Topics to Consider in Unit I

- *How might we define creativity, "culture," or the art of "appreciating" others?*
- *In what way can understanding musical creativity enhance our own creative development?*
- *What are some "universals" we share with everyone on the planet?*
- *What are some of the challenges to deepening our listening and appreciation skills of other cultures' music (or their values)?*
- *What are some of the steps through which composers go to create interesting "compositions"? How does this relate to our own creative potentials?*
- *What are some ways to improve our listening (vs. hearing) abilities?*
- *What are some of the means by which "traditions" change over time? (and what is the "real" definition of "tradition"?)*
- *What does a composition by an American composer share with that of a praise song from Morocco?*

UNIT I

Introduction:
Envisioning a Single Humanity Through Music

Throughout the course of human evolution, each of us in our time creates our world of values based primarily upon the strategies and perceptions we acquire from our immediate environment and community. As our needs and goals evolve, we increasingly will come into contact with "new" or different options. We reject or accept the opportunity to learn from these options based upon their proximity to our values, or upon the depth and degree to which we've been trained to be flexible or value others. Our preferences for art, food, or music are to a great degree, therefore, the result of these experiences more than any inherent degree of superiority. The more keenly we internalize this fact, the more quickly we will see 'justice' "with our own eyes and not the eyes of our neighbors." [1.1] Naylor and Naylor, 2003, P.14.

Some "Workable" Definitions

(These are in the authors' words. It is suggested that readers re-formulate them into their own.)

Creativity: The capacity to adapt, to enjoy change, to problem-solve, and to manifest personal or community flexibility and capacities in our lives. In music, creativity includes the mastering of skill sets for the purpose of reflecting personal experiences into a unique blend or fusion of sounds. To some degree, creativity also demands a willingness to take chances, to make mistakes, and both to take criticism (constructive suggestions/external input) and to trust one's intuition and personal insights without judging them.

Music: Sounds organized in time, which have emotional and cultural significance to their creators. Most music additionally serves the purpose of connecting individuals to a sense of community and to the life cycle, or of expressing the thoughts and emotions of the musicians to a constituency of "appreciators" who have generally similar tastes (affinities) or experiences.

Culture: A term used to loosely categorize for discussion the sum total of all expressions, language, art, ideals, artifacts, values, and, of course, music of humans of similar origin or geographical location, or more frequently with similar tastes, who share meanings, values, or affinities, regardless of the superficial appearance of race, nationality, gender, or other determinants. The term *culture groups* will be used interchangeably with *culture* to denote common subcategories or more firmly identifiable cultures, whenever possible, as determined or communicated of by the people (culture groups) themselves.

General note: *Whatever the terms used to denote a group of humans, they are more frequently convenient than accurate.*

Appreciation: *Respecting* something or someone and his or her ideals and expressions, usually through the exertion of some personal effort. Appreciation need not include "liking" (though one may find it easier to respect something having reached the state of liking it), but it does demand more effort and sacrifice than "tolerance" or any other form of passive and dispassionate co-existence.

Why Study Creativity?

> *"We must remember that the psychology of the creative person is the psychology of a person who walks around in life, who looks, and sees, and feels, who takes into account what life is and, somehow or other, wants to get out something he/she has within him(her)self."* Zilboorg, Creativity, "The Psychology of the Creative Personality", Hastings House, 1959, p. 25

Today, regardless of one's culture of origin, most individuals will need to acquire some degree of flexibility in communication with those whose experiences are considerably different from their own. At the core of the flexibility required for the journey into the cultures, lives, and musical genius of others is our understanding and capacity to be *creative*. In its root form, creativity is the ability to be spontaneous and willing to take chances, possibly at the risk of making mistakes or being criticized by those around us.

Of course, it is creativity that has given us electricity, air travel, computers, and most certainly, classical symphonies, hip-hop, and rock 'n' roll. To draw from the depths of our intuition (spirit, soul, etc.) something that at first may seem strange to others and possibly even to ourselves is nonetheless a critical component of the creative spirit. In many instances, the world's most creative music was initially rejected or spurned by the societies in which it appeared, only later to be embraced or to make a significant impact on the culture or the lives of its culture's descendants. But what is the greatest advantage of the study of the world's musical creativity? What do we learn from the insights of other culture systems as they are reflected in their music that we can practically apply to our lives?

At the pace at which many of us are actively moving, we may find it difficult to invest energy in activities we cannot justify as relevant to our immediate goals or career advancement. In many cases, if we do not see material, physical, or financial gain in an activity, the prospects of our investing passion or energy into it are slim. Therefore, we may want to be aware of possible motives as to why appreciating music, and, more importantly, respecting the people who make it, might prove valuable.

Music as a Tool for Enhancing Our Own Creativity

To begin, we might recognize that every time we come to a deeper understanding of another human's **values** (the traits, human qualities, and aesthetics they prefer to emphasize)[1,2] through any form of expression (music included) we advance our own vocabulary for "creating" solutions to problems or challenges. That this is so can be clearly seen as we contemplate any of our heroes thus far in our lives. They may be teachers, pastors, priests, or rabbis, coaches or mentors, actors or musicians, or just as likely, parents, grandparents, or other family members. In most cases, somewhere in their rising to the status of hero in our eyes, they performed an act or multiple acts of incredible creativity. They solved a problem, presented a thought or idea, or spoke of life's experiences in a manner that touched us, honored us, and left us, in some ways, wanting to be like them.

Pic1.1 *The colors and images in these paintings by Nancy Eckels reflect the parallel world's of art and music. In all art, image and, colors (whether visual or audio) blend together to induce thought and emotion, and to nudge us from our everyday world into the world of the passion, emotion, and experience of the author or artist.* Copyright: Nancy Eckels, 2004.

Impactful experiences and events, or heroic and inspirational insights eventually combine to motivate our choices of hobbies, professions, and, ultimately, our own unique creative outlook on life. In this sense we are a "fusion,"[1.3] or combination, of all the influences. This is what made Mozart, Duke Ellington, Charlie Pride, James Brown, Jimi Hendrix… or the "Mozarts" from any culture… *creative heroes* in their own right.

The Journey

Whether in school, in the workplace, or in decoding the representations of media or film presentations about *others,* each of us must constantly make decisions about what we will let into our world, or in what manner we will remember each image or event for the future. Yet, how adept are we at seeing the diversity of human cultures with the same level of passion and respect we might demonstrate to those of our own cultural backgrounds? And, assuming we desire to be comfortable in this relatively "new" world environment, how do we develop the skills and perceptual tools to accomplish this?

How We Got Here

Historically, as our planet evolved, an individual may have been defined solely by the goals or perceptions of value of his/her kin-structure, family, or clan. As culture structures enlarged, he or she may have been born into a village or tribal system (Ex: Uruba, Igbo, Diné, Lakota, Celtic, or Saxon). As culture systems enlarged further, regional identifiers would give way to identification by nation (Ex: French, American, Iranian, Japanese), linguistic groupings (Ex: German-speaking, Russian-speaking, Creole-speaking), continent (Ex: in the "West," Asian, African), or even the creation of systems of human racial designations which bequeathed to us the lasting image of "difference" by virtue of appearance. How human beings have defined themselves is, therefore, a combination of historical reference and the creation of terms and concepts used by our collective ancestries (often based upon very primitive or even fear-based initiatives) to describe "otherness."

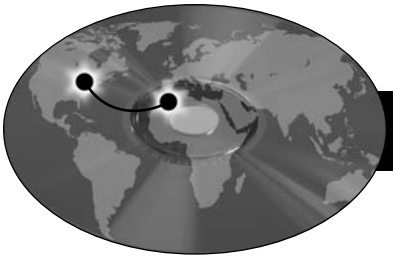
We have all been brought up with centuries of terms and categories to define ourselves and others as different: "them" and "us." Most often, these terms do not resemble who *they* are or, for that matter, who we are. For instance, we now know that, regardless of the political or strategic circumstances under which culture groups or systems meet, even in war or under hierarchically suppressive or divided human socio-systems, each culture system will exchange language, material, and creative expressions with the other. Frequently, without conscious awareness, the *creativity* of our human nature will insure the mutual and unilateral exchange of ideas and expressions across even the most substantial "human-made" borders or barriers. What is difficult to understand, however, is that the culture's awareness of the exchange of expressions and traits may pass for centuries unnoticed. Generations of *culture-bearers*[1.4] may be educated to believe (as we will see in subsequent units) one thing about their identity or the origin of their culture's values and expressions, when another *reality* may be simultaneously more relevant yet beyond their scope of perception.

Musical Universals

When we say "appreciation" of the music of other cultures, we mean to imply "respecting" the music to the best of our abilities, as the culture desires us to respect it, on their terms—not ours. Whatever our individual tastes and trained perspectives of "us" and "them" (or "our music" and "their music") may be, a just, fair, or balanced perspective will call for us to keep the following in the forefront of our minds:

Pic. 1.1B *Oguz (playing the dulcimer – left) and Mario (playing the Dombek – right) reflect the complete mixture of our world – of Czech, German, Italian, Greek, and Romani descent – playing instruments and music of even further fusion, might give us a glimpse into the sort of "flexible minds" and perceptions youth will need as our planet continues to evolve.* Photo: Authors.

- All music genres (styles of music) are ethnic. Whether the music of the Ba-Benzele (Central African Republic) or that of Beethoven (Austria/Germany), all music is the result of cultural values and ethnicity. Therefore, all music is equally "ethnic" or "folk." Only the relative values, aesthetics (perceptions of what is beautiful), instruments, and means of expression of the "folk" change. To somehow believe that our music, or music of a specific culture, is less ethnic than that of some other culture is a form of cultural arrogance and an impediment to a balanced vision.
- Music, much more than the sounds, the elements, or even the feelings or entertainment value it provides, is a profound representation of the people who create it. Their values, their beliefs, and their "purpose for living," whether we agree with them or not, are imbedded in the musical symbols, if we take time to read them.
- We must also remember that each piece is a sonograph, or sound picture, of only one aspect of the culture at one moment in time. It is very human to hear small samples of music from one time period and assume it to be the whole picture. The challenge is to become comfortable with knowing that, as soon as we have an image or perspective on another culture, it is likely already out-of-date with their new and evolving reality. This is a mindset essential to living in our current century.
- Music is universal, but it is not a universal language!! All cultures have music. And all music has value. However, just as with any language, value is seldom recognized and respected without investigating and attempting to understand how the people who create it feel about it themselves. To accomplish this, we may learn to ask: "What would you wish us to know about yourself?" The humility (willingness to put others in front of ourselves or be teachable) required to ask such a question is the centerpiece of respecting others.
- The variations in the manner in which music is used around the world can be put into a few broad-stroke categories. Although these categories should never be seen as exclusive of each other and are perpetually changing, they can be helpful in developing a more inclusive attitude toward others. Among these categories:



Inside the Musician's World

Orchestra Chabab Al Andalous de Rabat

Note: After hearing Dr. Hartway's piece, one may become more interested in the exciting musical heritage of Moroccan music and its vibrant cultural history. By chance, as is usually the case whenever we desire new knowledge, someone/thing will then come into our lives, as did a Moroccan student, whom we then asked to help us with a class discussion. This we did not only to encourage the student to share but also to enhance our own growth. He brought CDs and videos, and clearly was excited to be involved. We, in turn, were treated to an amazing array of Moroccan musical styles and incredible cultural and musical passion on the student's part.

The next semester we received an email from the student (Soufiane Hjiyej Andaloussi), informing us that he would be visiting his home and asking us if we wanted anything. This project was mentioned, and we asked if he thought anyone would like to be a part of it. He replied: *"I'm certain there are very good musicians who might want to participate."*

What follows is a small sampling of the jewels of Moroccan culture which Soufiane was able to secure, in particular the work of Orchestra Chabab Al Andalouss from Rabat, Morocco, and its director, Mohamed Debby, to whom we are indebted. Both the music and its story represent a graphic display of the natural process of cultural fusion over time.

Mr. Debby writes: *"The Arabo Andalusian music is originally from Al-Andalus, the name given by the Arabic or Muslim inhabitants to the Iberian peninsula (Spain), which was occupied by the dynasty of the Ommeyades for seven centuries. The people of this region developed numerous art and cultural forms while in this province. Most notably, architecture, poetry, and musical forms. Over time, the influence of this music, and such masters as Niryab,*[1,7] *have instilled the singing of* noubas (*vocalized poetry in dialogue with instrumentation),* praise songs (*see Madh in Unit V*), and Sanaå, (*classical Arabic poetry*) *as part of a dialogue between instrumentalists and vocalists. Although performance of the* noubas *is performed differently by each practitioner, the poems of divine love, human love, beauty, and awe of nature and 'God's' world are all designed to be played at precise moments of the day."*

The Orchestra Chabab Al Andalous de Rabat was created in 1987 by *"young music lovers from different horizons"* (M. Debby). Although all of the musicians in the orchestra have their own jobs, Mr. Debby writes, *"The association of Chabab Al Andalouss has an objective of promoting this worldwide heritage— to the world. That's really a big part of what we do."*

When asked to participate in this project by Soufiane, Mr. Debby replied, *"I am more than happy for what you are doing. It is a pleasure for us to share our modest knowledge. Personally, I am a banker, and the orchestra is, for each of us, a part-time occupation. We are a group of semi-professional amateurs… all of us are still learning as we practice. But our principle notion is to foster a rebirth of this phenomenal heritage, perhaps to evolve to the level of creativity that existed at the time of its creation. We get a lot of encouragement from family and friends.*

"Using today's technology, we are developing and recording it step by step. This way, more youth of today will have the chance to listen to the music, and perhaps learn the poems."

What we will hear is a musical style that is a fusion of influences incorporating the music of the Arab world (see Unit V), most importantly that of Islamic poetry; numerous influences from the Jewish and Gypsy communities (see Unit VII); the eventual fusion over time of all cultural influences both in Morocco and Spain; and, finally, the incorporation of musical instruments and technology from Western Europe.

"Musique Arabo," from the CD: **Andalusian Music of Morocco,** performed by the Orchestre Chabab Al Andalous. c. 2004, Rabat, Morocco.

> Mohamed Debby writes: *"The Andalusian music is close to the western 'indoor' (classical) music. It does not have a four-beat meter like most popular Arabic music today. One basic rule to create a good sound is to have a proportional distribution between the instruments. For example, you must have four violins for every ud (oud). Another rule is to give a good (fair) representation of all the instruments."*

Pic. 1.5-1 *The "rebec" evolved from the "rababah" to become the violin*. Painting: Gerard David, 1509.

This recording is a condensed version of the entire work, which runs 15 minutes. One may at first be surprised by the appearance of the piano, which plays a combination of *phrygian* and *harmonic minor* **scales** (menus of pitches or tones that exist in Western music) that are most similar to a couple of ***magamat*** (Arabic scales). The piano section is followed by a section played by the violin (the descendant of the ***r'bab, rababa(h), rebaba,*** still used by some Moroccan or Arabic orchestras).

The quality of meditation and trance, spoken of earlier, are imbued in the music, which, as it progresses, evolves to "praise" poetry and eventually to the inclusion of the full orchestra and chorus. Although we will address musical styles from this region in later units (Units V, X), the style of melodic singing is greatly influenced by the style used in the chanting of the Quran (Koran).

Mr. Debby indicated how important the unity and collective harmony of the musicians are in performing the music you will hear. Balance is also essential in the blending of the instruments.

Mr. Debby writes, *"Basically, the minimum group we can have is four violins, one ud (oud), one cello, one darbouga, one tar (a large-frame tambourine-like instrument), and two to four singers. To create really good music, we also like to have the rebab, a kanoun (qanun – a zither instrument with strings laid out flat, plucked by a large pick, or plectrum), and an alto or double bass."*

If we were to make a *sonograph* (sound picture or graph of the musical instruments) over a time line, it might look as follows:

Piano solo – free rhythm	Violin solo – free rhythm	Full orchestra with poetic chant & chorus
:40 sec	2:14	2:00