A Note from the Instructor:

Through a selection of songs this weekend workshop will explore the evolution of Lennon, McCartney, and Harrison as composer/lyricists as they developed from mere local cover band to arguably some of the most influential songwriters of the 20th century. Our goal is to understand how special and sophisticated their songwriting could be on many different levels as the power and originality of their astonishing body of creative work still speaks loudly and clearly today.

In some cases we will delve into individual songs deeply. In other cases, we will discuss specifics of harmony, meter, or phrasing by briefly referencing a number of different songs. A byproduct of our investigation will be to find similarities and connections between songs, authors, and even periods. Keep in mind that time does not permit us to cover every song listed.

As time permits we will also explore: the roles producer George Martin, the famed engineers of Abbey Road played; the revolutionary recording procedures and techniques they initiated; and The Beatles’ diverse creative influences (including R&B and Motown artists, classic rockers, and decidedly non-rock influences such as British Music Hall, Indian classical music, and the Classical avant-garde).

While the course is not designed for literate musicians, some knowledge of the basics of music – e.g. meter and harmony – will come in very handy. But, have no fear! If you are inexperienced or unsure I am more than happy to explain. Just ask.

Note for those of you who took this class last year: we will cover much of the same material but perhaps with different emphasis and, in some cases, different examples.

Your “pre-assignment” is: familiarize yourselves with this list of songs.

Since this is a one-day course there isn’t a “real syllabus.” You will not have to do any reading, although it is assumed you are already interested in, and have some knowledge of The Beatles and their work. This is not a history course. We will only touch upon historical and career events tangentially as needed. We will spend time listening and discussing the songs listed below. The list is designed to illuminate certain traits about the Beatles’ songwriting, draw comparisons within their catalog, as well acting as a foil to some common rock songwriting traits.

Sit back, listen, listen again, familiarize, and enjoy!

NB: there may be repetitions of some songs as many do fit into multiple categories

Echoes of Tin Pan Alley in Form & Style
Till There Was You – A Taste Of Honey – Do You Want To Know A Secret - If I Fell - I’m A Loser
Here There And Everywhere – Honey Pie

The Wonder Years
She Loves You – I Want To Hold Your Hand

Classical Progressions, Descending Lines, And Sophisticated Harmonies
All My Loving – Any Time At All – Things We Said Today – And Your Bird Can Sing – Got To Get You Into My Life – For No One – Dear Prudence – Because
What Were They Thinking? Cool & Odd Modulations
Another Girl – Good Day Sunshine – Penny Lane – Being For The Benefit of Mr. Kite – Martha My Dear - Something

A Twist of Lennon
Being For The Benefit of Mr. Kite – Good Morning Good Morning – I Am the Walrus – Happiness Is A Warm Gun

Macca’s Silk Brush
And I Love Her – Yesterday –Eleanor Rigby – Here There And Everywhere – Blackbird

Harrisons
Don’t Bother Me – Love You To – While My Guitar Gently Weeps – Here Comes The Sun – Something

Blues?
Can’t Buy Me Love – You Can’t Do That – Day Tripper - She’s A Woman – Yer Blues

Rocks of Gibraltar: Songs That Do NOT Change Key, Or Even Harmony!

A few additional songs that may be covered

Non-Beatle tracks with which it would be helpful to be familiar:
Hound Dog – Elvis
Roll Over Beethoven – Check Berry
Long Tall Sally – Little Richard
Please Mr. Postman – The Marvelettes
Come And Go With Me – The Dell Vikings
Anna (Go To Him) – Arthur Alexander

Due to its short format, this workshop may not be taken for Credit or a Letter Grade.