

Stanford | Continuing Studies

Course Title: The Songwriting of the Beatles: The Experimental Sounds of *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver*

Course Code: MUS 02

Instructor: Dr. Joel Phillip Friedman

Schedule: Saturdays, October 31, November 7, November 14, and November 21, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm (PT).

Format: Live Online

Course Summary:

More than fifty years after they exploded onto the music scene, The Beatles still capture our imagination as few groups have. In this four-day course, we will delve into the Beatles' career, development, and songwriting process through a deep-dive into two extraordinary albums, the "bookends" of *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver*, which marked the end of their commercially driven era and a transition to a more experimental sound. Recorded in the fall of 1965, and a decisive step away from Beatlemania, *Rubber Soul* showcased the band's growing maturity as songwriters and studio artists. It was also their second complete album of originals, after 1964's *A Hard Day's Night*. Steeped in equal parts of Bob Dylan, Stax, and Motown soul, *Rubber Soul* illustrated how pop was rapidly shifting from discrete pop singles to album-length artistic statements. 1966's *Revolver* was a landmark—arguably their greatest album. An explosion of influences—psychedelia, American soul, avant-garde European classical/electronic music, Hindustani classical music, and British music hall—*Revolver* was the album that opened up vast, new artistic spaces and changed rock history. It was also their first album that could not be easily, or adequately, performed by the band live on stage. The course will include lectures, discussions, and the opportunity to listen closely to individual tracks, as we examine the studio process, equipment, techniques, and songwriting craft that brought these albums to life.

Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
 - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.

**Please Note:* Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Course Outline:

Rubber Soul Part 1 **Saturday, October 31, 2020** 10-12:30 PST

Rubber Soul Part 2 **Saturday, November 7, 2020** 10-12:30 PST

Rubber Soul showcased the band's growing maturity as songwriters and studio artists. It was also their second complete album of originals (after 1964's *A Hard Day's Night*). Steeped in equal parts of Bob Dylan, Stax, and Motown soul, *Rubber Soul* illustrated how pop was rapidly shifting from discrete pop singles to album-length artistic statements. Who knew their songwriting tank was empty when the recording sessions began mid-October? Perhaps that's why there are two Harrison selections on this LP. Selected outtakes will illustrate both songwriting and recording developments. **Listening:** *Rubber Soul* (2009 Remaster) complete LP. Single: *We Can Work It Out/Day Tripper* (found on *Past Masters* 2009 Remaster).

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 650-725-2650

PRELIMINARY COURSE SYLLABUS

Revolver Part 1 **Saturday, November 14, 2020** 10-12:30 PST

Revolver Part 2 **Saturday, November 21, 2020** 10-12:30 PST

1966's *Revolver* was a landmark—arguably their greatest album. An explosion of influences—psychedelia, American soul, avant-garde European classical/electronic music, Hindustani classical music, and British music hall—*Revolver* was the album that opened up vast, new artistic spaces and changed rock history. It was also their first album that could not be easily, or adequately, performed by the band live on stage. The album introduced engineer Geoff Emerick to the Beatles' team and a host of technological advancements. Selected outtakes will illustrate both songwriting and recording developments. **Listening:** *Revolver* (2009 Remaster) complete LP. Single: *Paperback Writer/Rain* (found on *Past Masters* 2009 Remaster).

LEGAL

It is mandatory that you access all required listening materials legally and properly – whether via physical media (CD vinyl, etc.), download, or streaming. I own all my materials. Recordings will not be shared under any circumstances.

We are able to offer this course under the umbrella of the TEACH Act, which “extends the Face-to-Face Teaching exemption to distance learning courses in a limited way. The exemption applies only to online courses restricted to registered students, and so may be applicable for Stanford courses that incorporate an online component.”

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