

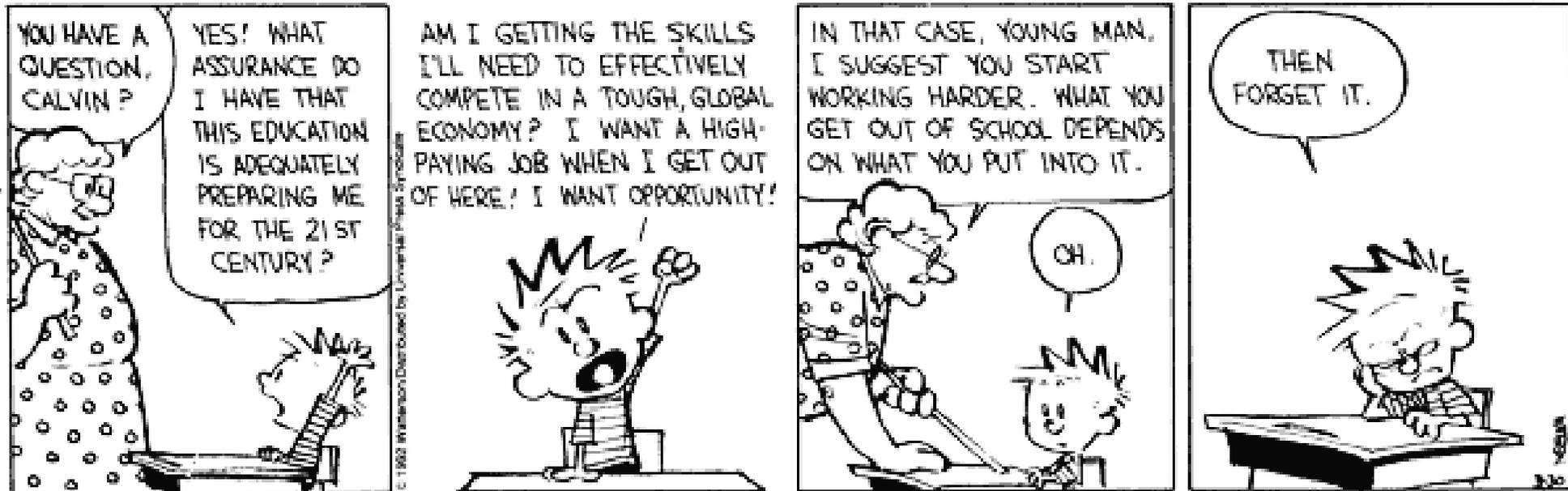
Attendance/reading Quiz!

Music 1060: Reflections of the World in Western Music

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Purchase College

Fall 2016



Recap

- Comparing musical styles at the turn of the 20th century: France and Germany
- Similar aesthetic trends in several artistic disciplines (painting, poetry, music)

Music as a stand-in for civilization

- People often use music as an indicator of people's taste, class, and refinement
- Johann Nikolaus Forkel, *A General History of Music*
 - 1788-1801

Being the socio-economic-political underdog

- Work within the system: vote, lobby, legislate
- Rebel, revolt, protest
- Delude yourself, pretend it's not so bad
- Resign yourself to the status quo: despair, depression, commiserate
- Try to win at the status quo
- Channel energy into something positive or creative
- Dream, hope, aspire for a better future

Comparing musical styles

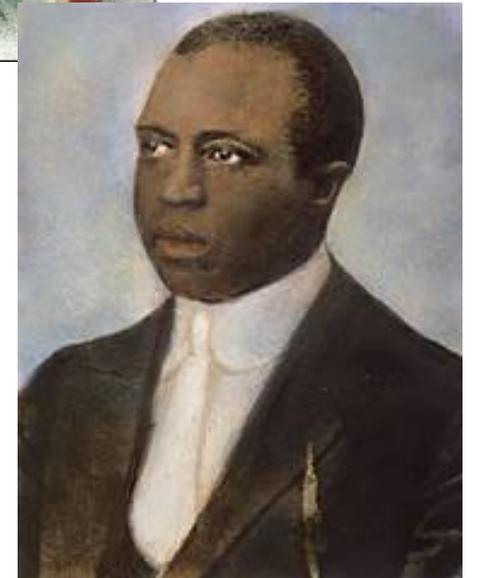
Frédéric François Chopin, Mazurka
Op. 17 No. 2 in E minor (1833)



Clara Schumann, Piano Trio in G
minor, Op. 17, I. Allegro moderato
(1846)



Scott Joplin, *Maple Leaf Rag*
(1899)



Frédéric François Chopin (1810-1849)

- b. Warsaw, Poland
- Middle class family
- Couldn't start his career in Vienna
- 1831 – settled in Paris (home to many Polish émigrés)
- Popular piano teacher in Paris
- Hated performing in public
- Nationalistic (ethnically Polish) pieces: mazurkas, polonaises
- Salon – meeting of literary or musical connoisseurs



Photograph of Chopin by Louis-Auguste Bisson (1814-76), 1849

Clara Schumann (1819-96)



- Piano virtuoso
 - Trained by her father and leading musicians of Germany
- Married Robert Schumann (1810-56, piano student of her father)
- Took care of her mentally ill husband, 8 children, put his career first
 - Began touring again non-stop in 1856 to support the family following Robert's death
- Composer, performer, impresario, scholar

“I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose—there has never yet been one able to do it. Should I expect to be the one?” – Clara Schumann, 1839

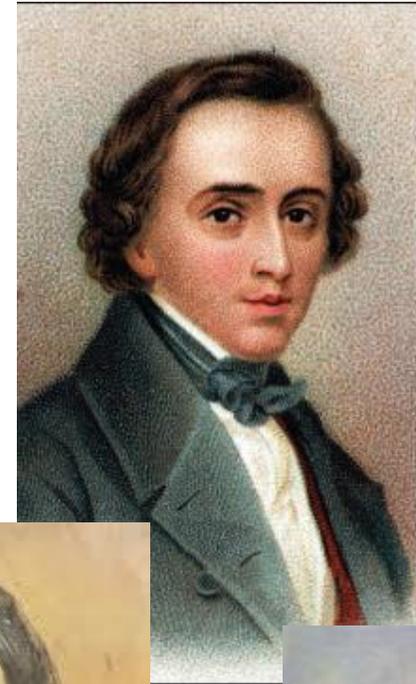
Scott Joplin (c.1867/68-1917)

- Singer, cornet player, pianist, composer, teacher
- Didn't invent ragtime but is best known for his rags
 - 40 rags; waltzes, marches, songs
 - Aimed for “classical” excellence in his rags – pieces that would have the same artistic merit as European classical music
- Spent most of his creative efforts on more “serious” works for the stage
 - Ballet: *The Ragtime Dance* (1902)
 - Opera: *A Guest of Honor* (1903, lost), *Treemonisha* (1910, never performed)
- Forgotten in 1920s and 1930s; renewed interest in 1940s and 1970s



Comparing musical styles

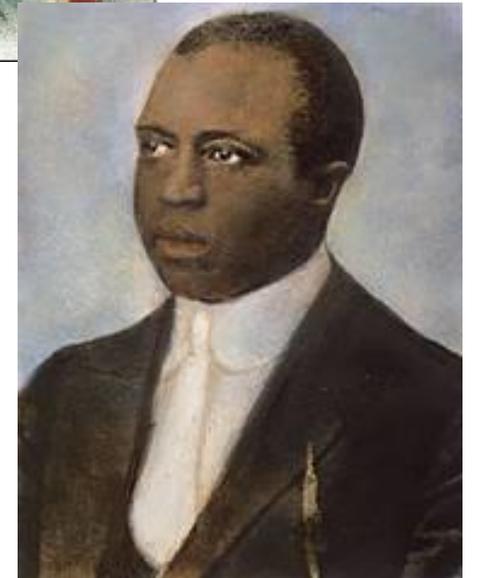
Frederic Francois Chopin, Nocturne
Op. posth. 72 No. 1 in E minor (1827)



Clara Schumann, Scherzo No. 1 in D
minor, Op. 10 (1838)



Scott Joplin, *Bethena* (1905)



Music defines a community

- Music is a product of a community, its values, its hopes, and its fears
- Music influences that same community, its values, its hopes, and its fears
- Music gives a community a public face – it acts as an emissary or ambassador to people outside that community

US history: lightning round

- 15th-19th centuries: Transatlantic slave trade
- 1860-65: Civil War
- 1865-77: Reconstruction
- 1890-1965: Jim Crow laws passed in Southern, Plains/Midwestern, and Western states – state-sanctioned racial discrimination and oppression against Blacks, Latinos, and Asians (separate but equal facilities, voting restrictions, residential segregation, anti-miscegenation, sundown towns)
 - Lynchings were common
- 1954-68: Civil Rights movement
- Happily ever after, no more problems

Robert Johnson, *Cross Roads Blues* (1936)

- Musical story-telling
 - Captures a state of mind or a feeling
 - Personal but universal
 - The text is a series of related but not necessarily chronological events consisting of vivid but non-specific metaphors and allusions
- Often melancholy; seemingly simple but wise
- Improvisatory
 - Words, melody, accompaniment can be made up on the spot to be expressive, extend a song, or shorten a song
- Sound quality – rough around the edges (voice and guitar)



Robert Johnson (1911-37)

Robert Johnson, *Cross Roads Blues* (1936)

- Blues pattern
 - Repetitive harmony and melody forces you to focus on the words and their emotional content
 - Inescapable cycling through same harmonies
- Music enhances, expands, and intensifies what is said in the text



Simple statement

More emphatic because of different harmony – reaffirms line 1

Resolution – gives nuance or context, continues the story

I went to the crossroads, fell down on my knees.
I went to the crossroads, fell down on my knees.
Asked the Lord above, “Have mercy, now save poor Bob if you please.”

Robert Johnson, *Cross Roads Blues* (1936)

- Improvised music is a little different in every performance
- Recorded in a hotel room in Dallas, TX, 1936
 - 2 takes of the same song
- Same basic story-arc and melody
- Accompaniment can change (tempo, contour, gestures)
- Different wordless sounds
- Can end on any verse (or go on forever)

Remakes

- Meaning comes from musical sound, who the performer is, who the audience is
 - Meaning doesn't just come from the text
- Alters the meaning of the music (even if the notes and words are the same)
 - No longer a personal statement from one man
 - Pre-planned structure (not an in-the-moment inspiration)
 - Refined sound – intonation, sound quality, regular pulse and tempo throughout, controlled sound/pitch of the voice, clear enunciation of words
 - Energized – electric instruments, faster tempo, clear rhythm



Cream, *Crossroads* (1968)

Billie Holiday, *Strange Fruit* (1939)

- Who is this music for? Who does it speak to?
What does it say to different listeners?



Lawrence Beitler (1885-1960),
lynching of Thomas Shipp and
Abram Smith, August 7, 1930



Billie Holiday (1915-59)

The power of art

- Art sidesteps socio-economic-political limitations and gives power, voice, and a platform to ideas, communities, or issues that would otherwise be ignored
- The arts open our eyes to different perspectives, different ways of life, and alternative realities
- When we come across a piece of art, we ask ourselves how it could have come into being: How is it made? Who made it? Why did they make it? What kind of person were they? What kind of world did they live in?



Reminders

- Online Class Discussion #5 on ballet – through the end of Saturday
- Online Class Discussion #6 on women in classical music – Sunday through Saturday
- Think-piece essay due December 1
- Concert response essay due December 16 (at the Final Exam)



End quiz

Give an example from class today in which a musician's identity (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, place, time) can affect or shape the music that they make.