MUSIC (MUSI)

* MUSI 006a, Musical Genius  Lindsay Wright
Is there such a thing as “musical genius”? What exactly are the qualifications, and who gets to decide? In this course, we explore how the answers to these questions have shifted in the past three centuries, investigating when and where—and especially how and why—the notion of musical genius became so pervasive and powerful. To this end, class discussions draw upon a range of materials: we listen to music; parse primary historical sources; analyze news coverage and podcast episodes; and read from a range of academic subfields, including music history, ethnomusicology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, disability studies, critical race studies, gender and sexuality studies, and music education. We compare and critically analyze discourse about a range of figures dubbed musical geniuses, from L. v. Beethoven and W. A. Mozart to Thomas “Blind Tom” Wiggins, Aretha Franklin, and Vijay Iyer. Building upon this historical context, we also interrogate the significance of musical genius in today’s world, considering the proliferation of genius-themed self-help literature, the politics and procedures of the Macarthur Genius Grant, invocations of genius and talent on social media, and additional issues of interest to students. Beyond gaining a robust understanding of the history of ideas like genius and talent, we contemplate the benefits and challenges of conceptual history as a scholarly enterprise more broadly.  HU

* MUSI 054a / CLCV 051a / HUMS 061a / LITR 029a / THST 051a, Performing Antiquity  Pauline LeVen
This seminar introduces students to some of the most influential texts of Greco-Roman Antiquity and investigates the meaning of their “performance” in different ways: 1) how they were musically and dramatically performed in their original context in Antiquity (what were the rhythms, the harmonies, the dance-steps, the props used, etc.); 2) what the performance meant, in socio-cultural and political terms, for the people involved in performing or watching it, and how performance takes place beyond the stage; 3) how these texts are performed in modern times (what it means for us to translate and stage ancient plays with masks, a chorus, etc.; to reenact some ancient institutions; to reconstruct ancient instruments or compose “new ancient music”); 4) in what ways modern poems, plays, songs, ballets constitute forms of interpretation, appropriation, or contestation of ancient texts; 5) in what ways creative and embodied practice can be a form of scholarship. Besides reading ancient Greek and Latin texts in translation, students read and watch performances of modern works of reception: poems, drama, ballet, and instrumental music. A few sessions are devoted to practical activities (reenactment of a symposium, composition of ancient music, etc.). Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  WR, HU

* MUSI 081a / ER&M 081a / SOCY 081a, Race and Place in British New Wave, K-Pop, and Beyond  Grace Kao
This seminar introduces you to several popular musical genres and explores how they are tied to racial, regional, and national identities. We examine how music is exported via migrants, return migrants, industry professionals, and the nation-state (in the case of Korean Popular Music, or K-Pop). Readings and discussions focus primarily on the British New Wave (from about 1979 to 1985) and K-Pop (1992–present), but we also
discuss first-wave reggae, ska, rocksteady from the 1960s-70s, British and American punk rock music (1970s-1980s), the precursors of modern K-Pop, and have a brief discussion of Japanese City Pop. The class focuses mainly on the British New Wave and K-Pop because these two genres of popular music have strong ties to particular geographic areas, but they became or have become extremely popular in other parts of the world. We also investigate the importance of music videos in the development of these genres. Enrollment limited to first year students. Pre-registration required: see under First Year Seminar Program.

* MUSI 137a / HUMS 139a, Western Philosophy in Four Operas 1600-1900  
Gary Tomlinson
This course intensively studies four operas central to the western repertory, spanning the years from the early 17th to the late 19th century: Monteverdi’s Orfeo, Mozart’s Don Giovanni, Wagner’s Die Walküre (from The Ring of the Nibelungs), and Verdi’s Simon Boccanegra. The course explores the expression in these works of philosophical stances of their times on the human subject and human society, bringing to bear writings contemporary to them as well as from more recent times. Readings include works of Ficino, Descartes, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Douglass, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, and Adorno. We discover that the expression of changing philosophical stances can be found not only in dramatic themes and the words sung, but in the changing natures of the musical styles deployed.

* MUSI 185a / THST 236a, American Musical Theater History  
Dan Egan
Critical examination of relevance and context in the history of the American musical theater. Historical survey, including nonmusical trends, combined with text and musical analysis. Limited enrollment. Interested students should contact dan.egan@yale.edu for application requirements.

* MUSI 207a, Commercial and Popular Music Theory  
Nathaniel Adam
An introduction to music-theory analysis of commercial and popular song (with a focus on American and British music of the past 50 years, across multiple genres). Coursework involves study of harmony, voice leading and text setting, rhythm and meter, and form, with assigned reading, listening, musical transcription and arranging, and written/oral presentation of analysis. Prerequisite: Completion of a 100- or 200-level music theory course or the corresponding placement exam, and/or permission of instructor.

* MUSI 210a, Counterpoint, Harmony, and Form: 1500–1800  
Daniel Harrison
A concentrated investigation of basic principles and techniques of period musical composition through study of strict polyphonic voice leading, figuration, harmonic progression, phrase rhythm, and small musical forms.

* MUSI 218a, Aural Skills for Tonal Music  
Nathaniel Adam
Tonal music theory topics with an emphasis on sight-sightreading, rhythm, melodic and harmonic dictation, and aural analysis. Prerequisite: Completion of MUSI 110, or any 200-level MUSI course, or the following: ability to match pitch and sing a major scale; knowledge of standard staff notation (treble/bass clefs); knowledge of major/minor key signatures; knowledge of basic time signatures; knowledge of intervals; knowledge of triads.
* MUSI 219a, Aural Skills for Chromatic Music  Nathaniel Adam
Study of chromatic tonal music theory topics through sightreading, transcription, aural analysis, and improvisation. Must have already taken MUSI 218, or demonstrate the following prerequisites: • Knowledge of all key signatures • Knowledge of treble, bass, and c clefs • Ability to sing/match pitch • Ability to perform roman-numeral analysis • Ability to perform harmonic dictation of diatonic music  

* MUSI 220a, The Performance of Chamber Music  Wendy Sharp
Coached chamber music emphasizing the development of ensemble skills, familiarization with the repertory, and musical analysis through performance. Admission by audition only. May be repeated for credit. For audition information e-mail wendy.sharp@yale.edu. Credit for MUSI 220 only on completion of MUSI 221. ½ Course cr

* MUSI 230a, Composing for Musical Theater  Dan Egan
This course is open to all students (including graduate programs) and from any major, although priority is given to music majors. Knowledge of the basics of music theory and music notation is required, and some familiarity with the musical theater idiom is expected. Some prior composing experience is recommended. Piano skills are very helpful, but not required. Normally the class size is limited, so that all assignments can be performed and fully considered during the class meeting time. Prerequisite: MUSI 110 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 12. Please contact joshua.rosenblum@yale.edu with any questions about eligibility.

* MUSI 232a, Central Javanese Gamelan Ensemble  Phil Acimovic
An introduction to performing the orchestral music of central Java and to the theoretical and aesthetic discourses of the gamelan tradition. Students form the nucleus of a gamelan ensemble that consists primarily of tuned gongs and metallophones; interested students may arrange for additional private instruction on more challenging instruments. The course culminates in a public performance by the ensemble. This course may be repeated for credit. No previous musical experience required.

* MUSI 238a, Contemporary Chamber Music Performance  Maiani da Silva
Contemporary chamber music ensemble that emphasizes collaborative workshopping methods for the performance of recent professional repertoire and pieces written by student and faculty composers. Students learn about musical analysis through performance, extended techniques, and the instrumentalists’ role in bringing to life a new piece. Admission by audition only. Students must bring their instruments to class. ½ Course cr

* MUSI 239a / GMAN 174a, Literature and Music  Staff
An advanced language course addressing the close connection between music and German and Austrian literature. Topics include: musical aesthetics (Hoffmann, Hanslick, Nietzsche, Schoenberg, Adorno); opera (Wagner, Strauss-Hofmannthal, Berg); the "art song" or Lied (Schubert, Mahler, Krenek); fictional narratives (Kleist, Hoffmann, Mörike, Doderer, Bernhard). Prerequisite: GMAN 140 or higher.

* MUSI 240a, The Performance of Early Music  Grant Herreid
A study of musical styles of the twelfth through early eighteenth centuries, including examination of manuscripts, musicological research, transcription, score preparation, and performance. Students in this class form the nucleus of the Yale Collegium Musicum and participate in a concert series at the Beinecke Library. Admission
Music (MUSI)

by audition only. May be repeated for credit. For audition information e-mail grant.herreid@yale.edu.  

* MUSI 328a, Introduction to Conducting  William Boughton
An introduction to conducting through a detailed study of the problems of baton technique. Skills applied to selected excerpts from the standard literature, including concertos, recitatives, and contemporary music.

* MUSI 345a, Lessons  Kyung Yu
Individual instruction in the study and interpretation of musical literature. No more than four credits of lessons can be applied towards the 36-credit degree requirement. Auditions for assignment to instructors (for both credit and noncredit lessons) are required for first year and some returning students, and are held only at the beginning of the fall term. For details, see the Music department’s program description in the YCPS.

* MUSI 420a, Composition Seminar III  Kathryn Alexander
Advanced analytic and creative projects in music composition and instrumentation, with a focus on writing for chamber ensembles. Ongoing study of evolving contemporary procedures and compositional techniques. Group and individual lessons to supplement in-class lectures. Admission by audition only. May be repeated for credit. Enrollment limited to 10. To audition, students should upload two PDF scores and MP3 recordings in a single zip file by 4 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the semester, to the designated Music 420 audition assignment page at the Canvas site. Students with questions should contact the instructor at konrad.kaczmarek@yale.edu. Prerequisites: Both MUSI 320 and 321.

MUSI 428a / CPSC 431a, Computer Music: Algorithmic and Heuristic Composition  Scott Petersen
Study of the theoretical and practical fundamentals of computer-generated music, with a focus on high-level representations of music, algorithmic and heuristic composition, and programming languages for computer music generation. Theoretical concepts are supplemented with pragmatic issues expressed in a high-level programming language. Ability to read music is assumed. After CPSC 202 and 223.

* MUSI 445a, Advanced Lessons  Kyung Yu
Individual instruction for advanced performers in the study and interpretation of musical literature. No more than four credits of lessons can be applied towards the 36-credit degree requirement. Auditions for assignment to instructors (for both credit and noncredit lessons) are required for first year and some returning students, and are held only at the beginning of the fall term. For details, see the Music department’s program description in the YCPS.

* MUSI 449a, Jazz Improvisation  Wayne Escoffery
In this course students study basic, intermediate, and advanced concepts of improvisation and learn the essentials for the Jazz Language through solo transcription and analysis. Students learn how to use vocabulary (or musical phrases) and a variety of improvisational devices and techniques over common chords and chord progressions. Upon completion of the course students have a deeper understanding of what it takes to become a great improviser, what to practice and how to practice it, and how to go about expanding their Jazz Vocabulary in order to naturally develop a unique improvisational voice. Students are required to bring their instruments to
class. Prerequisite: Basic understanding of Jazz nomenclature and some experience improvising is advised. Admission by audition only. Permission of the instructor is required. ½ Course cr

* MUSI 450a / AFAM 243a / AMST 243, Black Arts Criticism: Intellectual Life of Black Culture from W.E.B. DuBois to the 21st Century  Daphne Brooks
This course traces the birth and evolution of Black arts writing and criticism—its style and content, its major themes and groundbreaking practices—from the late nineteenth century through the 2020s. From the innovations of W.E.B. DuBois, Pauline Hopkins, and postbellum Black arts journalists to the breakthroughs of Harlem Renaissance heavyweights (Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes and others), from the jazz experimentalism of Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray to the revolutionary criticism of Amiri Baraka, Lorraine Hansberry, James Baldwin, Phyl Garland and others, this class explores the intellectual work of pioneering writers who produced radical knowledge about Black culture. Its second half turns to the late twentieth and twenty-first century criticism of legendary arts journalists, scholars and critics: Toni Morrison, Thulani Davis, Margo Jefferson, Hilton Als, Greg Tate, Farah J. Griffin, Joan Morgan, Danyel Smith, Wesley Morris, Hanif Abdurraqib, and others. Emphasis will be placed on music, literary, film, and theater/performance arts writing. Prerequisite: one or more AFAM courses.  

* MUSI 495a, Individual Study  Nathaniel Adam
Original essay in ethnomusicology, music history, music theory, or music technology and/or multimedia art under the direction of a faculty adviser. Admission to the course upon submission to the department of the essay proposal by the registration deadline, and approval of the director of undergraduate studies.

* MUSI 496a, The Senior Recital  Nathaniel Adam
Preparation and performance of a senior recital and accompanying essay under faculty supervision. Admission by permission of the director of undergraduate studies. Prerequisite: MUSI 461.

* MUSI 497a, The Senior Project in Composition  Nathaniel Adam
Preparation of a senior composition project under faculty supervision. Admission by permission of the composition faculty of the Department of Music. Prerequisites: MUSI 312, 313, 412, and 413.

* MUSI 498a, The Senior Project in Musical Theater Composition  Nathaniel Adam
Preparation of a senior composition project in the field of musical theater under faculty supervision. Admission by permission of the coordinator of the Shen Curriculum. Two terms of MUSI 314 or equivalent.

* MUSI 499a, The Senior Essay  Nathaniel Adam
Preparation of a senior essay under faculty supervision. Admission by permission of the director of undergraduate studies.