Writing Assignments

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Music 2116: Survey of Music from c. 1750 to c. 1990

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General Information: Every student is required to attend a minimum of one concert that includes classical ("art") music and to turn in a review of that concert. Note carefully the deadlines for these reviews. This assignment is worth up to 5% of your final grade. Reviews turned in by the "Very Early" or "Early" dates will earn extra credit bonuses. Students who choose Grading Option 3 are required to turn in two additional written assignments. These may be one or two additional concert reviews (subject to the same deadlines and capable of earning the same extra credit bonuses). Or, they may be Research Papers on one or two of the specific subjects given below. Please note that these subjects are keyed to what is being covered in the readings and lectures, and that there are different and very specific deadlines for each of these papers.

Papers whose writing falls below acceptable standards will be returned without being graded and the student referred to the university's Writing Center for help with that paper. No penalty will be assessed for this, and the paper should be turned in again for grading after working with the Writing Center.

All writing assignments should be done individually. Papers which appear to be identical to other papers will be turned in to the Honor System as possible plagiarism. All material that is taken from print, web, or other sources must be acknowledged using quotation marks and/or parenthetical notes, and a list of references provided. No other bibliography is required. When extensive borrowed material is used, the student is expected to also provide extensive new material putting the quoted material into context and comparing or contrasting as may be appropriate. Papers with all borrowed and no original material will not be acceptable.

Pre-Review Assignment: During the first week of class, access professional concert reviews in the Sunday edition of a major newspaper like the New York Times, Washington Post, or Los Angeles Times in the Library or on the Internet to get an idea of what can be done in a good
review. A 2-paragraph report summarizing such a review and giving your ideas on what a review should be like is due on Wednesday, January 23, and may be submitted by e-mail. This report will not be graded, but will earn automatic extra credit when it is turned in on time. Late submissions will not be accepted.

**Concert Reviews:** One Concert Review is required. Additional Concert Reviews will be accepted from students on Grading Option 3 only. It should be written as if for publication. Your "audience" is not me, but the general reading public. Your "voice" is a person who attends concerts for pleasure. Spelling, grammar and punctuation count!

Early Submission: Note that bonus points are given for Reviews submitted "very early" in the semester (deadline Mon Feb 11) or "early" (deadline Fri Mar 1).

Hard Copy: Paper reviews must be typed or computer-printed, double-spaced (not 1 1/2 spaced), with a 1-inch margin on the sides, top and bottom. Use conventional type faces and sizes (12-point Times, for example). Do not format your review as if it actually were in a newspaper. Treat it as the copy you would turn in for editing and publication. Staple the pages together in the upper-left corner. (Do not use binders.) Put a 4-line heading with your name, your student number, MUSIC 2116, and the date you turn it in at the top of the first page. Invent a newspaper-type headline as a title. Place a simple header on the following pages with your last name and the page number (Howell/14). Title pages and bibliographies are not appropriate. Attach a copy of the program for the event to your paper. (Turn it in in class with your name on it if you submit your review by e-mail. If there was no program, include a note of explanation.)

E-Mail Submission: For e-mail submission transmit your file as an attachment to an e-mail message or as an actual e-mail message. (E-mail itself will not always transmit formatting or special characters, including accent marks and italics.) The Music Department uses Macs with MS Office 98 (Word 6.0). There has been a problem with certain ms-dos file types, and it is suggested that you save your file as a Microsoft Word Document before attaching it to an e-mail message. Include the same 4-line heading in the body of the paper, and all other items required for hard-copy submission.

Length: These should not be long papers! A newspaper or magazine has a limited amount of space, and successful writers say quite a lot in a short review. If your review is actually complete in one page (250 words), that's enough. About 2 pages (500 words) should be average, and 3 pages (750 words) the maximum.

**Specifics:**

**Required Review:** Must be of a full-length opera, recital, or concert of classical ("art") music by a large or small ensemble or a soloist. Note that this is a required assignment, and if it is not submitted by deadline none of the other writing assignments will be graded or counted.
**Additional Review:** May be as above or may be of any concert (or full evening of entertainment) in any musical style.

**Deadlines:** February 11 for "Very Early," March 1 for "Early," April 1 final deadline for all reviews.

**Grading:** Up to 100% each, plus a 15% bonus for "very early" or a 10% bonus for "early" submission.

**Research Essays:** Students on Grading Option 3 may select one or two of the following four topics and submit an essay of between 500 and 750 words. The topics and deadlines are keyed to the material being covered in class. The purpose is to increase the student's understanding of the societies in which music has found itself. The relationship between music and the subject of each essay must be well covered; I am not looking for generic essays that can be downloaded from Net sources.

**Topic 1:** Describe late 18th century European society, specifically including the place of music in that society and the influences of the Enlightenment.
**Deadline:** February 18

**Topic 2:** Describe European Romanticism during the first half of the 19th century, comparing the musical concepts with those of the poets and novelists of the time.
**Deadline:** March 18

**Topic 3:** Describe the influences of Nationalism on music in the last half of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th, including both the major musical influences and the political movements of the time.
**Deadline:** April 10

**Topic 4:** Compare and contrast the musical philosophies of the early 20th century 12-tone composers, represented by Schönberg, and Neo-Classical composers, represented by Stravinsky and Hindemith.
**Deadline:** April 19

**Evaluation and Grading:**

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Some Common Problems (My pet peeves; you have been warned!)

- There are specific terms used for classical concerts that are different from those used for popular music, and you are expected to know and use them properly. If you have specific questions, email me and ask.
- Be careful in your use of punctuation marks--especially commas. Remember that commas and periods go inside quotation marks, while exclamations, question marks, colons and semicolons go outside. ("Wonderful," … "Wonderful"; … "Wonderful"!)
- Use *italics* (or a continuous underline if you cannot produce *italics*) for the titles of large musical works, and use "quotation marks" for the titles of individual movements in a larger work or individual songs in a song cycle. (This is exactly the same as using *italics* for the title of a book or magazine and "quotation marks" for chapters, sections, or articles within the book or magazine.) Boldface is not appropriate for either. For the title of a single song use normal type without either *italics* or "quotation marks."
- Make sure subjects and verbs agree, and make sure that an opening clause actually refers to the subject of the sentence.
- A runon sentence or "comma splice" is 2 sentences crammed into one; either separate them with a semicolon like this or make them into 2 separate sentences.
- Use an "em-dash"--like these--or parentheses (like these) to separate side comments in a sentence. (The alternative in typing is to use a double hyphen--like these--for the em-dash. I used the double hyphen here because HTML code does not recognize the em-dash and turns it into something ugly.) Most word processors should provide an em-dash, but you might have to search the documentation for it. (In Word for the Mac it is produced by holding down Shift and Option and typing the hyphen key.)
- I or my reader will edit for style and grammar. Some of my editing will reflect my own style and personal opinion. If you can show me that your usage is correct (in Hacker or any other style manual), you will get back the points I deduct. We will try to get very early and early reviews back to you so you can look at the editing, but cannot guarantee it.