

Guidelines for Writing a Concert Review

Read the sample Reviews on the next page.

Each review is worth 9 points.

Review Checklist: You get 1 point for doing the review and 1 point for each of these items:

- ___ 1. Who, where, when? (see #2 below)
 - ___ 2. Names of performers and instruments (see #3 below)
 - ___ 3. Names of all songs (see #6 below)
 - ___ 4. Identification of soloists on each song (see #6 below)
 - ___ 5. Descriptions of each song
 - ___ 6. Your reactions to each song (2 points)
 - ___ 7. Your overall reaction to the performance (see #5 below)
 - ___ 8. Required Format (see #1 below)
1. You will receive by email and on Sakai links to 25 different jazz concerts on YouTube. Choose three (3) of them to review. Turn in the reviews on Sakai by the dates given in the Class Synopsis.
 2. Each review should be about 6 to 12 pages in length, double-spaced, with 12-point regular type such as Times or Helvetica. Make sure that your name is at the top left, and identify the paper as your Review #1, Review #2, or Review #3. Submit the review on Sakai. Write it using any standard word-processor, such as Word or Pages. Name the file like this: **REV1.LastName.docx**, for example, **REV3.Dwyer.pages**.
 2. Write a brief **Introductory Paragraph** at the beginning of the review, giving the name of the group, the names of its members and their instruments (see #3, below), and (if known) the city, venue, and date of the performance. Tell the date and time when you viewed the performance. **The remainder of the review should be primarily about the musical performance, not about the venue, the atmosphere, etc.**
 3. If the group is small (7 or fewer musicians), give the names and instruments of each musician. If the group is large (8 or more musicians), identify the number of the instruments (for example, 5 saxophones, 4 trombones, 5 trumpets, piano, string bass, drums, guitar, and female vocalist) and give the names and instruments of the soloists on those songs during which they solo. If you cannot find out the names of the performers, identify them by their instruments, for example, "the trombone player."
 4. Give the **name of each song** you heard performed (see #6 and #8 below), and write **at least two sentences** identifying its style, sound, and significant soloists. Write **at least two more sentences** giving your reaction to that song. You may write more about each song if you wish, but the overall length of your review should be about 6 to 12 pages.
 5. At the end of the review, write a **summary paragraph** giving your personal reaction (and your reasons why) to the overall musical performance, and giving your personal reactions to individual songs which especially stand out, particularly if your reaction to those songs differs from your overall reaction.
 6. Sometimes the names, instruments, and song titles are given. You may find relevant information in the **SHOW MORE** or **Comments** sections below a YouTube video. **If you are unable to get any names**, identify soloists by instruments ("the trumpet player") and songs by their order, tempo, and style ("The third selection was a medium tempo blues"). In any case, focus on the sound of the music you hear.
 7. The 25 possible YouTube choices for reviews have times ranging from 52 minutes to 135 minutes. Any one of them, whether shorter or longer, is acceptable for a review. However, in each case review the entire video.
 8. The Honor Code rules are in effect for concert reviews. Do **NOT** copy, discuss, or collaborate on your descriptions of the performance or your comments about the sound of the music. If you and a friend collaborate on a review, or copy material from someone who took the class during a previous semester, then you will have an Honor Code violation. The error is obvious to Professor Dwyer when he reads the reviews, and results in **complete loss of credit on the entire reviews for you and your friend, an additional five point penalty, and submission of an Honor Code violation report, which can result in dismissal from the University.**

Sam

Excerpt f

Errors in this review include: (1) incorrect name of the group, the name of the musician, (3) lack of any discussion of the music itself, and flattering the professor to make up for

The group played in a small club, impr on the walls for atmospher and little lites on seems nice for some jazz. Settled in with so

The group is pretty good but u didn't t Moody Jazz or something. One of them ha flare and I heard several tunes and the gro looked like young busines exec types with

...I heard a bunch of songs, but had because I got to listen to this incerdable r group so good. Before taking this class, fayvrite thing.

Excerpt from

There are introductory and summary paragraphs. Each song is named; each song is

On Saturday night, October 12, 2007, in Manhattan. Members included James Moody and Jeff Hamilton on drums. They played names of several of the songs, but w which I viewed on August 21.

The opening song was *Scrapple from the Apple*. Moody set off on a series of amazing ideas, his musical ideas melodically. Toward the end, more toward his tenor saxophone.

Fly Me to the Moon was next. Mike Longo did an inventive job with the punctuation. After Christian McBride's fast-paced improvisation before the use of the "friendly" sound.

The third song was Dizzy Gillespie's *Hamilton*, leading into the latin

...Overall, the James Moody set was which at times was hard to follow as pretty ballads. This balance see the interaction between the provided appropriate support, time and have downloaded th

It is not necessary to name the songs or even an entire paragraph of reactions and praise or reason(s) for your per

Sample Concert Reviews

Excerpt from a "Poor" Concert Review

Errors in this review include: (1) incorrect spelling and grammar, (2) failure to identify the date, the place, the name of the group, the name of the musicians, the instruments which they play, and the names of the songs, (3) lack of any discussion of the music itself, (4) not viewing the entire performance, and (5) pretending to like jazz and flattering the professor to make up for the lack of a real review.

The group played in a small club. impressed with the decrations and the cool waitresses. club has dark wood panels on the walls for atrosphear and little lites on the tables but still kept the club atrosphear pretty dark which certainly seems nice for some jazz. Settled in with some cold beverges while starting to listen to the music.

The group is pretty good but u didn't really know the names of the songs they played somebody said they called the Moody Jazz or something. One of them had pretty long hair and beard but they all wear suits and ties and dress with flare and I heard several tunes and the group was okay if u liked jazz, which I don't. most of the people at the place looked like young busines exec types with their wives or grilfriends...

...I heard a bunch of songs, but had to stop because of a study class. In fact perfessor this is really a great class because I got to listen to this incerdable music which I now love, and certainly watch the whole video the next time, the group so good. Before taking this class, I never listen to jazz, but because u such a grate teecher, jazz is my trueley fayvrite thing.

Excerpt from a "Good" Review of the SAME Concert

There are introductory and summary paragraphs. The time and place are identified; the personnel, instruments, and soloists are named; each song is described and discussed; and the review ends with the writer's personal reaction.

On Saturday night, October 12, 2011 the James Moody Quartet played at the Champions Club in midtown Manhattan. Members included James Moody on tenor sax and flute, Mike Longo on piano, Christian McBride on bass, and Jeff Hamilton on drums. They played ten songs, ranging from swing standards to bebop tunes. I didn't know the names of several of the songs, but was able to find out most of the titles by checking the comments below the video, which I viewed on August 21.

The opening song was *Scapple from the Apple*, by Charlie Parker. After playing the intricate melody on tenor sax, Moody set off on a series of amazing variations. Most of the time he seemed to stay in the middle register, developing his musical ideas melodically. Toward the end, however, the energy level increased as the improvisations seemed to go more toward his tenor saxophone's high register. I couldn't follow the tune, but liked the energy the group displayed.

Fly Me to the Moon was next, and was a nice change of pace. Moody played the Sinatra-style tune on flute, and then let Mike Longo do an inventive but relaxed piano solo. McBride and Hamilton provided thoughtful support and punctuation. After Christian McBride's brief bass solo, Moody came back in on flute and played a few choruses of rather fast-paced improvisation before restating the pleasant tune. This song was easy for me to follow, and I particularly liked the use of the "friendly" sounding flute.

The third song was Dizzy Gillespie's *A Night in Tunisia*, which began with a furious solo by drummer Jeff Hamilton, leading into the latin rhythms which set up the melody...

...Overall, the James Moody Quartet was a very enjoyable group to hear. Their fast songs had a lot of improvisation, which at times was hard to follow, but in between those songs they included familiar tunes by Sinatra and others, as well as pretty ballads. This balance in their program kept the music stimulating but not overbearing. It was particularly fun to see the interaction between the members of the group. As each of them took a solo, the others listened carefully and provided appropriate support, sometimes loud and energetic, but at other times very quiet and sensitive. I had a great time and have downloaded their CD.

It is not necessary that you "like" everything. In fact, you might experience some individual songs or even an entire performance which you do not like at all. Feel free to give your true reactions and praise or criticize the music honestly! What IS important is that you give the reason(s) for your personal reactions.