

Fall 2025 M501 Sections:

Section #6624, MWF 9:10 AM–10:00 AM; SM 340, Jackie Fortier

Performing “Otherness” on the French Stage from Lully to Debussy (weeks 1-5): In this unit, we will think of the ways issues such as identity, colonization, gender, race, power, politics and imperialism manifested in French opera. To do so, we will look at scores and libretti, as well as watch modern representations of key operas. We will also examine contemporaneous reviews to understand how audiences and critics received these performances through time.

Global Circulation of Music Before 1900 (weeks 6-10): An exploration into the ways music and people travelled around the world. As an introduction to historiography, in this unit we will analyze primary sources such as scores, letters, travel logs, histories and chronicles to better understand how music from around the world was thought of and exchanged.

Dance Music in the Caribbean from the Twentieth Century to Today (weeks 11-15): A survey of representative genres of dance music that developed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in the Caribbean. We will approach techniques to analyze and differentiate recordings and performances of dance music. We will think through the social significance of dancing and ask why and in what contexts did people dance? How was technology used to disseminate and create new music?

Section #6625, MWF 8:00 AM–8:50 AM; SM 340, Jackie Fortier

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Section #6626, MWF 10:25 AM–11:15 AM; SM 294, Kitt Westerduin

Soundscapes of Colonial Latin America. The Spanish conquest and colonization of Latin America was mediated by sound. The restructuring of cities according to the Spanish colonial order irrevocably altered the urban life and sonic ecology experienced by the native inhabitants. Nonetheless, scholars have also shown how the indigenous communities used music, ritual, dance, and other sonic practices to negotiate their colonized status. This module explores the shifting soundscapes of colonial urban centers in the 16th and 17th centuries with reference to original sources such as manuscripts and codices, travel accounts, and legal documents such as those pertaining to music from the inquisition. Students will also be introduced to historical sound studies as a methodology to inform their understanding of the past.

Opera and identity 1600-1750. Opera and other sung theater works were used to construct, reinforce, and negotiate identity in the European imaginary following the global encounters of the Renaissance. In this repertory focused module, we will examine how this music contributed to the European fashioning of “self” and “other” in an era of increasing human classification with consideration of national differences and socio-political motivations.

Jazz and U.S. Imperialism of the 20th century. This module blends music historiography and new imperial studies in order to ask questions about dominant narratives in music history. We will begin with a discussion of the largely accepted origin myth of jazz, which situates the genre as a purely U.S. American artform, and ask what happens to this narrative when we listen to early jazz within a transnational framework. We will further ask how the logic of U.S. imperialism contributed to the formation and global spread of jazz and in what ways did local jazz scenes around the world reinforce or weaken the imperial grasp of the United States in the twentieth century.

Section #8746, MWF 8:00 AM–8:50 AM; SM 356, Kitt Westerduin

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