

21M.260: STRAVINSKY TO THE PRESENT

Class 8: March 1

AGENDA

Warm-up: Source texts on jazz (Ravel and Gershwin)

- Jazz values
- Ideas of "America" in America and abroad
- Expression as "national"
- The concept of "assimilation"

Ideas of "jazziness" in musical terms

- Which parameters do we hear it in?
- Ravel's "jazz thesis"
- How well do we know jazz and where does our idea of "jazziness" come from?
- The usefulness of "jazz" for European composers

Appropriation of jazz into classical music: Was it a problem then? Is it a problem now?

Quiz 2 is Thursday. Anthology works to study: Stravinsky (x2), Weill, and Ravel

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WARM-UP

I have given you two short statements on jazz, one by Gershwin and one by Ravel. Read them carefully and take notes on the following questions.

1. What do Gershwin and Ravel value most about jazz?

GERSHWIN:

RAVEL:

2. To what extent do the statements here seem to be manifested in Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* or Ravel's Piano Concerto in G?

GERSHWIN:

RAVEL:

3. How do their ideas about jazz relate to ideas about American musical identity?

4. How do you feel about the idea that when a composer writes music, he is expressing something explicitly coded as "national"? Is there anything political about this?

5. What does it mean to "assimilate" jazz (as in the heading)? Where are they taking jazz "from" and what is it "turning into"?

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