



## Attendance/Reading Quiz!

# Mu 101: Introduction to Music

Queensborough Community College

Instructor: Dr. Alice Jones

Fall 2019

Sections F2 (T 12:10-3), M4 (Th 3:10-6), J4A (Th 6:10-9)



# Recap

- Classical music isn't only a historical phenomenon
  - Roundtable: living classical musicians, organizations in NYC
- Everything that happens in the world is part of classical music, too
  - Politics, law, technology, prejudice and systems of oppression
- “This is just the way things are done” is one of the laziest reactions we can have

# John Cage (1912-92)



Cage in Japan, 1962

“To what end does one write music?... [Music conditions one’s mind, leading to] moments in life that are complete and fulfilled.” (1948)

“Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music.”

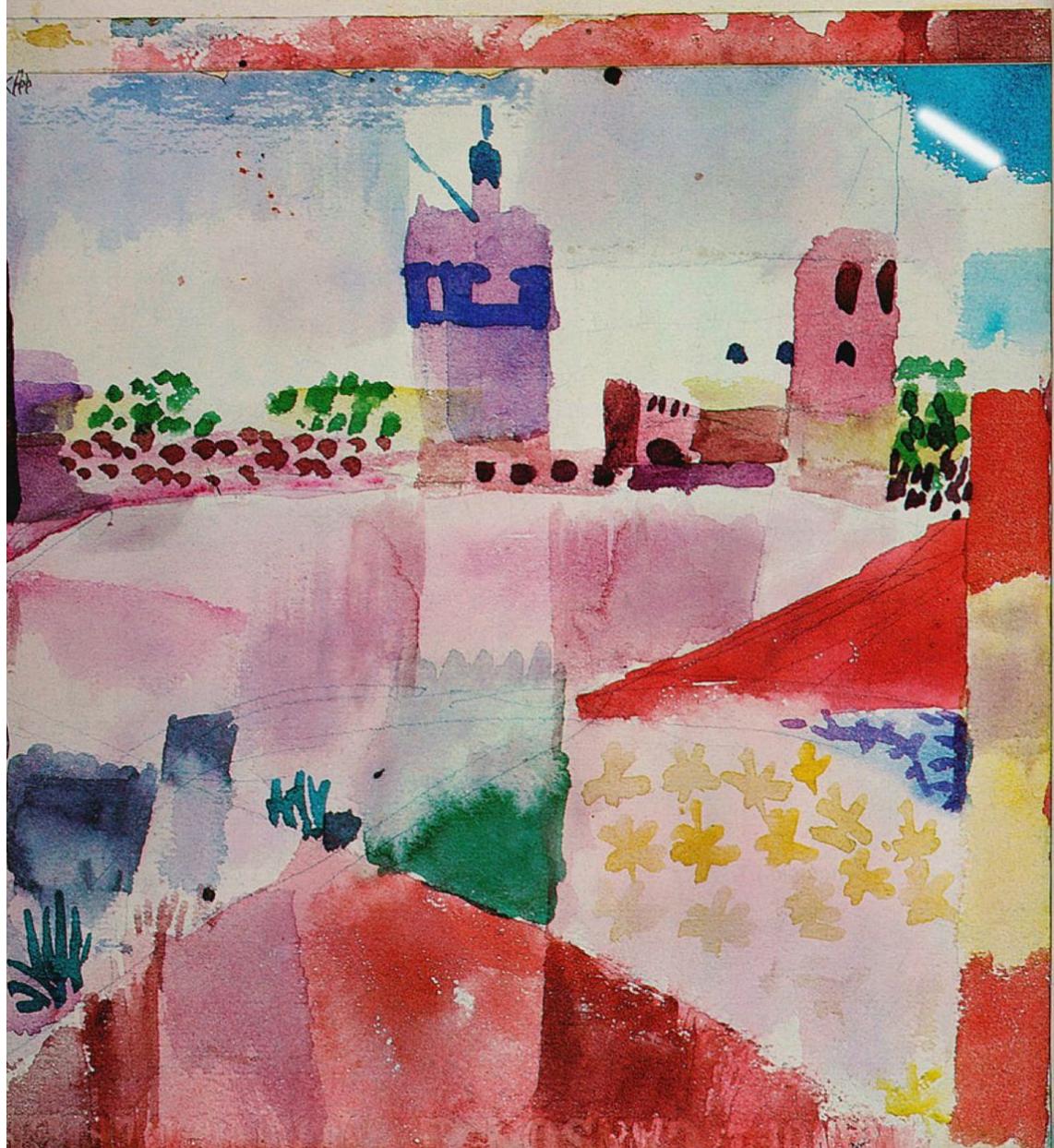
—Cage, after visiting an anechoic chamber at Harvard University, 1951

# Minimalism in visual art



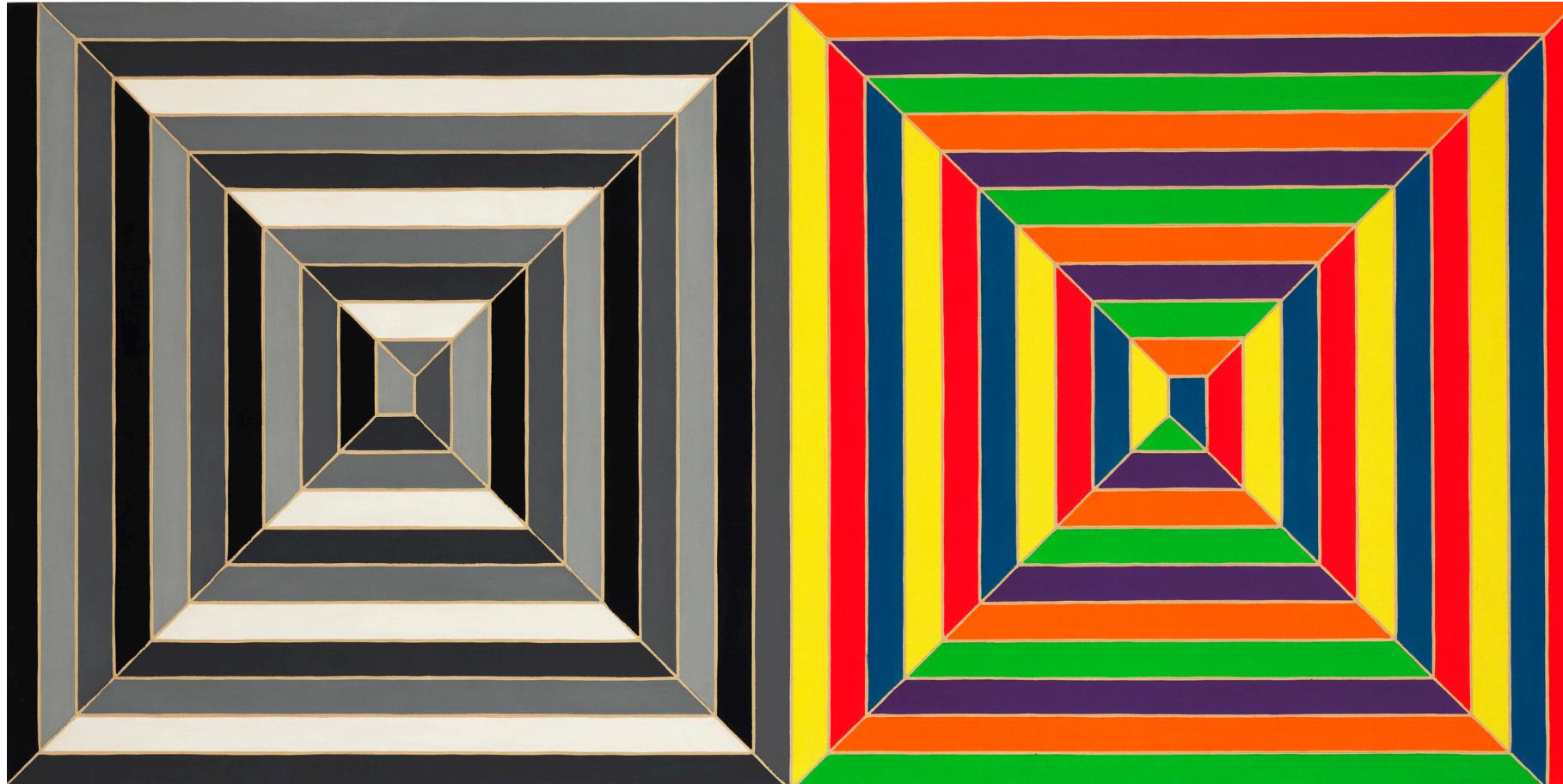
Hammamet,  
Tunisia

Paul Klee (1879-1940),  
*Hammamet with its  
Mosque* (1914)



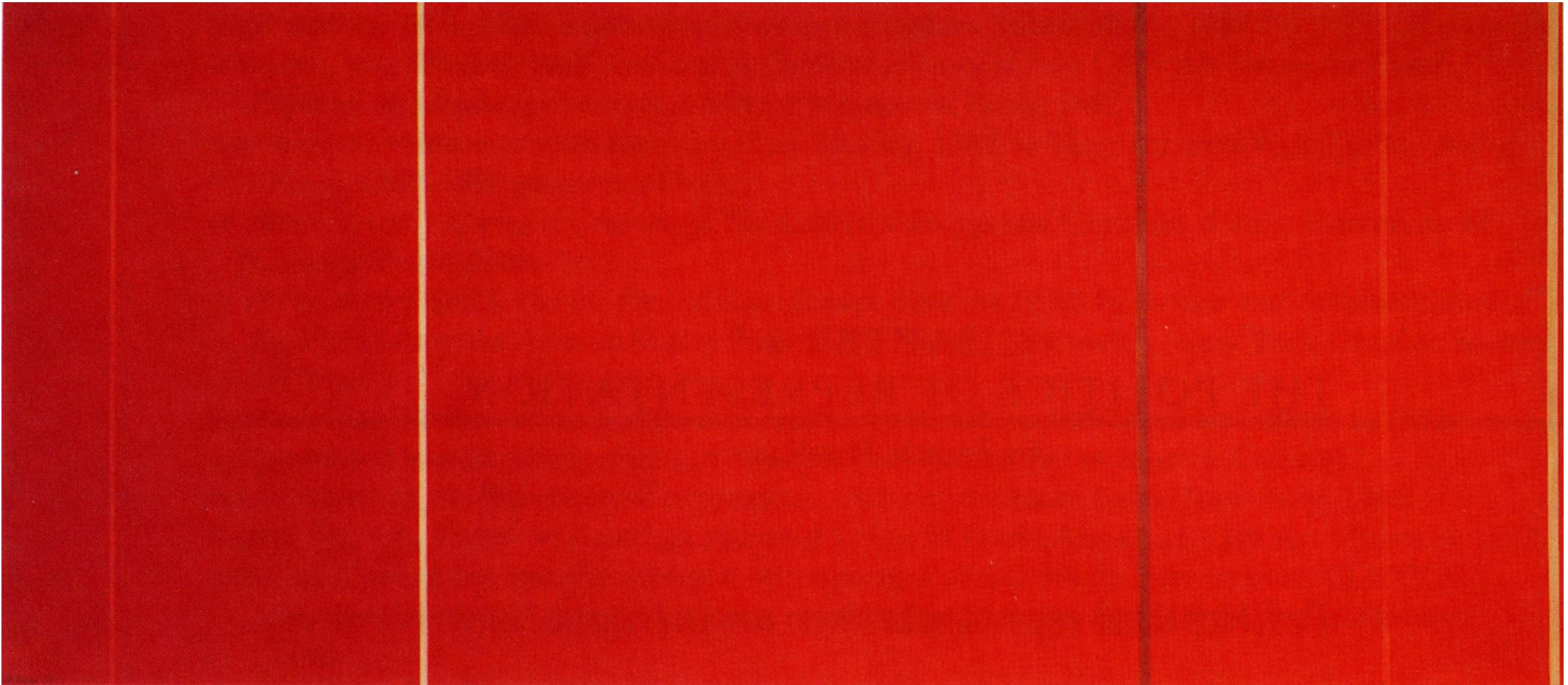
# Minimalism in visual art

Philip Glass, String Quartet  
No. 2 "Company", I. (1983)



Frank Stella (b. 1936), *Untitled* (1966)

# Minimalism in visual art



Barnett Newman (1905-70), *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (1951)

# Steve Reich (b. 1936), *Clapping Music* (1972)

- Phasing – playing the same rhythmic figure slightly out of time (out of phase) with another musician



# Steve Reich (b. 1936), *Drumming*, part I (1970-1)

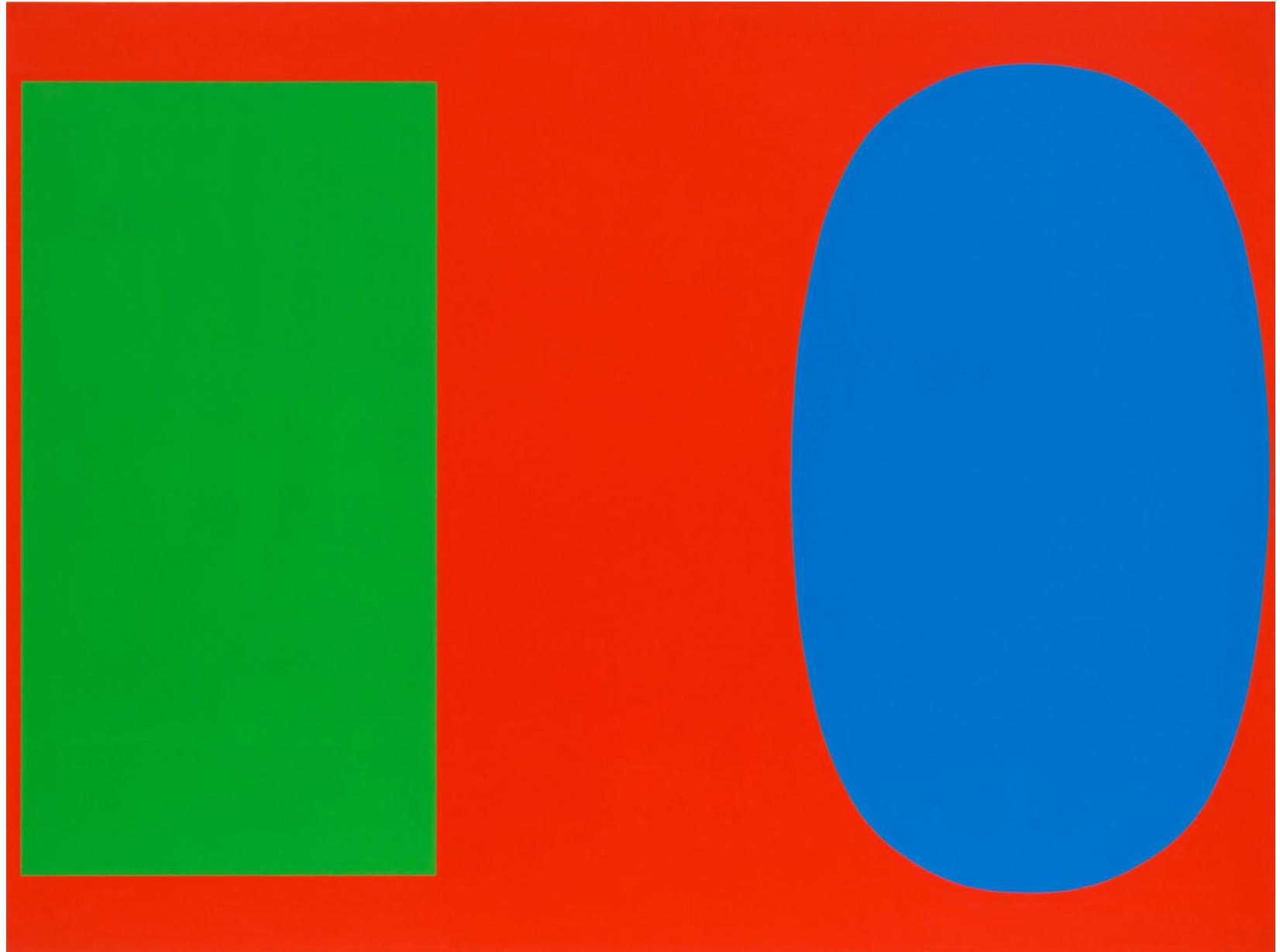
- 4 sets of tuned bongos (8 drums, 4 players)
- Phasing
- The composer provides a template for how the piece should unfold, not specific commands for the execution of every single note
  - Improvisation – each player takes a turn at a solo



Alvin Lucier, *I Am Sitting in a Room* (1969)

Break!

Ellsworth Kelly  
(1923-2015),  
*Green Blue Red*  
(1963)



# Listening comparison: Romantic vs. 12 tone vs. Minimalism

Johannes Brahms



- Johannes Brahms (1833-97), String Quartet in A minor, Op. 51 No. 2 (1873)
- Anton Webern (1883-1945), String Quartet, Op. 28 (1937-38)
- Philip Glass (b. 1937), String Quartet No. 5, III. (1991)



Anton Webern



Philip Glass

The term “minimalism” was intended as an insult  
Pierre Boulez (1925-2016): it is music “of  
minimal interest”

# Minimalism in action!

In your group, create a piece of minimalist performance art. Use our list of reasons to take Mu 101 as your text or inspiration.

# Homework and reminders

- Final online discussion (Music and violence) ends Sunday, Dec 8
- Reading for next class (experimentation and virtuosity) is available online
- Writing Portfolio due T Dec 10 / Th Dec 12
- Final exam dates
  - F2: T Dec 17, 12:15-2:15
  - J4A: Th Dec 19, 2:30-4:30
  - M4: Th Dec 19, 6:10-8:10
- Final exam = Final discussion + in-class writing project
  - Preparatory blog post available starting next week
- Any other work you need to hand in is due by your final exam
  - If you need to take an Incomplete for the semester, make an appointment to talk to me

End write

What are the three most important things you've learned in Mu 101 this semester? What makes them important to you?