
Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Rhythm Studies and Jazz Drumming · Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Thomas Hornig · Henri Selmer Paris Artist · The Whole Horn

The syllabus • MUJ 345 • 15 weeks • 2 credits

Watch the video • 17 s

Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion

The course explores from a historical perspective the various styles of Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion along its dual relationship to the Jazz language. The percussion instruments are all studied and explored in-group setting.

Afro-Cuban religious ceremonial rhythms, in addition to drum set applications, are also covered. The course also focuses in depth upon the analysis and knowledge of the inner workings of clave and basic techniques on the major battery of Afro-Cuban percussion (congas, bongo, timbales) in addition to [the] minor battery (maracas, guiro, shakers, cowbells, etc.).

Weeks 1–8 • Brazil.

The Brazilian percussion instruments (surdo, agogô, triangle, caixeta, ganzá, afoxé, reco-reco, tamborim, pandeiro, cuíca, repinique, berimbau...); bossa nova and samba bass lines and comping; the drummer's role. Students play the rhythms while singing the standards ("Corcovado", "Só Danço Samba") and rehearse four bossa novas and three sambas in a small group.

Weeks 9–13 • Cuba.

Five clave rhythms, the cascara, traditional son clave styles, rumba clave styles, contemporary Cuban styles; a history of Afro-Cuban music and ten Afro-Cuban musicians, such as Paquito D'Rivera and Tito Puente.

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Weeks 14–15.

A public performance with a small jazz group.

Texts.

Essential Rhythms for Jazz Ensemble (Kendor); The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set and Cuba: Passport to a New World of Music (Alfred).
Recommended: Rebeca Mauleón's 101 Montunos and Salsa Guidebook; Aebersold volumes 31, 64, 69, 77 and 98.

Grading.

Participation and practice 20%, class work and quizzes 20%, midterm 20%, final 40%.

Rhythm studies and Afro-Cuban studies

When it is offered: An elective, offered when a specialist teacher is available. The syllabus for Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345) is ready to run.

“... The likelihood that we would add in a rhythm studies or ... Afro-Cuban studies component to the jazz program ... depends on the human capital [that] comes in, and many of the courses that will be offered are gonna depend on the expertise that comes into the Conservatory.”

thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program