

# **JAZZ 200 SYLLABUS**

## **PRELUDE**

The person awarded the course must sing. He or She must enjoy singing and acknowledge singing as a central aspect of the jazz language.

The progression of the course involves one class of lecture/video viewing/discussion/singing. The second day involves playing and singing. Some singing should take place in both classes. The text *Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art* by Stephen Nachmanovitch should be discussed in the Monday class. Additional texts on the blues should also be discussed on Mondays. On some Mondays videos may be viewed and discussed in conjunction with the subject of the lecture.

The Snidero text, *Jazz Conception: 21 solo etudes*, is utilized on Wednesdays. The *Jazz Standards* text is also utilized on Wednesdays. All songs from the text should have diatonic Roman Numeral conversion of chords to scale degrees done. Learn the songs in the original keys. Learn them in keys that best suite women's vocal ranges and men's various vocal ranges. Have each student determine whether they are soprano, alto, tenor or bass. Have them learn and perform the tunes in the keys that they can sing them best.

The challenge is to balance the texts over the two days of the course. Supplemental tunes not in the texts may be introduced. Jazz standards, Afro Cuban/Brazilian, Gospel and Spirituals tunes can be used. Within the year poetry, dance and visual art may be hard topics or supplementally used.

The art of aural transcription is developed over the year. Sing it and they play it. The importance of "hearing" is stressed all year long. Aural transcription exams are scheduled over the course of the year. Solos and tunes are the source of transcriptions. A mixture of instrumental and vocal sources are used.

A podcast of 20 minutes must be produced during the first term, usually in the midyear exam. A podcast of 30 minutes must be produced as a part of the final exam. The topics of the podcasts may concern anything explored during the course.

I provide simply a general outline of what the second semester involves. The person awarded the course can create his/her own. Good luck with the course.

# **JAZZ 200 THE LANGUAGE OF JAZZ**

## Generic Syllabus

The instructor will choose from suggested topics to address each class.

### **Introduction**

The Language of Jazz provides a broad introduction to the basics of jazz. The course explores jazz as an art form. JAZZ 200 serves as a foundational course for subsequent Jazz Studies courses in the curriculum. Listening, readings/discussion, aural transcription, performance analysis, repertoire development, instrumental performance, vocal performance and films study constitute the core work.

**The objective of the course** is to explore and illuminate aspects of the aesthetics, history, sociology, style, artists, performance traditions, and repertoire of the music. The following components serve as points of departure. **African and African American cultures and philosophical traditions govern all aspects of study:**

- African retention
- Being in the moment (Letting go)
- The Blues
- Community
- Deep listening
- Democracy
- Development of self teaching strategies
- Exploring the full implications of "ensemble"
- Improvisation
- Individuality
- Integration of music of various genre & cultures
- Passing it on (Methods and traditions of cultural and artistic stewardship)
- Performer/Audience relationship
- Personal responsibility
- Primacy of melody
- Primacy of rhythm
- Primacy of voice
- Story telling (Compelling and coherent musical communication)
- Swing

## Preparation

One must be musically literate. It is essential that one is able to read and perform written music. It is essential that one knows basic jazz chords and scales construction. It is essential that one readily sings. JAZZ 209, 210, 251 & 252 are strongly recommended to be taken concurrently.

## Course work/Process

Course work consists of the following activities: assigned reading, assigned listening, performance modules, aural transcriptions, obligatory concert attendance, short exams, a mid-term exam (first semester only) , a mid-year exam and a final exam. Course work will involve in equal measure lecture and practicum/workshop. We will utilize the entire history of jazz in our exploration.

**Please note that JAZZ 200 is a process course.** It is one of accumulative process and progress. Consistent punctual attendance is required. Consistent preparation for and participation in classes is required. Attendance of all assigned concerts is required.

Required texts

- **Free Play: Improvisation in Life and the Arts** by Stephen Nachmanovitch, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc.
- **Jazz Standards** published by Hal Leonard
- **Jazz Conception** (Book & CD) by Jim Snidero, Advance Music
  - Vocal - Piano, Guitar, Flute, Bass "C"
  - Bb – Trumpet, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone
  - Eb – Baritone Saxophone, Alto Saxophone
  - Bass Clef – Double Bass, Electric Bass, Trombone

## Evaluation

Attendance will be taken daily.

Attendance/Punctuality/Preparation for class	10%
Exams/Papers	30%
• Aural transcriptions	
• Performance exams	
• Papers	
• Listening exams	
Midterm exam	10%
Mid year exam	20%
Final exam	30%

### FINAL GRADE

A+ 95-100	4.30	<b>Outstanding:</b> All work submitted on time very clear presentation, originality, individual insights
A 90-94	4.00	
A- 85-89	3.70	
B+ 80-84	3.30	<b>Very Good:</b> All work submitted on time, clear presentation, well-conceived approach
B 75-79	3.00	
B- 70-74	2.70	
C+ 65-69	2.30	<b>Satisfactory:</b> All work submitted on time, adequately done
C 62-64	2.00	
C- 60-62	1.70	
D+ 57-59	1.30	<b>Marginal Pass:</b> Less than all work submitted on time, ill-prepared or incomplete
D 53-56	1.00	
D- 50-52	0.70	
F, FNS on	0	<b>Poor – Failure:</b> Less than all work submitted on time, little or no clarity or understanding

**Please note:** No supplemental exams are given in this course. Incomplete will be given only under exceptional circumstances. Extensions on assignments and tests will be given only for medical or personal emergency reasons. Otherwise, a grade of "F" will be given.

## **LECTURE & WORKSHOP TOPICS** (Classes M – Monday, W – Wednesday)

### **September**

#### **Week 1**

M - Welcome/Introductions, Presentation of syllabus, Clarification of the objective of the course. Choose a wide variety of instrumental and vocal music discussion of what constitutes jazz, listening to various jazz recordings, discussion

- Discuss what is heard (tempo, time signature, tune type, emotional content, etc.)

W- Workshop: Getting acquainted musically. Bring instruments.

- Sing a tune together. (any song: folk, jazz, America popular, etc.)
- Don't sing until you find a song that everyone knows.
- Sing some scales, some root position chords, some arpeggios in various keys.
- Acknowledge the privilege of being able to play an instrument and to sing.
- Commune with your instrument as you prepare to play it.
- Talk about swing. Drummers perspective, bassists perspective, consecutive eighth notes perspective
- Play "air" drums and sing scales, tunes etc.
- Play a simple tune, a tune with lyrics. (How High the Moon) Bring sheet music. Begin learning the tune.
- Sing the lyrics in strict time. Do not paraphrase.
- Have students create a desktop file for tunes. Have students look up the tune on Wikipedia and note the composer, lyricist, year of publication, show or movie etc. of where the song comes from, original recording of the song, various recordings of the song. All of this is compiled into a file under the name of the song.

#### **Week 2**

M - Workshop: Getting acquainted musically. Bring instruments.

- Introduce the concept of Diatonic Roman numeral transformation of chord symbols to scale degrees. This is very important. This is the beginning of students learning to play and sing a tune in all keys.
- Assignment for this class is for the students to prepare the tune introduced in the previous class in Diatonic Roman Numeral conversion.
- Work on the tune in two keys a minor third apart.

W- Workshop: Getting acquainted musically. Bring instruments.

- Work on the tune in two different keys a minor third apart done on Monday.
- Work on the tune in two different keys a minor third apart.
- Do some call and response ear training.
- Play the melody of a tune of your choice with conviction.

### **Week 3**

M - Lecture: *The Blues*. Bring instruments.

- Present the historical context.
- Present an overview of the blues.
- Use Albert Murray's introduction to **Stompin' the Blues**.

W- Workshop: Continuation of performing the blues

- Play/Sing the blues. Learn a blues by ear.
- Explore the harmonic, rhyming and emotional aspects of the blues.
- Prepare a Snidero exercise.

### **Week 4**

M- Lecture: Video on the Blues

- Provide an historical context.
- Discuss types of blues forms.
- Discuss harmonic, rhyming, emotional and rhythmic aspects of the blues.
- Choose a video that is from 30-60 minutes in duration.
- Sing some blues that is a part of the video.

W- Workshop: Continuation of performing the blues. Bring instruments.

- Play/Sing two blues.
- Began to learn a blues solo.
- Play/Sing the blues in two keys.
- Co-compose a blues with lyrics. Perform it.
- Play a second Snidero exercise.

## **Week 5**

M - Lecture: American Popular Song. Singing, Oh What A Joy

- Free Play reading: Prologue, introduction & chapter 1.
- Prepare for discussion. Note critical information in each section. Summarize.
- Conduct research on The American Popular Song. Prepare notes.
- Choose a song and learn the lyrics, melody and bass note progression.
- Perform the song in two keys.

W- Workshop: Work on the American Popular Song

- Choose a song and work on it. In class format and in smaller units format.
- Play/Sing a Snidero exercise.

## **Week 6**

Workshop: Continuation of Work on the American Popular Song

M – Lecture: The American Popular Song

- Free Play reading.
- Lecture on a particular composer and his/her song(s).

W-

- Snideo exercise.
- Play/Sing another song.

## **Week 7**

M- Lecture: The American Popular Song

- Free Play reading.
- Introduction of videos of jazz musicians playing the American Popular Songs.
- Videos of musicians discussing the American Popular Songs.

W- Workshop: Continuation of Work on The American Popular Song

- Snidero reading.
- Individual singers perform an American Popular Song.
- Individual instrumentalists perform an American Popular Song.
- Aural Transcription Exam 1.

## **Week 8**

M- Midterm Exam

W- Performance: Play a three blues and three American Popular Songs.

## **Week 9** Bring instruments.

M- Lecture: A Method for practicing Jazz Materials

- Organization of time
- Organization of objectives
- Organization of what to practice
- Sources of inspiration
- Where and how to find resources for practice

W- Workshop: Practicing Jazz materials

- Playing/Singing 8 bar phrases in all keys
- Playing/Singing scales in all keys
- Spelling chord 1-3-5-7 in all keys (major, minor triads, minor 6, dominant & diminished)
- Learning jazz phrases in all keys
- Learning the first 8 bars of tunes in all keys
- Snidero reading.

## **Week 10**

M- Lecture: A Method for practicing Jazz Materials

- Barry Harris & Hal Galpher videos
- Discussion
- Free Play reading

W- Workshop: Practicing Jazz materials

- Aural Transcription Exam 2
- Students lead the class in practicing jazz material.
- Individual students will lead the class.

## **Week 11**

M - Lecture: The Significance of Speech in Improvisation and Jazz Performance

- Giving strong attention to our voices as we speak
- Noticing nuance and tone in verbal communication
- Reading a paragraph from various perspectives (sincere, angry, humorous, spiteful etc.)
- Free Play reading as source of the exercise

W- Workshop: The Significance of Speech in Improvisation and Jazz Performance

- Bring Instruments!
- Bring to class something to read: a chapter, a paragraph, a poem, a magazine article, lyrics to a song etc.
- Read and then sing that which you have brought to class.
- Play the rhythm of the text that you have brought to class.
- Snidero reading.

## **Week 12**

M- Lecture: The Significance of Speech in Improvisation and Jazz Performance

- Videos of Charles Mingus, Langston Hughes, LeRoi Jones, Archie Shepp, Betty Carter, Niki Giovanni etc. reading
- Discussion

W- Workshop: The Significance of Speech in Improvisation and Jazz Performance

- Perform something spoken and then played or sang

## **Week 13**

M- Workshop: The Significance of Speech in Improvisation and Jazz Performance

- Perform, with instrumental accompaniment, something that says something. The voice is the primary carrier of the tone.
- Aural Transcription Exam 3

W- Last class of the term

- Discussion of the Mid-year Examination

**Week 14 M** – Make Up for Thanksgiving October

**Week 16: W** - Mid-year exam 1:00-4:00 PM MB 8.135

# Holiday Recess!

## **LECTURE & WORKSHOP TOPICS - January**

### **Week 1**

M - Workshop: Sight reading new tunes

W -

### **Week 2**

M - Lecture

- What is Soul?
- How is it Situated within the jazz tradition?

W - Workshop: View Gospel At Colonus

### **Week 3**

M - Workshop: View completion of Gospel At Colonus.

- Discuss Gospel At Colonus.

W - Discussion of Gospel At Colonus

- Aural Transcription Exam 4

### **Week 4**

M - Lecture: What is Soul?

- How is it Situated within the jazz tradition?
- Listening to various performances of the same tune

W - Workshop: Performance of soulful music

### **Week 5**

M - Lecture: I've Got Rhythm

- Its significance in the Jazz Tradition

W - Workshop: Work on 'Rhythm

## **Week 6**

M - Lecture: I've Got Rhythm

- Its significance in the Jazz Tradition

W - Workshop: Work on Rhythm

- Aural Transcription Exam 5

## **Week 7**

M - Lecture: I've Got Rhythm

- Its significance in the Jazz Tradition

W - Workshop: Work on Rhythm

## **Mid-term break**

## **Week 8**

M - Workshop: Lecture: Saying Something, The Tradition of Jazz Singing

W - Workshop: Singing in one's playing, playing in one's singing

## **Week 9**

M - Workshop: Lecture: Saying Something, The Tradition of Jazz Singing

W - Workshop: Singing in one's playing, playing in one's singing

## **Week 10**

M - Lecture: Jazz and Words – Exploring the application of poetry and prose

W - Workshop: Reading your composed jazz poetry or prose to recorded music

- Aural Transcription Exam 6

## **Week 11**

M - Workshop: Reading your composed jazz poetry or prose to improvised music

W - Workshop: Reading your composed jazz poetry or prose to improvised music

## **Week 12**

M - Workshop: Reading your composed jazz poetry or prose to improvised music

W - Workshop: Reading your composed jazz poetry or prose to improvised music

**Week 13:**

M - Lecture: The Rhythm Section, an Endangered Species  
W-08 Workshop: Last class of the year  
Aural Transcription Exam 7

**Week 14**

M - Makeup for classes missed on Easter Monday

**Week 15**

W - JAZZ 200 Final Exam 2:00-5:00 MB-8.135