Magazine* (1954)
Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]
Making Jazz French, chap. 9 “Epilogue”, pp. 191-203
- Session 2: André Hodeir, the Modern Jazz Quartet and the Third Stream
Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 6

- Session 1: Film: selection from *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (Louis Malle, 1958)
Discussion
Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]
“‘In One Word: Emotion’. Jazz and Cinema”, *Dancing with de Beauvoir. Jazz and the French*, by Colin Nettelbeck [CR]
- Session 2: Film: selection from *Round Midnight* (Bertrand Tavernier, 1986) — Discussion
Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 7

- Session 1: **Review**
Session 2: **Midterm exam**

1970s-2000s: From free jazz to “world jazz”

Week 8

- Session 1: American “free” jazzmen in Paris / the Atlantic crossing
Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]
- Session 2: Guest speaker (TBA)

Week 9

Session 1: The new “battle” of jazz / Parisian jazz critic reception

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]
“Free jazz and the French Critic”, Eric Drott. [CR]

Session 2: The French re-appropriation of free jazz: François Tusques, Jean-Louis Chautemps, Michel Portal...

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 10

Session 1: A dream of anticonformism and permanent renewal

Philippe Carles / J.-L. Comolli, *Free Jazz/Black Power* (1971)
Gérard Terronès (Futura/Marge), a figure of the “resistance”

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Session 2: French jazzmen in America: Michel Petrucciani (selection from Michael Radford’s documentary, 2011)

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 11

Session 1: **Second short Essay due**

The *Collectifs*, a new conception of jazz: Didier Levallet and Perception, Alan Silva and the Celestial Communication Orchestra, Workshop de Lyon, Compagnie Lubat... [1971-1980]

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Session 2: A sense of burlesque, to escape from solemnity: Bernard Lubat and the Festival d’Uzeste (1978), *un jazz gascon?* (from the region Gascogne)

The phenomenon of festival culture

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 12

Session 1: Jazz from the West Indies: Alain Jean-Marie, *Biguine Reflections* (1992)

Parisian melting-pot: where jazz “meets” Africa

Readings for Session 1: Documents [CR]

Session 2: The crisis that affects the jazz sphere: more and more excellent musicians, less and less opportunities to play (2000s)

Readings for Session 2: Documents [CR]

Week 13

Session 1: **Review**

Session 2: **Final exam**