

First, a few logistics

or, the unpleasantness of the Spring 2021 calendar and “pop-up” days

Week 10: April 5- April 9

You will have reading material on Monday, April 5
We will have assigned material on Wednesday, April 7
We will NOT meet synchronously on Friday, April 9 [pop up day]

Note: if you have any concerns at all why I am making these announcements about class schedule changes, please see <https://www.potsdam.edu/academics/academic-calendar> and/or feel free to drop me an email!

POST-WAR SOUNDS:

Vernacular & Experimental Musics
in the United States



Week 9 Music History III



EDGARD VARÈSE

(1883-1965)

- French composer (but moves to New York in 1915)
- trained in mathematics and engineering
- interested in electronic instruments even before World War I
- *Amériques* (1918-1921): requires 11 percussionists (two sirens), later *ondes martenot*
- interested in neo-primitivism, futurism
- *Hyperprism* (1923), *Intégrales* (1925), *Ionisation* (1931)
- 1934-1954: long silent period for Varèse



THE LIBERATION OF SOUND

EDGARD VARÈSE

Our musical alphabet is poor and illogical.

Music, which should pulsate with life, needs new means of expression, and science alone can infuse it with youthful vigor.

Why Italian Futurists, have you slavishly reproduced only what is commonplace and boring in the bustle of our daily lives.

I dream of instruments obedient to my thought and which with their contribution of a whole new world of unsuspected sounds, will lend themselves to the exigencies of my inner rhythm.¹

(Excerpts from lectures by Varèse, compiled and edited
with footnotes by Chou Wen-chung) †

Edgard Varèse (1883-1965): “Hyperprism”

- scored for massive battery of percussion, including a siren, lion’s roar, combined with 9 woodwind & brass instruments (no string instruments—too expressive and sentimental)

HYPERPRISM

Duration: 4 minutes

Edgard Varèse

Moderato poco Allegro

Flûte
Petite Flûte

Clarinét en mi b

1.
Cor en ta

2.
Cor en fa

3.
Trompettes en ut

1.
2.

Tenor

Trombone

Bass

Snare drum

Indian drum

Bass drum

Tambourine

Crash Cymbal

2 Cymbals

Tamiam

Triangle

Anvil

Slap Stick

high

2 Chinese blocks

low

Lion Roar

Rattle

Big Rattle

Sleigh Bells

Siren

subito molto crescendo
attacca pp subito
ff
Sord.
p
suivre la 1^{re}
Sord.
ff
gliss.
gliss.
Sord.
p
mf
ff
mp
ff
long
Laisser vibrer et étalader
L.V. et étalader
ff
mf
ppp
frictionner l'un contre l'autre
L.V.
mf
pp
grave
pp

Edgard Varèse (1883-1965): “Hyperprism”

- tenor trombone: pitch C# with accents and glissandos, in alternation with horns playing crescendos, sforzandos, and flutter-tonguing on the same note: sound with static central pitch but constantly changing timbre

The image displays a page from the musical score for "Hyperprism" by Edgard Varèse. The score is written for a large ensemble, with parts for Horns, Trumpets, and Trombone/Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into systems, with the first system showing the Horns (Corns en fa) and the second system showing the Trumpets (Trompettes en ut) and the Trombone/Bass. The Trombone/Bass part is particularly notable for its use of glissandos and accents, as mentioned in the text. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *attacca pp*, *molto*, *ff*, *gliss*, *Sord.*, *p*, and *sf*. The notation includes notes, rests, and glissando lines, indicating the specific techniques used in the performance.

Edgard Varèse (1883-1965): "Hyperprism"

- mm. 15-16: instruments enter to form a chord containing the nine chromatic notes from Bb to F# spread over a range of 4.5 octaves—with staggered entrances
- m. 19: flute melody includes all twelve chromatic notes, ending with minor 9th against trumpet

0:30

Très calme
(harmonique)

a tempo

accél. molto

très agité
animant

Fl. *mp*

Cl. mib *f* *mp* *f* *p* *molto fff* *p* *sempre p*

1. Cors en fa ouvert (non troppo) *f* *pp* *sf p* *molto fff* *bouché*

2. Cors en fa ouvert (non troppo) *f* *pp* *sf p* *molto fff* *bouché*

3. Cors en fa ouvert *f* *pp* *sf p* *fff*

1. Trppts *con sord.* *poco sf* *senza sord.* *con sord.* *ff haletantes (en dehors)* *molto fff*

2. Trppts *mp* *pp* *(sans sord.)* *f* *p* *ff* *p*

T. *pp* *pppp* *(sans sord.)* *f* *p* *ff* *p*

Trbns B. *(sans sord.)* *(b)*

Très calme

a tempo

0:52

Calmato a tempo

Fl. *dans un sentiment sourd. et tumultueux* *f* *cède légèrement*

Cl. mib *5*

1. Cors en fa *5*

2. Cors en fa *5*

3. Cors en fa *5*

1. Trppts *5*

2. Trppts *5*

T. *pppp*

Trbns B. *5*

dans un sentiment sourd. et tumultueux (voilé) **Calmato a tempo**

(1) rebord
(2) membrane

OTHER QUALITIES OF THE CLASSIC BLUES

Coded lyrics:

- use of metaphors or double-meanings, sometimes suggestive or sexual meanings.

He poured my first cabbage and he made it awful hot
He poured my first cabbage and he made it awful hot
When he put in the bacon, it overflowed the pot

Why use coded lyrics?

many reasons, including:

- creativity
- “insider meanings”
- the ability to evade censorship
- “signifying multiple meanings” to evade the oppression of white middle-class structures

**Coded
Lyrics**

EMPTY BED BLUES

RECORDED BESSIE SMITH

I woke up this morning with a awful aching head
I woke up this morning with a awful aching head
My new man had left me, just a room and a empty bed

Bought me a coffee grinder that's the best one I could find
Bought me a coffee grinder that's the best one I could find
Oh he could grind my coffee, cause he had a brand new grind

He's a deep sea diver with a stroke that can't go wrong
He's a deep sea diver with a stroke that can't go wrong
He can stay at the bottom and his wind holds out so long

He knows how to thrill me and he thrills me night and day
Oh he knows how to thrill me, he thrills me night and day
He's got a new way of loving, almost takes my breath away

Lord he's got that sweet somethin' and I told my girlfriend Lou
He's got that sweet somethin' and I told my girlfriend Lou
From the way she's raving, she must have gone and tried it too

“Prove It On Me Blues” (1928)

Ma Rainey

Went out last night, had a great big fight
Everything seemed to go on wrong
I looked up, to my surprise
The gal I was with was gone.

Where she went, I don't know
I mean to follow everywhere she goes;
Folks say I'm crooked.
I didn't know where she took it
I want the whole world to know.

They say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
Sure got to prove it on me;
Went out last night with a crowd of my friends,
They must've been women, 'cause I don't like no men.
It's true I wear a collar and a tie,
Makes the wind blow all the while
Don't you say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
You sure got to prove it on me.
Say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
Sure got to prove it on me.
I went out last night with a crowd of my friends,
It must've been women, 'cause I don't like no men.

"PROVE IT ON ME BLUES"

Ma Rainey

What's all this? Scandal? Maybe so, but you wouldn't have thought it of "Ma" Rainey. But look at that cop watching her! What does it all mean? But "Ma" just sings "Prove It On Me" in this great new Paramount Blue No. 12666, with a bang-up accompaniment by the Tub Jug Washboard Band. Don't fail to get this record from your dealer, or send us the coupon.

[12666—Prove It On Me Blues and Hear Me Talking To You, "Ma" Rainey and the Tub Jug Washboard Band.]

12666—Fustworthy Blues and Long Ladder! Levie, Blind Lemon Jefferson and His Guitar.

12664—Some Grubbed Blues and Western Dukes Blues, Ida Cox; Piano, Banjo and Cornet Acc.

12665—Low Down Mississippi Bottoms and Tom Cat Blues, "Mr. Freddie" Spruill; Guitar Acc.

12668—Ash Tray Blues and No Need of Kerosene! On the Blind, "Papa Charlie" Jackson and His Blues Banjo.

12661—Saint Louis Man and Kentucky Stomp, Dixie Four.

12667—Rumblin' And Rumblin' See Gon-stretcher Blues and Detroit Bound Blues, Blind Blake and His Guitar.

12660—Honey Hunt Stomp and Big Bill Blues, Big Bill and Thelma; Guitar Acc.

12663—Lester's Chair Blues and See That My Grave Is Kept Clean, Blind Lemon Jefferson and His Guitar.

12669—Jimmy Rodgers Blue Yodel and Way Out On The Mountain, Louis Warfield; Guitar Acc.

Favorite Spirituals

12662—Bade On, King David and Our Father, Markia Jubilee Quartette.

12660—The Eyes Is On The Sparrow and I Wouldn't Mind Dying In Dying Was Ah, Markia Jubilee Quartette.

SEND NO MONEY! If your dealer is out of the records you want, send us the coupon below. Pay postman 15 cents for each record, plus small C. O. D. fee when he delivers records. We pay postage on shipments of two or more records.

Paramount
The Popular Race Record

The New York Recording Laboratories
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12660 12661 12667
12665 12662 12663
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Name _____
Address _____
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Wear my clothes just like a fan
Talk to the gals just like any old man
Cause they say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
Sure got to prove it on me.

What does understanding classic/women's blues do for us?

- a specific intersectional identity—this music is
- made primarily for and by Black performers and audiences
- made primarily for and by the working class
- made primarily by women of color
- **Why is this important? A voice not often heard in the music industry, especially during this era....**Allows us to hear an alternative form of representation, an oral and musical women's culture that explicitly addresses the contradictions of feminism, sexuality, and power.
- Classic blues: a discourse that articulates a cultural and political struggle over sexual relations, a struggle directed against the objectification of female sexuality within a patriarchal order but which also tries to reclaim women's bodies and the sexual and sensuous subjects of women's song.

HAZEL CARBY(B.1948)

(AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, ENGLISH LITERATURE)

“It has been a mistake of much black feminist theory to concentrate almost exclusively on the visions of black women as represented by black women writers without indicating the limitations of their *middle-class* response to black women’s sexuality.” (p. 240)

Blues allows us to see a different picture, alternate form, an oral and musical women’s culture that *explicitly* addresses the contradictions of feminism, sexuality, and power.

Tries to reclaim women’s bodies as the sexual and sensuous subjects of women’s song.

Carby sees blues performance as part of a discourse of sexual relations within the black community

- community?
- audience: “race records” marketed to black audiences
- blues symbols (like the train) have different meanings for men and women
- differences in the domestic sphere, or even blues singer = the public sphere
- female sexual autonomy
- move from object of male desire to representation of female desire
- violence?

Time of the blues singers is short-lived—does not outlast the Depression

EARLY JAZZ

Why do we have such trouble telling, uncovering, and understanding the histories of the origins of jazz?



What sources do we use?

NAWM Selection: “West End Blues” (1928)

- Published Sheet music
- King Oliver and Clarence Williams
- dotted rhythms [swung?]
- piano introduction [vamp]
- verse: 12-bar blues progression
- Refrain: two statements of 12-bar blues progression

- Hugely influential recording
- Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five

- virtuosic trumpet introduction
- no verse; five refrains (choruses)

a challenge to every trumpet player....

- Chorus 1: entire group, Armstrong on melody **listen to his syncopations!**
- Chorus 2: Robinson on trombone, backed by rhythm section
- Chorus 3: clarinet in call & response with Armstrong scatting
- Chorus 4: Hines on piano
- Chorus 5: entire ensemble

two alternating styles: more “classical” versus “trumpet” style

ORIGINAL DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND

- first band to record jazz
- “Livery Stable Blues” (1917)
- some questions: this is a recording made by a white ensemble—is it reflective of New Orleans jazz as it was played by black New Orleans jazz musicians in the late 1910s? Hard to know
- Also: is this a typical use of humor in jazz?
- or is it making fun of Black musicians (the heritage of minstrelsy?).....hard to say

