

ANNOUNCEMENTS?

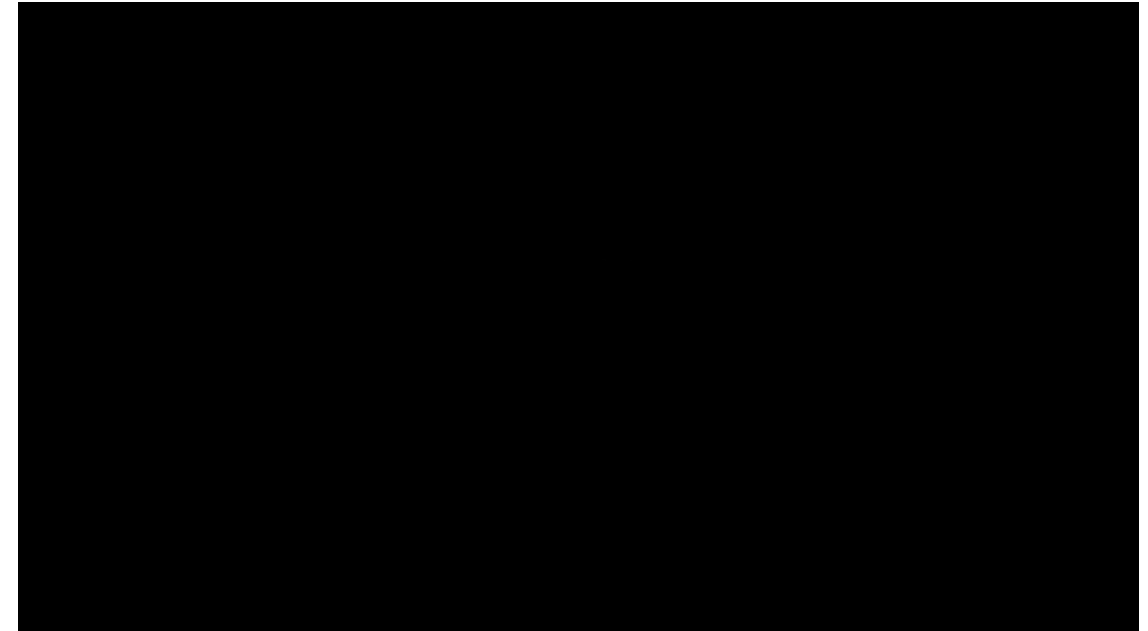
- Let's stick with today through Monday!

Guest DJs

- La Santa Cecilia, "Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles," *Treinta Días* (2013)
(this album won a Grammy Award for Best Latin Rock, Urban or Alternative Album in 2014)
- LA-based group; "I met Pepe Carlos on Olvera Street," lead singer Marisol "La Marisoul" Hernandez recalls. "I was busking with the older musicians — my teachers who I learned all that beautiful, traditional Latin-American music from — and Pepe was busking with his little brother on the other side of the street."
- They formed a connection, and years later Hernandez roped in her friend, Oso, along with Alex Bendaña, to create La Santa Cecilia, a band "where we could make our own music, write about our own experiences [and] experiment with our influences," she says. Those influences were vast. They heard Mexican accordions and horns in mariachi bands and fused those sounds with bossa nova, jazz and pop—listen for cumbia, Afro-Cuban, bossa nova, folk, mariachi, rock, blues, bolero, rancheras, norteño and jazz in their works.
- On the same album, listen to "Losing Game" featuring Elvis Costello and "Ice, el Hielo," a moving song about ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and the experience of being undocumented—video is in collaboration with National Day Laborer Organizing Network



From left, Marisol "La Marisoul" Hernandez, Miguel "Oso" Ramirez, Alex Bendaña, Jose "Pepe" Carlos.



Guest DJs

When do you go?

- Sign-up sheet will go around on Monday....make sure to make note of your assigned day. I'll try to remind you as well, and the list will be posted on Brightspace.

What can you pick?

- One musical selection of approximately 5 minutes or less.
- Your selection can be any time period, any piece of music you find intriguing (picking something is not a declaration that it's your all-time fave)

How to send it me?

- Email me your chosen musical selection the day before your assigned date (sometime before 11:59 pm). Morning of is not enough time for me....
- feel free to send me a Youtube link, Spotify link, Apple Music.....whatever. Hopefully it'll load okay.....I'll keep you posted if I have issues

What should you include?

- When sending me the link, tell me the **artist** and **title** and **year** of the piece.
- In addition to your selection, include **a short paragraph explanation of what you find intriguing or something to listen for.....**



What *is* Music Today?

28 August 2024



Alex Ross: music critic for the
New Yorker

27 August 2018



(Cover art features an
illustration of Aretha
Franklin, who had just
passed away)



TIM RUTHERFORD-JOHNSON



Alex Ross: music critic for the *New Yorker*

Where do YOU get your music suggestions?



Alex Ross: music critic for the *New Yorker*

Where do YOU get your music suggestions?

Historical development of the music critic as an “expert” who might tell us what to listen to and what is/is not good music.

We agreed that most of us likely don’t get our music recommendations from music critics in 2022, so we spent some time chatting about how we DO access new music, and which of those methods are new/vs. changing versions of earlier types of access.

Spotify

Youtube

algorithmic
suggestions

Apple
Music

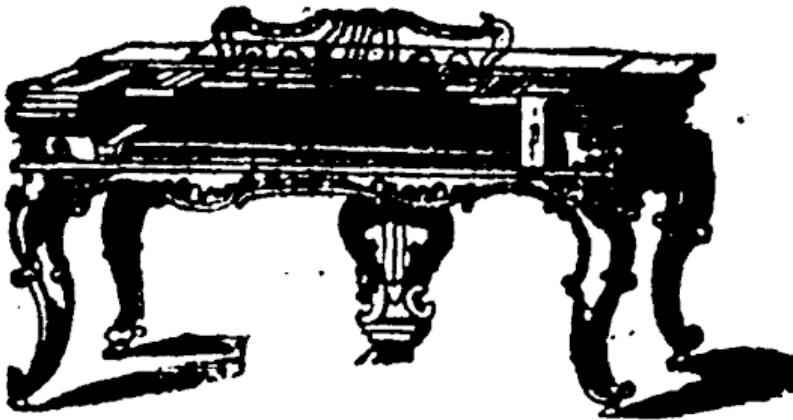
podcasts

Tik Tok

friends or
family

websites
or blogs

curated
playlists



W. G. METZEROTT,
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Agent of Kavan & Bacon's and William Miller's
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stock of PIANOS from \$175 up to \$1,000.
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Music published and received every day.
Pianos for rent nov 4-tr



ACCESSING MUSIC

It was not supposed to be this way. During the early, optimistic years of the internet, digital distribution was often envisaged as a force that would diminish, not exacerbate, the divide separating superstars from other artists. A theme popular among journalists, industry observers, and musicians alike was that the internet had diminished the relevance of traditional gatekeepers, helping to level the playing field. Faith in the democratizing potential of digital media was especially pronounced in the world of Music Information Retrieval, a field that occupies a middle ground between industry and academia and that is largely responsible for devising the algorithms used to sort, classify, and search digital music online.

One of the main advantages claimed for the discovery tools MIR researchers developed was their ability to orchestrate a more optimal matching of niche artists with niche audiences. The pre-internet music industry featured a number of job categories—radio programmers, A&R personnel, concert promoters, etc.—who acted as filters on musical production, distribution, and consumption. Their joint effect was to narrow the range of musics available to most listeners, just as they narrowed the range of listeners available to most musicians. It was this unsatisfactory arrangement, in which idiosyncratic styles and tastes were both ill-served, that motivated a number of MIR researchers to seek out a technical fix. In most instances, this took the form of algorithms that generated personalized recommendations for listeners.



ERIC DROTT

Fake Streams, Listening Bots, and Click Farms: Counterfeiting Attention in the Streaming Music Economy

SEOClerks is a microlabor platform. Like other, better-known sites, such as Amazon's Mechanical Turk, Crowdfunder, and Fiverr, the platform acts as a virtual labor market, bringing together buyers and sellers of services. Those seeking to have tasks done can publish job descriptions, detailing, among other things, the prices they are willing to pay, while those looking for work can advertise the services they offer and the fees they charge, as well as make bids on jobs posted to the platforms. Where microlabor platforms like SEOClerks differ from other, more traditional labor markets is in the scale, distribution, and digital mediation of the services being traded: generally speaking, microwork consists of small data-processing tasks distributed among a large group of individuals working remotely via the internet (examples include labeling images and video online, transcribing audio, and classifying the sentiment expressed in a review or comment posted to a website). And where SEOClerks differs from other microlabor platforms is in the precise nature of the digitally mediated services being bought and sold. As its name suggests, the platform specializes in search engine optimization, the ethically murky practice whereby individuals and companies game search engines and recommendation algorithms in order to gain a competitive advantage over rivals in capturing the attention of potential clients and audiences.

But even the phrase "search engine optimization" is perhaps too much of a euphemism to accurately describe the kinds of transactions the site

Eric Drott is associate professor of music theory at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Music and the Elusive Revolution: Cultural Politics and Political Culture in France, 1968–1981* (University of California Press, 2011). Current projects include *The Oxford Handbook of Protest Music*, coedited with Noriko Manabe, and a book on music streaming platforms.

American Music Summer 2020
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ACCESSING MUSIC



Indeed, many of those involved in designing recommendation systems adopted the idealistic (or paternalistic) stance that it was their duty to use “nonobvious recommendations” to push audiences toward novel and/or obscure musics. Such was the case with Òscar Celma, head of research at Pandora, who declared in a 2010 text that “one of the goals of a recommender should be to promote the tail of the [distribution] curve by providing relevant, personalised novel recommendations to its users.”

In their efforts to redirect music consumption away from the head of the distribution curve, where hits and superstar artists clustered, toward the tail, where overlooked musics and musicians were confined, designers of music recommendation systems assumed a quasi-ethical mandate: not only would music recommenders diversify consumers’ tastes, but in the process they would also lessen the disparities that had long characterized the reward structure of the musical field.

With the passage of time, many of Anderson’s Pollyannaish predictions about the imminent democratization of cultural production and consumption have proven exactly that: Pollyannaish. Studies conducted since the publication of his 2006 book generally reveal little change in the distribution of hits relative to nonhits; indeed, if anything, the head of the curve has grown to the detriment of the tail. Even before streaming had overtaken downloads as the dominant mode of online music distribution, there were signs that a superstar economy remained in force within the digital music market.

Still pretty top-heavy industry:

2011: 100 of iTunes store’s ~ 8 million tracks accounted for 15% of overall sales (so 0.0001 percent of music is getting 15% of the sales). 94% of iTunes tracks had been downloaded fewer than 100 times

2014: Top 1% of artists responsible for generating 77% of revenue for recorded music

2016-2017: 0.0001 percent of Spotify’s over thirty million tracks accounted for roughly 16 percent of the roughly one billion tracks the platform was streaming per day at that time.

Do we have the “mental shelf space” to keep track of a lot of competing similar competing products?

“Light consumers”—opt for most readily accessible (most popular?) tunes

“Heavy consumers”—a small percentage of the group who has invested time to be familiar with many alternatives

(Fake streams, counterfeit listeners, artificial boosts of play and following counts)

Starting with the Pulitzer Prize...what is this, anyway?

- Established 1917
 - Joseph Pulitzer had made a ton of money in publishing and established a fund for prizes in certain areas
 - There was a historical connection to Columbia University for the early decades of the award
- Annual awards in 21 categories: mostly prizes for journalism, letters (writing), and arts (including photography but also **musical composition**)
- Has to be within the United States
- Prizes usually selected by a jury of 5 members
- Kind of a convoluted process, but your work must be entered; for each category the jury chooses among the entrants to nominate 3 finalists, then the Pulitzer Prize Board votes on the 3 finalists and the majority vote winner gets the Pulitzer
- Starting in 1943, the musical composition prize is defined as "for distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during that year."



Alex Ross, "The Sounds of Music in the 21st Century"

Paragraph 2:

Lamar's win made me think about the **changing nature of "distinguished musical composition,"** to use the Pulitzer's crusty term. Circa 1950, this was understood to mean writing a score for others to perform, whether in the guise of the dissonant hymns of Charles Ives or the spacious Americana of Aaron Copland. But that definition was always suspect: it excluded jazz composers, whose tradition combines notation and improvisation. In 1965, a jury tried to give a Pulitzer to Duke Ellington, but the board refused. Within classical composition, meanwhile, activity on the outer edges had further blurred the job description. By the early fifties, Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry were creating collages that incorporated recordings of train engines and other urban sounds; Karlheinz Stockhausen was assisting in the invention of synthesized sound; John Cage was convening ensembles of radios. By century's end, a composer could be a performance artist, a sound artist, a laptop conceptualist, or an avant-garde d.j. Du Yun, Kate Soper, and Ashley Fure, the Pulitzer finalists in 2017—I served on the jury—make use, variously, of punk-rock vocals, instrumentally embroidered philosophical lectures, and architectural soundscapes. Such artists may lack the popular currency of Lamar, but they are not cloistered souls.



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We spent time talking over how narrowly the Pulitzer defined "composition," especially earlier in 20th century. Their [BAD!] definition of composition often meant:

- notated music only, and Western notation specifically**
- concert or art music, as opposed to folk or popular music**
- music within certain avant garde genres**
- music mostly made by white, middle class, European or European-influence men**

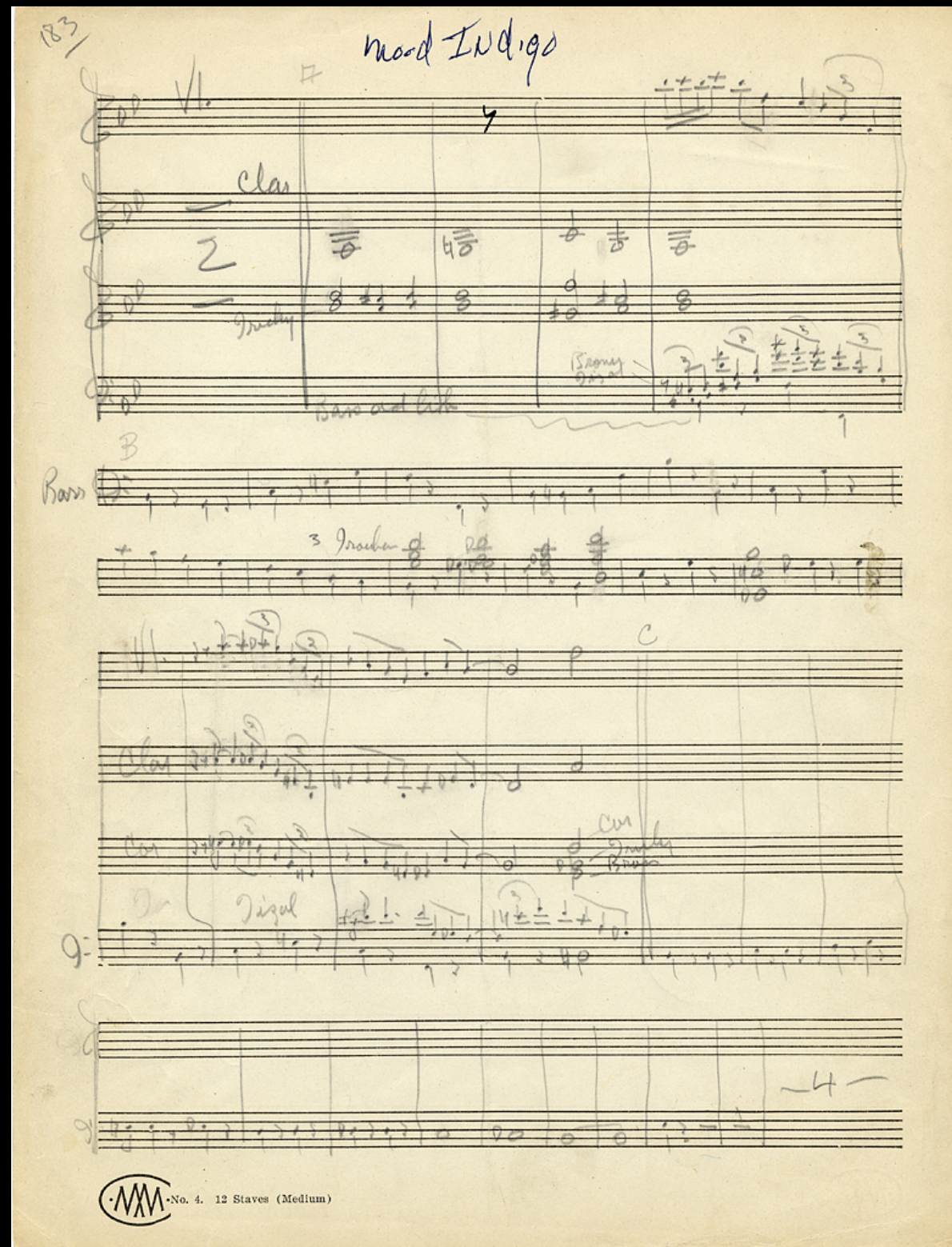
83/1 mood Indigo

Handwritten musical score for "mood Indigo". The score is written on 12 staves, organized into three systems of four staves each. The instruments and parts are labeled as follows:

- System 1 (Staves 1-4):**
 - Staff 1: Violin (Vl.)
 - Staff 2: Clarinet (Clar)
 - Staff 3: Trumpet (Tru)
 - Staff 4: Bass and Lute (Bass and lute)
- System 2 (Staves 5-8):**
 - Staff 5: Bass (B)
 - Staff 6: Trombone (3 Trombone)
 - Staff 7: Violin (Vl.)
 - Staff 8: Clarinet (Clar)
- System 3 (Staves 9-12):**
 - Staff 9: Cornet (Corn) and Trumpet (Tru)
 - Staff 10: Trombone (3 Trombone)
 - Staff 11: Bass (B)
 - Staff 12: Bass (B)

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the number "4" written below the final staff.

This page is a "short score" for Mood Indigo, the 1930 classic composition of Duke Ellington and Barney Bigard, noting melodic lines for specific players in the Duke Ellington Orchestra--"Barney" for clarinetist Barney Bigard, "Tizol" for trombonist Juan Tizol, and "Tricky" for trombonist Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton. Duke Ellington Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.



To expand a bit about how unhelpful this obsession with only notated music is.....but even within that bigger problem, the Pulitzer committee wasn't even being particularly accurate about their reasons for exclusion.

A clear example of strange, contorted logics for Pulitzer, because they argued jazz wasn't considered for the Pulitzer because it was "improvised music" (not notated).....

look at this page by Ellington, we know that jazz can be a mix of improvisation and notation anyway!

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Duke Ellington Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.