

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Your written assignments will consist of two brief papers (the first due mid-semester, the second at the end). These will document a non-western, traditional, or “folk” **concert** (bluegrass and blues are OK; jazz, country-western, classical, musical theatre, and pop are not) **or the viewing of a video** of the same. You will provide a brief summary of the events and a description of the music you heard. This is an individual project, not a group assignment.

You are not restricted to attending Miami-sponsored events, though there should be several that will fulfill this requirement. Many events on the Regionals Artist Series will be applicable (but not necessarily all). If you are uncertain about the suitability of a particular performance for this assignment, don't hesitate to ask me in advance.

If you choose the video option, there are several on reserve at the Middletown campus library (there are additional copies of some of these available for checkout). These may be viewed in the library on a PC or in a DVD player, but may not be taken home. Several more that can be checked out are listed at the end of this document.

You can also view **streaming videos** from this site:

<http://www.folkstreams.net/films.php?cat=8&sort=recent>

*Please note that there are many, many videos at this site. I have linked you to search results based on the subject "music," and it defaults to sorting by "Most Recently Added," but not all of these will be appropriate. Adhere to the restrictions on appropriate types of music at the beginning of this document, and plan on watching something of ~ 1/2 hour duration at a minimum (there are some that are much shorter). There are multiple pages of listings—click on “Load More” at the bottom of the page to see additional videos, so don't get fixated by the first page only (please!). You can also resort in alphabetical or reverse-alphabetical order.

If you choose the video option, I would prefer you use one of the videos listed here or on the streaming site linked above. If the video is primarily a biographical documentary, **summarize the content**, and **describe the subject's musical style, with references to specific pieces** if at all possible, even if you do not catch the title. If it is a performance then the following comments about attending a performance will apply to a large degree. You may make personal evaluations, but keep it as objective as possible.

I would suggest taking pen and paper to the concert, or have them with you as you watch, to jot down notes and impressions. Record the behaviors of both the performers and the audience members, notice the types of people in the audience, how they are dressed, etc. Is there a printed program (often there will not be for these types of performances)? Does it contain descriptions of the works to be performed? If so, take the time to read the notes. The bulk of the paper should focus on the music; try to describe it using terms and concepts learned in class. You should give a sense of the entire performance, but you should **focus on two or three pieces for detailed discussion**. Did you think this was a good performance—why or why not? You may also describe your own reactions to the music, but if you do, it should be something more substantial than "I liked it" or "I hated it"—tell me why.

In all cases, try to be specific. Name and describe specific pieces if at all possible (two or three should be sufficient per paper). Use a formal writing style.

Papers should be at least three and no more than five typed or word-processed pages in length, single-sided, double-spaced, with one-inch margins and a font size no larger than twelve points. Be sure to include your name, course number, and assignment number (#1 or #2) at the top of the first page. **You must turn in a hard copy of the paper to receive credit.**

Miami-owned Videos

Koto: The Music of Tadao

M142.K6 S28 2003

[Tadao Sawai was Japan's greatest modern koto player, enjoying immense popularity and influencing a whole generation of musicians. His widow, Kazue Sawai, has become heir to his musical legacy and is one of the foremost players of this traditional instrument. Kazue discusses Tadao's playing and how she has integrated modern music into her own repertoire. Contains highlights of several of Kazue's performances and archival footage of Tadao playing his koto]

Jamesie: King of Scratch

ML3565 .J364 2006

[A musical journey to the Caribbean focusing on scratch band music (also known as Quelbe), an indigenous, grass-roots form of folk music from the Virgin Islands that was recently declared the "official" music of the Virgin Islands. 79-year old James Brewster, the central character of this documentary, is an uncompromising, humorous, and provocative musician known for his playful compositions and lively performances and is the legendary "King of Scratch". Included are performances by Jamesie and the All Stars, interspersed with more intimate footage of Jamesie talking with other musicians at his home about the historical significance of the music and explaining how he came to create some of his songs]

Bill Monroe: Father of Bluegrass Music

ML420.M5595 B55 2008

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan: A Voice from Heaven (documentary about Pakistani qawwali singer)

M1809.18 .K47 2001

Can't You Hear the Wind Howl?: The Life and Music of Robert Johnson

(documentary about the most-famous Delta blues singer)

ML420.J735 C36 1997

American Aloha: Hula Beyond Hawaii (documentary about attempts to preserve and extend hula in California)

GV1796.H8 A54 2003

Fine Rain: Politics and Folk Songs in China

M1804 .F564 2007

["Whether they were crafted to spread Mao's message of class struggle or spun from the fabric of everyday life, Chinese folk songs carry with them immense historical and cultural importance. This program examines a wide range of songs and melodies from the country's pre-Communist era to the Cultural Revolution, energized by a rich progression of archival footage, photographs, interviews, and present-day renditions sung in homes and on street corners. The origins, meanings, and political impact of several well-known songs are described, along with an illustration of jianpu, the traditional Chinese system of musical notation, and the distinction between haozi, or workmen's songs, and the urban style known as xiaodiao."]

Hot Pepper: The Life and Music of Clifton Chenier (documentary about famous zydeco musician)

ML419.C43 H67 2005

Buena Vista Social Club

M1681.C918 B83 1999

In 1996, Ry Cooder went to Cuba to search for buried treasure. His recording featuring the re-discovered talents of Cuba's foremost folk musicians sold millions and earned a Grammy Award. Cooder now returns to Cuba with film maker Wim Wenders to reveal the stories, personalities, and music of the performers who collaborated on that recording. Includes live performances in Amsterdam and at Carnegie Hall

Indian Classical Music

M1808 .I53 2000z on reserve

[Performances by Ali Akbar Khan, Alla Rakha, Amjad Khan, Harisprasad Chaurasia, and Ravi Shankar (all are Hindustani musicians)]