

Course Title: “Turn, Turn, Turn, Part One”: A chronological and musical road trip through the golden era of American rock ‘n’ roll, 1955-70

Description:

This course will cover the golden age of American rock n’ roll, 1955-70, **part one**. It will be taught chronologically and geographically (“a road trip”) across several regions where key American musical movements sprung up. The ten classes will be presented as a cultural and musical journey through those periods and places where that region was at the forefront of popular music. The course will do this through several media: lectures, photographs, recorded music, film clips, question and answer sessions, and the use of live music. The instructor--and special guests--will play piano, guitar and sing, and will choose appropriate examples from each genre.

Suggestion: Many students have reached out to us about the inconsistent quality of the course materials on zoom, i.e. poor audio, poor video, and the fact that many of the videos shown in my class are removed due to youtube licensing laws. Believe me, we are doing our best to make the online experience as positive as possible but we can only do so much. But you can do something: **Come to the Freight!!**

We are aware of how life has changed for all of us due to the pandemic, and driving and parking around there can be a nightmare, but we did it before 2020 fine. But it’s 2025; things are safer. And the Freight is better than ever: the terrific sound system, the big screen, our ability to do live music, (with that beautiful piano) and, most importantly, my ability to teach these courses how they were conceived; live, interactive, with folks in the room, soaking up the experience. So, when you sign up for this course, please consider the tremendous upside of being there in person. Thanks!

Learning Outcomes: The five desired goals for the students are as follows:

- 1) Enlighten students who are already familiar with the topic--either as a fan and/or a musician--as to the nuances of different styles that are most associated with key American regions and their respective “golden eras.”
- 2) Introduce students who enjoy the topic--but are otherwise not well versed in the history, people or music—to the cross-cultural currents and connections that link it all together.
- 3) Pose and answer questions about the rich cultural history of this art form, often by demonstrating musically what words sometimes cannot explain.
- 4) Inform and educate students about the specific movements that are the backbone of this art form, and how they relate to each other musically, chronologically and geographically.

- 5) Have an interactive dialogue with people who are passionate about the music, the people, the places and the events that have shaped this uniquely American art form.

Course/class outline: The instructor will break the course up chronologically into six key American musical movements, each with its origin in a different region of the USA; New Orleans, Memphis (twice), New York, Detroit, and a final class that will revisit Bob Dylan's 1965, a pivotal year in rock n' roll history. Each session will include the following:

- A thorough, fast-background lecture about each movement, including; the roots of the musical style most associated with it, the socio/cultural forces that came together to allow the movement to thrive when it did, key artists who put that area on the musical map, and personal stories from the instructor. With accompanying photographs, charts and maps.
- Audio, video, film clips and photographs of those artists performing in the style most associated with them, their region and time period.
- A live music component, where the instructor will demonstrate on piano, guitar (and voice) the musical style that was the trademark of those movements.
- A classroom where students can ask questions, critique, comment on and weigh in on what was presented during that class.

***** several of the videos on the in-class playlists are unavailable online due to copyright/ licensing restrictions; I have listed the links for them next to the song.***

Part One: Weeks 1-6, The roots of rock n' roll, 1955-65

Week 1: New Orleans and the Deep South 1955-1960: the cradle of rock and roll. Early rhythm and blues, the first wave: Leadbelly, Robert Johnson at the crossroads, early R&B, Fats Domino (New Orleans) Little Richard (Georgia) Bo Diddley (Mississippi) and Chuck Berry (Missouri). Why does this music swing so much? *From the fields to the factories to Friday night.*

****suggested reading, listening, and viewing:***

Reading:

The Alan Freed Story - The Early Years of Rock & Roll, by John Jackson (2007)
Chuck Berry: the Autobiography (2001)

Listening:

The Complete Recordings: Robert Johnson (Columbia, 1990)
Fats Domino Greatest Hits: Walkin' to New Orleans, 30 songs (Capitol, 2007)
Here's Little Richard, (Specialty, 1957)

The Great Twenty-Eight, Chuck Berry, (Chess, 1982)

Viewing:

Rock Around the Clock, dir. by Fred Sears (1956)

American Hot Wax, dir. by Floyd Mutrux (1978)

Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' roll, Chuck Berry, directed by Taylor Hackford, (1987)

in-class playlist:

Play CD #1--*Long Tall Sally* 1956

Play CD#2—*Rock island Line*

Play CD #3--*Sweet Home Chicago*—Robert Johnson 1934

Play video #1-- Got My Mojo Workin'--Muddy Waters 1960

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cQRHOIDb1w>

Play CD #4--*Mama he treats your daughter mean*—Ruth Brown 1954

Play CD #5 *Shake Rattle and Roll*—Joe Turner 1954

Play CD #6--*The Twist*--Hank Ballard—1958:

Play CD #7--*Staggerlee*--Lloyd Price--1958

Play video #2--Bo Diddley—from History of Rock and Roll, episode 1, at 34:00

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2Ptv_7VqO4

Play video #3—Blue Monday--Fats Domino—1956

from History of Rock and Roll, episode 1, at 35:00

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2Ptv_7VqO4

Play CD #8—*Blueberry Hill*--Fats Domino, 1957

Play CD #9/live--*I'm Walkin'*--Fats Domino, 1957

Play CD #10--*Rock and Roll Music*--Chuck Berry 1957

Play video #4—You can't catch me--Chuck Berry, from movie “Rock, rock, rock”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jKrHzps0XM>

Play video #5—Sweet Little Sixteen—Chuck Berry—1958

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLV4NGpov_E

Play CD #11 *Wabash Cannonball* –1980 Boxcar WillieP

play CD#12—*Promised Land*--Chuck Berry--1964

play CD#13--*You Never can Tell*--Chuck Berry 1964

play CD # 14 *Tutti Frutti*—Little Richard 1956

Play video #6—Lucille and other hits: Little Richard—1963 UK Granada TV

at 12:20—25 minutes of pure, unadulterated, total rock and roll!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_KQd9Oe1p8

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Week 2: Up the Big Muddy to Memphis, 1955-1962. The Rockabilly era--rhythm and blues meets country-western, and the result is rock n' roll. Sun Studio, Sam Phillips, Elvis, Buddy Holly, the wild rockabilly of Jerry Lee Lewis, Gene Vincent, Eddie

Cochrane and Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, the Everly Brothers. *Just give me a Gibson guitar and a Fender amp. And record it in mono...*

** suggested reading, listening, and viewing:*

Reading:

Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock 'n' Roll Music, by Greil Marcus, (1975)

Rockabilly: The Twang Heard 'Round the World: The Illustrated History, by Michael Dregni (2011)

Listening:

The Sun Sessions, Elvis Presley, 1954-55, (RCA Victor, 1976)

Rebel Rock: The Essential Rockabilly Album (101 Distribution label, 2011 compilation)

Carl Perkins Greatest Hits, (Columbia, 1969)

Everly Brothers Greatest Hits, (Not Now label, 2013, 3-CD set, 75 songs)

20 Golden Greats, Buddy Holly and the Crickets (EMI, 1978)

Viewing:

The Buddy Holly Story, dir. by Steve Rash (1978)

Great Balls of Fire, dir. by Jim McBride (1989)

Walk the Line, dir. by James Mangold (2005)

in-class playlist:

CD #1--Mystery Train—Elvis

CD #2--That's Alright Mama--Elvis

CD #3--Good Rockin' Tonight--Elvis

play video #1 Hound Dog—Elvis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWquP_06spc

CD #4--Suspicious Minds—Elvis

CD #5--I Can't Help Falling In Love--Elvis

play video #2--Blue Suede Shoes—Carl Perkins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46fzt2-fG08>

CD #6--Be Bop A Lu La—Gene Vincent

CD #7—20 flight rock—Eddie Cochrane

CD #8--Summertime Blues

play video #3--Whole Lotta Shakin --Jerry Lee Lewis—pure great rock-n-roll.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dC0DseCyYE>

CD #9--Great Balls of Fire—Jerry Lee Lewis

play video #4--Oh Boy—Buddy Holly—the prince of rock and roll

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtIOy9WcxU0>

play video #5— Hard-headed Woman--Wanda Jackson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzJ3hiqsi0U>

play video #6--Bye Bye Love--Everly Brothers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUoN50lkRi4>

CD #10--Pretty Woman—Roy Orbison

play video #7--Only the Lonely—Roy Orbison *black and white night*; an impossibly beautiful performance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6Aw3ZnqQrY>

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Week 3: North to New York City, 1957-64: the urbanization of rock n' roll: *Power returns to the publishers, labels, producers and writers.*

Part A. The singers: the great doo-wop, groups, Solomon Burke, Ray Charles, Jackie Wilson, the Drifters, the Coasters, Sam Cooke, the Ronettes, the Four Seasons.

Part B. The producers and the writers: Phil Spector, Bert Berns, Jerry Wexler, Ahmet Ertegun, Arif Mardin, Tom Dowd and Atlantic Records, the wunderkinds of the Brill Building; Pomus/Shuman, Goffin/King, Leiber/Stoller, Greenwich/Barry, Sedaka/Greenfield, Mann /Weill, Bacharach/David.

** suggested reading, listening, and viewing:*

Reading:

Here Comes the Night: The Dark Soul of Bert Berns and the Dirty Business of Rhythm and Blues,

by Joel Selvin (2013)

Rhythm and the Blues; A Life in American Music, by Jerry Wexler (1994)

Tearing Down the Wall of Sound: The Rise and Fall of Phil Spector, by Mick Brown (2008)

Always Magic in the Air: The Bomp and Brilliance of the Brill Building Era, by Ken Emerson (2005)

Listening:

Back to Mono, Phil Spector, 1958-1969 (ABCKO, 1991)

The Greatest Hits of Jackie Wilson 16 songs (Brunswick--1998)

A Man and his Music; Sam Cooke—28 songs (RCA-1998)

The Magic Hits of the Drifters, (Atlantic Compilation 1975)

Viewing

Hitmakers: The Teens Who Stole Pop Music (Television: A&E network “biography,” 2001)

Tom Dowd and the Language of Music, dir. by Mark Moorman (2003)

in-class playlist:

CD #1---Spanish Harlem—Ben E. King --Leiber/Spector, 1960
 play video #1 You Send Me—Sam Cooke, 1957
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ois_9Pq1Q9k
 CD#2—He’s a Rebel—Crystals, Gene Pitney, 1963
 LIVE—Bring it on home to me—Sam Cooke, 1962
 CD#3--Reet Petite— Jackie Wilson 1958
 play video #2 Baby Workout—Jackie Wilson, 1963
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBa81YSyshk>
 CD#4--Higher and Higher--Jackie Wilson, Gary Jackson/Carl Smith 1967
 CD#5—Cry to Me—Solomon Burke, 1961
 CD #6—This Magic Moment--The Drifters
 play video #3 What I Say 1963 Ray Charles
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAjeSS3kktA>
 play video #4 Ronettes, Be My Baby
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-dr1PZZMds>
 CD#7--Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow—Shirelles, 1960 Goffin/King
 CD#8—Up on the Roof—Drifters 1962 Goffin/King
 CD#9--On Broadway—Drifters, 1963, Mann/Weill/Leiber/Stoller
 CD#10 —River Deep Mt. High—Ike&Tina/1966/ Spector/Barry/Greenwich
 LIVE—Wonderful World

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Week 4: Double back to Memphis and points south, 1963-68: Memphis Soul, Muscle Shoals, the Godfather of Soul, Raw sounds and soul music to the fore.
 Stax-Volt: Otis Redding, Booker T and the MGs, Wilson Pickett, Aretha, James Brown, Dusty Springfield, American Sound Studios. The power of race-blind music. *Mellow Wurlitzers, soulful B-3s, brash horns, stinging telecasters, testifying and the sanctity and groove of the four-piece rhythm section.*

** suggested reading, listening, and viewing:*

Reading:

Soulsville, U.S.A.: The Story of Stax Records by Rob Bowman (2003)

Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom, by Peter Guralnick (1999)

Listening:

Live at the Apollo, James Brown (King, 1963)

Otis Blue, Otis Redding (Volt, 1965)

Various Artists - Memphis Gold, Vol. I, (Stax-Volt, 1967)

Lady Soul, Aretha Franklin, (Atlantic, 1967)

The Very Best of Wilson Pickett, (Atlantic, 1993)

Viewing:

Otis Redding: Respect - Otis Live (in Europe), dir. by D.A. Pennebaker (1967)
Muscle Shoals dir. by Greg Camalier (2013)

in-class playlist:

play CD #1. Sweet Soul Music

play CD #2. Gee Whiz—Carla Thomas

play CD#3—Walkin’ the Dog

play video #1. Green Onions-- Booker T and the Mgs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2VEP8ZNIfk>

play video #2—Philly Dog—Mar-keys with Booker T and Mgs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4103vqy7aA>

play CD #4—I found a love—Wilson Pickett

play CD#5—Midnight Hour—Wilson Pickett

play video #3—Land of 1000 dances—Wilson Pickett in Africa 1971

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuPFkxc4rDM>

play CD #6. Knock on Wood—Eddie Floyd

play video #4 Stax/Volt 1966 Europe Sam & Dave/You Don’t Know Like I know

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4AW_IBwQriY

play CD #7. When something is wrong with my baby/Sam & Dave

play CD #8—Change is Gonna Come—Otis Redding

Play CD #9—Old Man Trouble

play video #5—Otis Redding/Monterey Pop—1967 --three songs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqYWfxmAStU>

play video #6—Try a Little Tenderness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuJTUpJzLOW>

CD#10—I never loved a man (the way I loved you)—Aretha Franklin

CD #11—Ain’t no way--Aretha

play video #7--TAMI show--James Brown, Night Train

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZF_rZrH4yBY

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Week 5: Migration to Motown, 1963-1970: How a little house in Detroit became “Hitsville, The Sound of Young America” hallowed ground for American pop music. Berry Gordy, Smoky Robinson, the Temptations, The Four Tops, The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, and the tortured prince of Motown, Marvin Gaye. Sweeten up the tracks with strings, and “*it sounds like they’re hitting a bloody tree!*” (John Lennon, upon hearing the big backbeat on all Motown records)

** suggested reading, listening, and viewing:*

Reading:

Where Did Our Love Go, by Nelson George (1986)
Nowhere to Run, The Story of Soul Music, by Gerri Hershey (1985)
Standing in the Shadows of Motown, an autobiography.
The Life and Music of Legendary Bassist James Jamerson (1989) with CD, transcriptions of his bass parts

Listening:

Motown 1's—CD of 25 #1 Motown hits (Motown, 2004)
Greatest Hits, The Temptations (Gordy, 1966 original release)
What's Goin' On, Marvin Gaye, (Tamla, 1971)
Talking Book, Inner Visions, Stevie Wonder, (Tamla, 1972, 1973)

Viewing:

Get Ready: Definitive Performances by The Temptations 1965-1972 (DVD)
Standing in the Shadows of Motown, dir. by Paul Justman (2002)

in-class playlist:

play CD#1. Dancin' In The Streets 1964
play CD#2. Please Mr. Postman 1961—Marvelettes
play video #1. My Guy 1964—Mary Wells
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79T-Q6qBEpo>
play CD#3 Do You Love Me 1962—Contours
play video#2—History of Rock and Roll, from “Sounds of Soul”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIIW0d00j3U>
play video #3--TAMI show, 1964—Miracles/ Hold On Me
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKQtWMETbfo>
play CD#4—Tears of a Clown
play CD#5. Can't Hurry Love 1966—Supremes
play video #4--TAMI—Supremes/Baby Love, Where Did our love go?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bem9HUU6-XQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7c-wEagF6k>
play video #5—Temptations, The Way you do the things, w/Murray the K
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7H9Yo0h2dJg>
play video #6—Temptations, My Girl in the studio
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58NBqCedRR8>
play video#7—I wish it would rain
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrjJePIGGxY>
play video #8—Nowhere to Run---Martha and the Vandellas
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNFDKm8F4hg>
play CD#6. Baby I need your Lovin' 1964—Four Tops
play video #8—Ain't that peculiar Marvin Gaye

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gP0Loe6tVB0>

play CD#7 You're all I Need to get by-- Tammi Terrell/Marvin Gaye
play video #9—Ain't no mountain high enough—Marvin/Tammi

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC5PL0XImjw>

play CD#8. I Was Made To Love Her 1967—Stevie Wonder

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Week 6: From A Buick 6: On the Road with Bob Dylan & the Band 1965-70;

The poet laureate of rock n' roll's classic trilogy of rock albums, recorded in New York and Nashville, and his legendary backing band, the Americana trailblazers **The Band**, (with a nod to the four Canadians in the group)

** suggested reading, listening, and viewing:*

Reading:

No Direction Home: The Life and Music of Bob Dylan, by Robert Shelton (1986)
Bob Dylan, a Biography, by Anthony Scaduto (1971)

Listening:

Bringing It All Back Home, Bob Dylan, (Columbia, 1965)

Highway 61 Revisited, Bob Dylan, (Columbia, 1965)

Blonde on Blonde, Bob Dylan, (Columbia, 1966)

Music from Big Pink, The Band (Capitol, 1968)

The Band (Capitol, 1969)

Viewing:

Don't Look Back, dir. by D.A. Pennebaker (1967)

The Last Waltz, dir. by Martin Scorsese (1978)

Bob Dylan, the 30th Anniversary Concert Celebration, PBS documentary and album (1993)

in-class playlist:

play CD#1--Highway 61

Play video #1—Mr. Tambourine Man, Newport 1965,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjcxIsdBaZk>

Play video #2—It's all over now baby blue 1965

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcWaHBOFkUw>

Play video #3 --“Don't Look Back” Subterranean Homesick Blues.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGxjIBEZvx0>

play live #1—It Takes A Lot to Laugh

play CD#2--Like a Rolling Stone

play CD#3--Positively 4th Street

play CD#4--Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues

play CD#5-- I Want You

play CD#6—I shall be released—the Band

play CD#7—Long Black Veil—the Band

play CD #8---The Weight—the Band

Play video #4 --“The Last Waltz” The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dDbnwQICek>