MUSI 1310 Live Concert Reviews

Requirements for Concert Review

Structure of the Review

One review of a live concert is required for this course. You will attend any concert that pertains to the material in the textbook; be sure to submit your review as soon as possible after attending the concert so that the experience is still fresh in your memory. **The concert MUST be attended DURING the semester you're enrolled in this course.** And, you MUST have a program (or ticket stub) from the concert you attend – attach an image of your receipt, stub, or program with your name written on it the submission drop box for your concert review. If there are no programs or receipts, be creative. An autograph from a musician, a note from your mom, an image of the menu, or an image of your credit card receipt for food bought showing the venue name and date are all fine. Adding a link to the webpage advertising the event and date is also important; your professor prefers not to search for evidence of the concert date and time for unverified reviews and if not found then you'll receive a 0. Scan and attach your evidence to the concert review assignment submission drop-box along with your review.

Format, file type Each review must be neatly typed; have one-inch margins at most; be free of spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors; and be one & ½ spaced or double-spaced with a preferred font of 11-point Times New Roman or other favorite (maximum of twelve-point font). Write at least two full pages. Organize your review by introduction, topic sentences, paragraphs, and conclude with a brief summary of your overall impressions about this live music experience. Submit it to the concert review assignment dropbox on the classroom website.

Place your single-spaced name "MUSI 1310" in the upper corner. This is not included in the two full page requirement. Also anything greater than one inch margins cannot be used to satisfy the two page requirement.

Submit your review as a Microsoft Word file. Don't submit .pages files or .odt files; if you do, you will have a 0 until you resubmit the assignment.

A rubric governs the grading process Go to the Concert Review submission link to find the rubric telling exactly what I look for in your paper and how many points I give over several categories. Read that rubric.
One of the most important things you can do to guide your review is check the grading rubric in the assignment submission dropbox for the exact aspects I look for in your concert review.

AVOID: **a)** collaboration- avoid collaborating with fellow students who attended that concert on the content of your report. All papers that are too similar receive 0's;
b) plagiarism- do not copy another review or any other source including the text; it may be helpful to consult the textbook regarding a style period or composer but cite your source
c) do not miss any part of the performance – attend from the beginning to the end and avoid sleeping through the middle of the performance.

Grading will be based on both content and construction so carefully proofread your papers. Read them aloud – your ear can catch mistakes that the eye does not. Having a trusted friend check your paper may also help. Late reviews will not be graded unless granted permission. All papers are checked for originality (plagiarism).

Content of the Review

Concentrate on your own experience of the concert; use the music vocabulary you've learned from the class and textbook. To help with specific aspects of the music and your experience you may include LIMITED information from other sources. It is not necessary for a concert review to use library sources unless you need more information about a work or genre. Use the citation method of your choice as long as it's neat and consistent.

For each concert prepare a personal **critique/review** of your experience. Approach your review like a book or CD review. Read book, concert or CD reviews – for example, the New York Times or writer of your choice, to get a sense of the writing format/style.

Suggestions "Think on paper" while you listen—write your "stream of consciousness" impressions or moods of the music; however, refrain from *extensive* note taking as it may distract others. Remember, you can't do it wrong. Just review the event in the most musically sophisticated manner that your personal musical experience and your grasp of the musical elements permits.

The best reviews will focus specifically on;

- *Your impression(s) of the music—describe mood(s), effect(s), or impression(s) that you heard.*
- *What musical elements were used to create your impression(s) of the music?*
- *Tell specifically how those musical element(s) served the composition, that is, how did the composer use the musical element(s) to create the effect/impression/mood?*
- *Relate what you hear to the Themes and to the Streams of music you've learned about.*
- *Write with good grammar, structure, punctuation, and style.*

Share information about concerts appropriate for your concert reports with fellow students. The Sunday edition of the Houston Chronicle's "Zest" section lists concert information for the next week. Graduate or faculty recitals at the local universities or colleges qualify and are free. See the list of suggestions on the class's web page.

Suggestions continued:
Once home from the concert, consider also these helpful suggestions for getting started on your review:

You could begin by very ***briefly*** (not more than one very, very short paragraph) describing the event (type of music, type of ensemble, date, time, location, purpose, etc.)

Detailed discussion of at least one piece (if short pieces, discuss at least three):

- Briefly, the title and composer: who, what, when, where, why, how?--the essential information. The performers.

Your reaction to the piece. Consider the musical and cultural factors contributing to your reaction

- Unusual sounds in the piece
- Specific musical features. Musical elements observed using terms and ideas from class

  Here are some considerations while describing *your* impressions of the music and performance:
  - *What about the experience was new/different for you?*
  - *What did you find pleasing and/or displeasing about this live music experience?*
  - *Which selection did you enjoy the most? Explain what it was about the music that intrigued you.*
  - *Which selection did you enjoy the least? Explain.*
  - *What was your opinion about the performer(s) presentation of the music?*
  - *What demands/challenges do you think the music presents to the performers?*

Observations on the cultural context:

- Genre/Style of each piece
- What historical eras are represented in the selections?
- Biographical, sociological, and cultural factors influencing the composition you heard?
- Suggest how cultural context affects the use of musical elements in these works.

Conclude briefly with your overall impressions of this live music experience.

- How did the live performance aspect affect your perspective on the music, especially if most of your musical experiences are from recordings, internet, TV, etc.?
  What were the benefits of attending a live performance?

Concert Etiquette for formal events

These suggestions don't usually apply to less formal events. But here are some guidelines for venues featuring formal events:

Attire – some events may be a dressier affair than others.

Seating – in case of art music, arrive early; but, if you are late, enter only *after* the entire piece is over. Also, do not leave during a performance.

Noise – whispering, shuffling, coughing – sometimes even writing with a pencil will distract from the sounds on stage.

Applaud – in case of art music, applaud only after the entire work is over, not between movements or parts,
when in doubt, *wait*.

Children – leave them home with a caregiver if they are not able to refrain from making noise.