**MUSIC AND QUEER IDENTITY**

**MUAR 399** **Course Syllabus**

# **Winter 2013**

Professor Lloyd Whitesell lloyd.whitesell@mcgill.ca

New Music Building, Rm A633

Class Meeting: MW 11:30-1:00, Strathcona Music C204

Office Hours: W 10-11 and by appointment

In this course we will explore critical perspectives on topics such as non-normative music history, queer modes of expression, subcultural music-making, and the implications of mainstream visibility. Along the way we will survey some notable lesbian/gay/bisexual/ transgender/queer composers and musicians in both art music and popular music.

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Coursepack of readings, available at the McGill bookstore. Most of the required readings are included in the coursepack; but there will be occasional readings found on the Web. These are clearly marked on the syllabus with links.

To prepare for class discussion, do the reading and listening listed for each class date before the class. I strongly suggest that you take notes as you listen, to help you discern what’s going on in the music, to allow you to formulate questions and points for class discussion, and to help you remember what the music examples sound like as you prepare for the examination.

It’s not necessary to read musical notation for this course. Listening comprehension, however, is a crucial component. There will be some listening identification on the exam. All listening tracks for the course are posted on MyCourses. The computer stations in the Music Library (new music building) are equipped with headsets for listening. Depending on your connection and media software you should be able to listen at home. There will be occasional assigned viewing of videos on reserve at the Music Library (enter on 3rd floor, circulation desk on 4th floor). Videos do not circulate; viewing must be done in the library. Viewing stations can accommodate more than one person at a time.

# CLASS OVERVIEW

Jan. 7-23: **Part 1. Different Lives**

Jan. 28: Paper #1 Due

Jan. 28-Feb. 11 **Part 2. Express Yourself**

Feb. 13-27: **Part 3. Musical Communities**

Feb. 27: Paper #2 Due

Mar. 4-8: Winter Break

Mar. 11-25: **Part 4. Queer Aesthetics**

Mar. 27-Apr. 15: **Part 5. A Place at the Table**

Apr. 3: Paper #3 Due

TBA: Final Exam

**GRADING:** There will be two short papers (5-6 pages), one longer paper (10-12 pages), and a final exam.

Class participation 10%

Paper #1 20%

Paper #2 20%

Paper #3 25%

Final exam 25%

MUSICAL TERMINOLOGY: If you are unsure of the precise usage of basic terms (‘melody,’ ‘harmony,’ ‘cadence,’ etc.), refer to a music dictionary or introductory music appreciation text. A useful glossary can be found in the back of *Listen* by Joseph Kerman (on reserve). Several music dictionaries are shelved in Music Reference; in addition, the comprehensive *Oxford Music Online* is available through the Library web page (Finding Information🡪Resources by Subject🡪 Music🡪Key Resources). Occasionally a reading may refer to more technical terms of rhythmic or harmonic structure and the like. You may skip those passages, or do your best to follow the author’s drift from the context.

* In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or French any written work that is to be graded.
* McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest) for more information).

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

\*\****For the listening, go to MyCourses to access a detailed playlist and all listening tracks*.**\*\*

**Part 1. Different Lives**

**1/7 Introduction: Sexuality, History, Music**

LISTENING: Claude Vivier, Ani DiFranco

READING: P. Tannenbaum, “The Brief and Turbulent Life of Claude Vivier,” *Music* 9 (1986): 12-14.

“Ani DiFranco,” in the *glbtq encyclopedia,* [www.glbtq.com/arts/difranco\_a.html](http://www.glbtq.com/arts/difranco_a.html)

**1/9 Queers in the Canon I**

LISTENING: Franz Schubert

READING: M. Solomon, “Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini,” *19th-Century Music* 12 (1989): 193-206. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/746501>

S. McClary, “Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert’s Music,” in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*,2nd ed., ed. Brett, et al. (Routledge, 2006), 205-15. (215-33 optional.) Ebook: <http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=190912>

**1/14 Queers in the Canon II**

LISTENING: George Frideric Handel

READING: G. Thomas, “‘Was George Frideric Handel Gay?’: On Closet Questions and Cultural Politics,” in *Queering the Pitch,* 155-203. Ebook: <http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=190912>

Optional: N. Hubbs, “Introduction,” in *The Queer Composition of America’s Sound: Gay Modernists, American Music, and National Identity* (California, 2004), 1-17. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb09028.0001.001>

**1/16 A Parisian Salon**

LISTENING: Ethel Smyth, Maurice Ravel

READING: E. Wood, “Lesbian Fugue: Ethel Smyth’s Contrapuntal Arts,” in *Musicology and Difference,* ed. Solie (California, 1993), 164-83. Ebook: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.06281.0001.001>

S. Kahan, *Music’s Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer* (Rochester, 2003), xvii-xxii.

L. Whitesell, “Ravel’s Way,” in *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity,* ed. Fuller and Whitesell (Illinois, 2002), 49-78.

**1/21 1920s Blues Women**

LISTENING: Merritt Brunies, Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Gladys Bentley

READING: E. Garber, “A Spectacle in Color: The Lesbian and Gay Subculture of Jazz Age Harlem,” in *Hidden From History,* ed. Duberman, et al. (Meridian, 1989), 318-31.

D. Harrison, *Black Pearls: Blues Queens of the 1920s* (Rutgers, 1993), 17-41.

**1/23 Jazz Arrangements**

LISTENING: Billy Strayhorn

READING: D. Hajdu, *Lush Life: A Biography of Billy Strayhorn* (FSG, 1996), 65-80.

D. Middlebrook, *Suits Me: The Double Life of Billy Tipton* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 3-11, 109-40.

J. Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (NYU, 2005), 47-61.

**Part 2. Express Yourself**

**1/28 Art Song; \*\*PAPER #1 DUE\*\***

LISTENING: Benjamin Britten (sonnet translations on MyCourses)

READING: G. Johnson, *Britten, Voice & Piano* (Ashgate, 2003), 35-47.

L. Whitesell, “Translated Identities in Britten’s *Nocturne*,” *repercussions* 6/1 (Spring 1997): 109-34.

**1/30 Musical Theater**

LISTENING: Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers/Lorenz Hart

READING: J. Clum, “Gay Lyrics, Gay Icons,” in *Something For the Boys: Musical Theater and Gay Culture* (St Martin’s, 1999), 49-75.

Porter lyrics, in [www.thepeaches.com/music/composers/cole](http://www.thepeaches.com/music/composers/cole)

Hart lyrics, in [www.thepeaches.com/music/composers/rodgershart](http://www.thepeaches.com/music/composers/rodgershart)

**2/4 *West Side Story***

LISTENING: Leonard Bernstein/Stephen Sondheim

VIEWING (optional): *West Side Story,* DVD 140, ON RESERVE, MUSIC LIBRARY A/V

READING: D. A. Miller, *Place for Us: Essay on the Broadway Musical* (Harvard, 1998), 34-39.

**2/6 Pop Duos**

LISTENING: Indigo Girls, Pet Shop Boys

READING: S. Hawkins, “The Pet Shop Boys: Musicology, Masculinity and Banality,” in *Sexing the Groove,* ed. Whiteley (Routledge, 1997), 118-33.

F. Maus, “Glamour and Evasion: The Fabulous Ambivalence of the Pet Shop Boys,” *Popular Music* 20 (2001): 379-93. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/853628>

Lyrics: <http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/indigogirls.html>

<http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/ritesofpassage.html>

**2/11 Queer Chic**

LISTENING: David Bowie

VIEWING: Videos by Madonna: “Express Yourself,” “Vogue,” in *The Immaculate Collection*, DVD 943, “Human Nature” in *The Video Collection 93:99,* DVD 944, ON RESERVE, MUSIC LIBRARY A/V

Picture gallery at [www.5years.com](http://www.5years.com) (The Ziggy Stardust Companion)

READING: M. Musto, “Immaculate Connection,” in *Out in Culture,* ed. Creekmur and Doty (Cassell, 1995), 427-36.

F. Jarman-Ivens, “What It Feels Like for Two Girls,” in *Madonna’s Drowned Worlds,* ed. Fouz-Hernandez and Jarman-Ivens (Ashgate, 2004), 69-87.

J. Gill, *Queer Noises: Male and Female Homosexuality in 20c. Music* (Minnesota, 1995), 106-13.

S. Waldrep, *The Aesthetics of Self-Invention: Oscar Wilde to David Bowie,* (Minnesota, 2004), 105-17.

**Part 3. Musical Communities**

**2/13 Cloisters**

LISTENING: Hildegard of Bingen

READING: B. Holsinger, *Music, Body, and Desire in Medieval Culture*, 89-92, 101-29.

**2/18 Womyn’s Music Festivals**

LISTENING: Alix Dobkin, Meg Christian, Cris Williamson, Holly Near, Ferron

READING: B. Morris, *Eden Built by Eves* (Alyson, 1999), 59-83.

E. Hayes, *Songs in Black and Lavender: Race, Sexual Politics and Women’s Music* (Illinois, 2010), 89-113. (114-130 optional.)

**2/20 Disco**

LISTENING: Sylvester, Patti Labelle, Sister Sledge, Gloria Gaynor, etc.

READING: A. Kopkind, “The Dialectic of Disco: Gay Music Goes Straight,” in Brackett, *The Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader* (Oxford, 2005), 298-308.

R. Dyer, “In Defense of Disco,” in *Out in Culture,* ed. Creekmur and Doty, 407-15.

A. Thomas, “The House the Kids Built,” in *Out in Culture,* 437-45.

F. Buckland, *Impossible Dance: Club Culture and Queer World-Making* (Wesleyan, 2002), 36-64.

J. Gamson, “Sylvester,” *Camera Obscura* 22 (2007): 140-3. <http://cameraobscura.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/22/2_65/140>

**2/25 Diva Cults**

LISTENING: Maria Callas, Judy Garland, Johnny Cash

READING: W. Koestenbaum, “The Callas Cult,” in *The Queen’s Throat: Opera, Homosexuality, and the Mystery of Desire* (Poseidon, 1993), 134-53.

R. Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (St Martin’s, 1986), 141-56.

T. Ortega, “‘My Name is Sue! How Do You Do?’: Johnny Cash as Lesbian Icon,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 94/1 (1995): 259-72.

**2/27 Queer Choruses; \*\*PAPER #2 DUE\*\***

LISTENING: GLBTQ Choruses

READING: E. Gordon, “GALA,” *Choral Journal* 30 (April 1990): 25-32.

**3/4-8: WINTER BREAK**

**Part 4. Queer Aesthetics**

*Note: The readings in the coursepack appear in a different order.*

**3/11 *Symphonie Pathétique***

LISTENING: Piotr Ilich Tchaikovsky

READING: M. Brown, “Tchaikovsky and His Music in Anglo-American Criticism,” in *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity,* 134-49.

A. Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* (Schirmer, 1991), 3-15, 556-61.

**3/13 *War Requiem***

LISTENING: Benjamin Britten (texts at <http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~tan/Britten/reqtext.html>)

READING: D. Mitchell, “Violent Climates,” in *Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten,* ed. Cooke, (Cambridge, 1999), 204-11.

L. Whitesell, “Britten’s Dubious Trysts,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56 (Fall 2003): 637-43, 662-65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3128786>

**3/18 *Sonic Meditations***

LISTENING: Pauline Oliveros (scores on MyCourses)

READING: M. Mockus, *Sounding Out: Pauline Oliveros and Lesbian Musicality* (Routledge, 2008), 37-51.

S. Cusick, “On a Lesbian Relation with Music: A Serious Effort Not to Think Straight.” in *Queering the Pitch,* 67-83. Ebook: <http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=190912>

**3/20 Alternative Soul**

LISTENING: Meshell Ndegéocello

# READING: M. Mockus, “MeShell Ndegéocello: Musical Articulations of Black Feminism,” in *Unmaking Race, Remaking Soul* (SUNY, 2007), 81-102.

**3/25 Nouveau Torch**

LISTENING: Rufus Wainwright

READING: “Rufus Wainwright,” *glbtq encycl.,* <http://www.glbtq.com/arts/wainwright_r.html>

R. Goldstein, “A Torch Song Named Desire,” *Village Voice,* August 24, 1999. <http://www.villagevoice.com/1999-08-24/news/a-torch-song-named-desire/>

M. Udovitch, “The Importance of Being Rufus,” *Rolling Stone,* June 10, 1999. <http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:iimp:&rft_dat=xri:iimp:article:fulltext:iimp00127623>

A. Powers, “Embracing Gay Identity with Candor and Pride,” *New York Times,* July 1, 2001. <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/01/arts/music-embracing-gay-identity-with-candor-and-pride.html>

**Part 5. A Place at the Table**

**3/27 Sir Elton**

LISTENING: Elton John

READING: P. Norman, *Elton John* (Harmony, 1991)*,* 329-35, 487-89.

“Elton John,” in the *glbtq encyclopedia,* [www.glbtq.com/arts/john1\_e.html](http://www.glbtq.com/arts/john1_e.html)

**4/1 Easter Monday; no class**

**4/3 Ingenue; \*\*PAPER #3 DUE\*\***

LISTENING: k.d. lang

READING: A. Stein, “Crossover Dreams,” in *Out in Culture,* ed. Creekmur and Doty, 416-26.

M. Mockus, “Queer Thoughts on Country Music and k.d. lang,” in *Queering the Pitch,* ed. Brett, et al. (Routledge, 2006), 257-71. Ebook: <http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=190912>

S. Bruzzi, “Mannish Girl: k.d. lang,” in *Sexing the Groove,* ed. Whiteley, 191-206.

M. Udovitch, “k.d. lang: How Did a Lesbian, Feminist, Vegetarian Canadian Win a Grammy and the Hearts of America?” *Rolling Stone,* August 5, 1993. <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdlink?did=8743542&sid=2&Fmt=3&clientId=10843&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

**4/8 Modern Bohemians**

LISTENING: Jonathan Larson, *Rent*

VIEWING (optional): *Rent,* DVD 1528, ON RESERVE, MUSIC LIBRARY A/V

READING: S. Schulman, *Stage Struck: Theater, AIDS, and the Marketing of Gay America* (Duke, 1998), 41-49, 80-97, 145-51.

**4/10 Anger Management**

LISTENING: Stephen Trask/John Cameron Mitchell, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*

VIEWING (optional): *Hedwig and the Angry Inch,* DVD 946, ON RESERVE, MUSIC LIB A/V

**4/15 Gleeks**

VIEWING: *Glee,* Season 1, #20, “Theatricality,” DVD 2256;

Season 2, #6, “Never Been Kissed,” DVD 2257;

Season 3, #7, “I Kissed a Girl,” DVD 2258.

READING: L. Alptraum, “Why *Glee*’s Brittany and Santana Are My Queer Icons,” 10/1/10, <http://jezebel.com/5652429/why-glees-brittany-and-santana-are-my-queer-icons>

A. Powers, “*Glee* Is at a Crossroads,” *L.A. Times,* 10/6/10, <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/music_blog/2010/10/critics-notebook-glee-is-at-a-crossroads.html>

L. Peitzman, “How *Glee*’s Gay-Bullying Plot Misses the Mark,” 10/10/10, <http://www.tv.com/news/how-glees-gay-bullying-plot-misses-the-mark-24522/>

H. Stuever, “*Glee*: It Was Fun to Watch Up to and Until the Moment Gay Kids Started Taking It Seriously,” 6/22/11, <http://www.thestranger.com/seattle/glee/Content?oid=8743706>

J. Harrell, “Oh Em Glee: Analyzing Gay Presence in Contemporary American Media,” *Americana* 7 (Spring 2011), <http://americanaejournal.hu/vol7no1/harrell3>

C. Belcher, “‘I Can’t Go to an Indigo Girls Concert, I Just Can’t’: *Glee*’s Shameful Lesbian Musicality,” *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 23 (2011): 412-30. <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=0f9c286a-3169-4399-ad14-484a0da89af2%40sessionmgr114&vid=4&hid=107>

**FINAL EXAM to be announced**