

Let it Rock: the Mount Olympus of American rock bands, 1965-1995

Course description: This is an eight-week course that will take a deep dive into the music and story of six of the greatest American rock and roll bands, groups that defined the genre. The rich history of rock and roll is full of brilliant songs and singers, but the *essence* of rock and roll has always been the rock and roll band—that small—usually four to seven piece—ensemble made up of young musicians who caught lightning in a bottle together, taking their blues, R&B, rockabilly, early rock, country, folk and even jazz influences and combining them to create music that is timeless and inspiring.

Week-by-Week Course Outline and Syllabus

**suggested reading, viewing and listening, and in-class audio and video playlist for each class.*

Week One: The Doors: the original poetry of Jim Morrison and his musical mates begets psychedelic rock: There at the very beginning in LA, they forged their own brand of psychedelic blues-based rock, led by their brilliant, mercurial and tragically short-lived supernova, poet and charismatic front man.

Reading:

The Doors, hardcover, by Ben Fong-Torres, 2006

Riders on the Storm, My Life with Jim Morrison and the Doors/John Densmore, 1991

Viewing:

When you're Strange: A Film about the Doors, 2010

"Mr. Mojo Risin': The Story of L.A. Woman" 2011

The Doors - Live in Europe 1968

The Doors, directed by Oliver Stone, starring Val Kilmer, 1991

Listening:

The Doors (1967) their debut album

Strange Days (1967)

Waiting for the Sun (1968)

The Soft Parade (1969)

Morrison Hotel (1970)

L.A. Woman (1971)

Audio and video playlist

Break on Through

Alabama Song (Whiskey Bar)

Light my Fire

People are Strange

Love me Two Times

Hello I Love You

Touch Me
Roadhouse Blues
Love Her Madly
Riders on the Storm
LA Woman

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Week 2: The Allman Brothers Band: They invented Southern Rock, endured tragedy, and persevered. Led by their soulful blue-eyed soul singer Greg, they overcame the loss of older brother and guitar virtuoso Duane, and made lasting music. There was nobody like them, and there never will be.

Reading:

Please Be with Me: A Song for My Father, Duane Allman, by Galadrielle Allman 2014 (Berkeley resident)

My Cross to Bear by Greg Allman, 2013

Midnight Riders: The Story of the Allman Brothers Band, Scott Freeman 1996

Viewing:

Song of the South: Duane Allman and The Rise Of The Allman Brothers 2013

The Allman Brothers Band, After the Crash, 2016

All My Friends: Celebrating the Songs & Voice of Gregg Allman 2014

Listening:

The Allman Brothers Band 1969

Idlewild South 1970

At Fillmore East (live) 1971

Eat a Peach (part live) 1972

Brothers and Sisters 1973

1970-2005: 23 live albums

The Very Best of Gregg Allman 2011

Audio and video playlist

Trouble no more

Ain't My Cross to Bear

Whipping Post

Midnight Rider

Revival

Statesboro Blues

Leave My Blues at Home

Stormy Monday

Ain't Wastin' Time No More

Melissa

Ramblin' Man

Jessica

One Way Out
Blue Sky
Little Martha

Week 3: The Band: Four young Canadian musicians meet an Arkansas drummer; join the Hawks, back up Bob Dylan, and go on to create timeless Americana records. Led by guitarist/songwriter Jamie Robbie Robertson, they were the quintessential pros, both live and in the studio—never a wasted note.

Reading:

Testimony, a memoir by Robbie Robertson, 2016

This Wheel's on Fire: Levon Helm and the Story of The Band, by Levon Helm 2013

Viewing:

**The Last Waltz 1978, directed by Martin Scorsese*

Once We Were Brothers, directed by Daniel Roher, 2020

****(required because it is SO great!)***

Listening:

Music from Big Pink 1968

The Band 1969

Stage Fright 1970

Cahoots 1971

Rock of Ages 1972 (live double album)

Moondog Matinee 1973

The Basement Tapes 1975 (with Bob Dylan)

Audio and video playlist

Tears of Rage

In a Station

The Weight

Long Black Veil

Chest Fever

Lonesome Suzie

I Shall be Released

Across the Great Divide

Up on Cripple Creek

Unfaithful

Look out Cleveland

Mystery Train

Open the door Homer (with Dylan)

The Shape I'm In

It Makes No Difference
The Night they Drove old Dixie Down

Week 4: Creedence Clearwater Revival: From El Cerrito to the bayou, with heavy doses of hooks and soulful singing, John Fogerty and friends made their mark, despite being torn apart by greed and betrayal.

Reading:

Fortunate Son: My Life, My Music by John Fogerty 2016

Bad Moon Rising: The Unauthorized History of Creedence Clearwater Revival, by Hank Bordowitz 2007

Viewing:

Inside: Creedence Clearwater Revival 2005

John Fogerty; My 50-year trip, available with PBS KQED passport (\$60/year)

Listening:

Creedence Clearwater Revival 1968

Bayou Country 1969

Green River 1969

Willy and the Poor Boys 1969

Cosmos factory 1970

Centerfield (John Fogerty solo album) 1985

Audio and video playlist

Wrote a song for Everyone

Suzie Q.

Born on the Bayou

Proud Mary

Green River

Bad Moon Rising

Lodi

Fortunate Son

Down on the corner

Long as I can see the Light

Lookin' Out My Back Door

Who will Stop the Rain

Have you ever Seen the Rain

Travelin' Band

Someday never Comes

Centerfield (John Fogerty solo)

Week 5: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Part One, 1976-83: Bursting out of the youth center dances of Florida and taking the rock world by storm, one great

record after another, Tom Petty and his bandmates exemplified, as much as any American rock and roll band, what a dedicated selfless group of friends with a shared interest can achieve—success, fame and fortune, without compromise.

Reading:

Petty Unabridged, by Warren Zanes, 2016

Tom Petty; A rock and roll life, by Nick Thomas, 2018

Conversations with Tom Petty, Paul Zollo 2020

Viewing:

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers: Runnin' Down a Dream, 2007, directed by Peter Bogdanovich

Tom Petty: Somewhere You Feel Free 2021—to be released this fall on streaming

Listening:

With the Heartbreakers

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (1976)

You're Gonna Get It! (1978)

Damn the Torpedoes (1979)

Hard Promises (1981)

Long After Dark (1982)

Southern Accents (1985)

Into the Great Wide Open (1991)

With the Traveling Wilburys

Traveling Wilburys Vol. 1 (1988)

Traveling Wilburys Vol. 3 (1990)

Solo

Full Moon Fever (1989)

Wildflowers (1994)

Audio and video playlist

Breakdown

American Girl

I Need to Know

Listen to her Heart

Stop Draggin' My Heart Around , duet with Stevie Nicks

Refugee

Here Comes My Girl

Even the Losers

Don't do me like that

The Waiting

A Woman in Love

You Got Lucky

Week 6: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Part Two, 1985-98: the modest and beloved elder statesman keeps the flame burning and the legacy of honest rock and roll alive, always true and beholden to his loyal fans.

Reading, Listening and Viewing—see week five)

Audio and video playlist

Don't Come Around Here No more

Learning to Fly

Into the Great Wide Open

(Tom Petty solo)

Free Fallin'

I Won't Back Down

Mary Jane's Last Dance

Runnin' Down a Dream

A Face in the Crowd

You Wreck me

You Don't Know How it Feels

Wildflowers