Weekly Subjects

Aug 29  Overview of Middle Eastern Music
- ‘iqa’at (usulu)
- maqamat (makamlar, dastgah)
- sharqi (şarqı, sharkı)
- the rules of taqsim (taximi, taksim)
- alphabets, transliteration, and pronunciation; naming conventions

References:
www.maqamworld.com

Sept 5  Labor Day (no class)

Sept 12  Sacred Music of the Middle East
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Hittite
- Ancient Sumerian/Akkadian
- nomadic Hebrew music arises out of Egyptian and Akkadian traditions
- Tengrism
- Christian music, the Pentarchy
- early Islamic poetry/music
- Mevlevi music
- Alevi ceremonial dance and music

References:
Sept 19  Greek Music: Ancient, Classical, & Modern
- Mount Athos
- Byzantine chant
- rebellion against Ottomans
- rebetika

References:
Holst(-Warhaft), Gail. Road to Rembetika: Music of Greek Subculture. Limni, Evia, Greece:
Denise Harvey, 1975.

Sept 26  Music of the Ottoman Empire
- Turkish migrations: origins in Central or NE Asia
- origins of the baglama
- Peşrev form
- unique usulu
- Persian influence (e.g. al-Farabi)
- talent-based classical musical system allowed for women and minorities

References:

Oct 3  Rosh Hashanah (no class)

Oct 10  Fall Break (no class)

Oct 17  Music of the Hebrews and Jews
- ancient Hebrew instruments:
- Tehillim (Psalms) compiled under King David
- correlations to West Africa
- Jewish diaspora in the Middle East:
  - Persia
  - Khazar conversion to Judaism
  - Ladino (murrano)
  - Ottoman
  - Yemen
- Jews in Islam
- modern Israeli music

References:
Oct 24  Ancient Arabian and Early Islamic Music; the Raj Movement
-origins in Greek academic culture
-Syrian Christian (Maroni) Sacred Music (maqamat)
-classical Arabic theory sources
-Reconquista: 711 (or 718) - 1492
-influence on W. European classical music
-Muwashshah diaspora
-classical Arabic rhythm in Latin music
-the emergence of Raj in Algeria

References:

Oct 31  Music of Modern Egypt
-Ottoman influence on modern Egyptian music
-relationship to N. Africa and the Levant
-Egyptian influence on American hip-hop culture

References:

Nov 7   Persian Music
-connections to India
-relationship to Central Asian music
-Dastgah & Avaz
-heavy influence on early Islamic culture, especially Turkey
-spread of the harp
-yuruk semai
-Revolutionary restrictions on music

References:
Nov 14  Modern Turkish Music & The Ottoman Musical “Diaspora”
-repression of Ottoman culture
-looking Westward/Euro-integration-Bulgarian/Macedonian
-Serb
-Romanian
-Greek
-Egypt and the Hijaz
-Mesopotamia and Persia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, others)

References:

Nov 21  The Levant & Southeastern Pontos, Khaleej, and the Nomads
-Levantine Music: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kurds, Alevi
-Southeastern Pontos: Laaz, Georgian, Armenian, Ossetian, Baloch, Azeri
-Khaleej (Arabia)
-­‐samri tradition
-Kuwait
-Yemeni singers
-Nomads: Roma, Bedou, Pashto

References:

Nov 28  Last Class
General Resources

- cmeme.arts.cornell.edu (click the daf in the upper left to access the CUMEME archive)
- www.maqamworld.com
- Grove Music Online (database via library.cornell.edu)
- Ethno-musicology Online (database via library.cornell.edu)
- www.ethnomusicology.org
- www.neyzen.com

Main Performances:

- November 16 (Wednesday), 8pm, Barnes Hall
- December 2 (Friday), 8pm, Watermargin (date may be subject to change)

Open Dancing and Drumming:

- August 31, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
- September 28, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
- October 26, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
- November 30, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
- December 28, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)

Other Engagements:

- September 4 (Sunday), 6pm, 207 Giles St.: Alicia's backyard party
- September 11 (Sunday), 1pm, Barton Hall: Clubfest
- September 18 (Sunday), TBD (between 12-6pm): Porchfest
- October 7-8 (Friday/Saturday), 6:15pm: 42nd Annual BSANA Conference performances
- November 12 (Saturday), 5pm, 311 South Albany Street: dress rehearsal dinner at Joseph's

Repertoire Selection

I will be happy to accept suggestions for songs to learn and sing in the group. Musical works will get priority consideration for how much they diversify the group's perspective, in particular:

1) uniqueness of geographic or ethnic origin,
2) uniqueness or rarity of maqam (makam) or iqa' (usul) in the CUMEME collection,
3) associated composers or performers of the work and their historical relevance,
4) subject matter of the lyrics in historical or cultural terms, and
5) artistic cultural value of the lyrics.

Course Materials

CUMEME aims for the same professional academic standards as other music ensembles. Each member is responsible for bringing his or her own instrument(s) as well as music charts. If you cannot read music, please try to ask questions and pick it up in class as much as possible, but always bring charts and a pencil (not a pen) to mark them with notes and corrections. If you prefer to go paperless, all charts will be made available online (see link above under General Resources).

The reference materials listed are all optional. Anything you actually need will be provided for free. The extra materials are for those students wishing to engage in more specific study of a particular subject area.
Class Participation

Our main purpose here is to teach one another what we know about our own cultures. Members' insight on historical or sociological issues is necessary and will be appreciated by all. Don't be shy in sharing your thoughts. Each of you is an expert with subject matter we all want to know.

To participate with the group, try to sing and clap at the very least. Some pieces are learned and sung to help the singers learn the anatomy of maqamat (makamlar or dastgah), which improves the quality of singing and helps instrumentalists improve their ability. Clapping helps study the rhythmic cycles, which increases the power and artistry of both singers and instrumentalists. If you would like to try to learn an instrument from the Lincoln Hall collection, you are welcome to try. Just talk to me or Greg Ezra. To take an instrument home for further practise, you will need to sign an agreement.

There are two ways to engage with the Ensemble on an academic level: a formal talk or translating lyrics. If you feel you can bring perspective to any of the weekly subject areas, please see me to request that date for your talk. We will also need help translating our lyrics for the concert, so feel free to volunteer to create English translations for your favorite songs!

Extra Assistance

I will be happy to provide extra time to ensemble members looking to improve skills in the performance of any instrument or voice, or the reading of music. Experience and auditions are not required, and I am happy to help improve the abilities of any interested student.

Academic Credit

Since the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble is no longer offered as a for-credit course, you may ask a professor if he or she would be willing to accept your work for the ensemble as an independent study under him or her. That professor may require you to do more work, e.g. write a formal paper, in order for you to receive credit.

Rehearsal Location

All sessions will be held in Lincoln B21 unless otherwise notified. The group will be notified the week prior if the location changes, and a sign will be posted on the door of Lincoln B21.

Rehearsal Format

Closer to performance dates, the rehearsals may become more orderly, but in general I will try to strike a balance between music rehearsal and the discussions we have about performance practise. This may be different from other musical ensemble rehearsals. This atmosphere is necessary for the study of performance practise.