MUSC513: IMPROVISATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE
Fall 2012
Monday, 10:00am to 12:50pm, MS301
Instructor: Eric Charry, 201 Music Studios, ext. 2579, echarry@wesleyan.edu
Office hours: TBA and by appointment
http://musc513.blogs.wesleyan.edu/

SYLLABUS

Course Description: This course will explore musical improvisation around the world from a variety of theoretical, cultural, social, and practical perspectives. Readings about theories of improvisational processes as well as specific musical traditions in various parts of the world will combine with transcription and analysis projects. Classes will consist of a combination of discussion of the readings, analytical listening to recordings, and student presentations. Topics include: General Theories of Improvisation, Orality and Literacy, Asian Modal Systems, Africa and Latin America, Tonal and Post-Tonal Systems (jazz and non-jazz), and Theories of Rhythm.

Required texts
All other readings are on electronic reserve (ERes) available via the Olin library home page.

Course Requirements
Reading: Reading the articles and chapters is required as indicated in the syllabus and announced each class. The readings may be divided up among class members during certain weeks with intensive listings.

Listening: Most readings have accompanying audio recordings, which are available on electronic reserve (as streamed mp3s) through the Olin library ERes page. You are required to listen to and study the pieces discussed in the readings.

Assignments: Weekly assignments based on the reading, ranging from response papers to short class presentations. One major research paper (15-20 pages) on any relevant topic to be chosen in consultation with the instructor, due at the end of the semester. An in-class oral conference style presentation (20 minute talk, 10 minute discussion) based on your paper at the end of the semester.

Attendance and Lateness Policy: Consistent class attendance and punctual arrival are expected. Any problems should be discussed with the instructor. Please keep cell phones silent in class.

Grades: The course grade is based on the weekly assignments, participation in classroom discussion, oral presentations, and the final research paper (which should reflect the culmination of the semester’s work).
SCHEDULE OF CLASS WORK
(musc513, Fall 2012)

1. Sep. 3  Introduction

2. Sep. 10  General Improvisation Theory and Issues
            Literacy

3. Sep. 17  Oral Composition
            Mitchell and Nagy (2000: vii-xxix [Intro to 2nd ed.]), Lord (1960: 3-5, 30-67 [chap. 3])
            Europe: Early Christian Chant

4. Sep. 24  Europe: 15th-19th Centuries

5. Oct. 1   South Asia: North India

6. Oct. 8   South Asia: South India

West Asia: Iran, Arab and Muslim world

FALL BREAK
7. Oct. 22  
**Southeast Asia: Indonesia**
www.wesleyan.edu/music/vim (search for gamelan; also take links to related instruments)

**Theory of Rhythm**

8. Oct. 29  
**East Asia: China**
www.wesleyan.edu/music/vim (search for erhu)

**Comparative Modal and Improvisation Theory**

9. Nov. 5  
**Africa and the Caribbean**
www.wesleyan.edu/music/vim (search for Ghana: Ewe drumming, take links to related instruments; search for Cuba: Bata drumming and take links)

10. Nov. 12  
**United States: Jazz before 1960**

11. Nov. 19  
**United States: Jazz post-1960**

12. Nov. 26  
**Oral Presentations**

13. Dec. 3  
**Oral Presentations**

**Final Paper Due:** 12pm Friday December 14
REFERENCES

Bent, Margaret

Berliner, Paul

Bor, Joep (ed.), Suvarnalata Rao, Wim van der Meer, and Jane Harvey (co-authors)

Braxton, Anthony

Brinner, Benjamin

Brownell, John

Cherry, Eric

Clayton, Martin

Farhat, Hormoz

Faruqi, Lois Ibsen

Feld, Steven

Ferand, Ernst

Gjerdingen, Robert O.

Goertzen, Valerie Wooding

Goody, Jack
1987 The Interface Between the Written and the Oral. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gushee, Lawrence

Jeffery, Peter

Kaufmann, Walter
Kippen, James 

Levy, Kenneth 

Lewis, George E. 

Lieberman, Frederic (trans. and commentary) 

Locke, David 

Locke, David featuring Godwin Agbeli 

Lord, Albert 

Love, Andrew Cyprian 

Martin, Henry 

Mitchell, Alice L. 

Mitchell, Stephen and Gregory Nagy 

Monson, Ingrid 

Moore, Robin and Elizabeth Sayre 

Nelson, David P. 

Nettl, Bruno 

Nettl, Bruno, with Melinda Russell (eds.) 

Owens, Thomas 

Powers, Harold 


Radano, Ronald

Ratner, Leonard G.

Ruckert, George E.

Russell, George

Schuller, Gunther

Slawek, Stephen

Stock, Jonathan P. J.

Sumarsam


Sutton, R. Anderson

Taruskin, Richard

Treitler, Leo


Viswanathan, Tanjore

Viswanathan, Tanjore and Matthew Harp Allen

Wade, Bonnie

Wu, Wenguang and Jinglue Wu
2001 *The Qin Music Repertoire of the Wu Family/Yushan Wu shi qin pu*. Beijing: Dong fang chu ban she.
Yung, Bell
     With accompanying CD.

Zbikowski, Lawrence M.
     University Press.