

Course name: *Listening to Jazz and More*

Sharpen your listening skills by studying – all styles of music, standards and jazz repertoire, master artists and their performances, how to ‘hear’ progressions and recognize them and their variants quickly.

Instructor: [Mike Tracy](#)

Type of Class:

- Live Zoom meetings with comments and discussion.
- All classes will be recorded and archived for those who could not participate live and for those wishing to review.

Target audience:

- Open to all musicians. Any instrument. Any skill level (except absolute instrument beginner). Students should be able to read music and have basic command of the instrument.
- Limited to 15 to 20 participants per level/class.

Level:

- Intermediate to Advanced and Experienced musicians – Thursday, 8:00PM EST
- Students beginning to study jazz would also benefit from this course.

Course length and frequency:

- Each class will meet weekly for 8 weeks
- Session length will be between 60 and 70 minutes depending on activity and discussion.
- All classes will be live and those live sessions will be recorded:
 - Recordings will remain available for one month for those who cannot attend the live sessions and for review by all.

Course description:

Listening to Jazz and More course will help you sharpen your listening skills by focusing on familiar and new recordings, iconic and recent performances, melodic lines and progressions. The course will help you to:

- Hear and describe melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and stylistic elements.
- Appreciate compositional and performance elements.
- Compare and contrast the subtle differences between various recordings and performances.
- Understand and appreciate roles played by the rhythm section and instrumentalists.
 - What they hear and listen for.
 - What they need from others in a performance.
- What the individual hears when listening to a performance. How to follow a performance, a soloist.
- Enhance your aural skills, helping you recognize altered harmony, for example: differences between 7+9 and 7b9 and other options.
- Be able to have a more expansive approach to listening.
- Be able to realistically assess a composition, a performance.
- Be able to use play-along and backing track more effectively.

Class:

- The class will focus on listening to selected recordings each week.
- Instructor will demonstrate during the first session various areas and elements contained in highlighted recordings that will act as a guide for what and how to listen.
- Instructor will select five recordings for study.
 - YouTube links will be provided to the class for the five tunes.
 - The class will review and comment in class.

- Participants will be asked to select three recordings, being able to describe why they selected each and how these recordings fit within class guidelines.
- When possible, participants will provide the music (lead sheet) and/or transcribed solo. We will share screen so that they will be able to use the written material during discussion.
- In class we will:
 - Discuss what the presenter hears.
 - Consider, compare and contrast what others hear.
 - The class will discuss ways to approach practicing and performance the selected
 - the various way to find, substitute and apply altered dominants and other harmonic considerations.
 - In class we will discuss performance practice and related techniques.
 - Each week, the instructor will select an iconic progression for study.
 - Unique chord sequences.
 - Chord/scale associations.
 - Relationships between similar progressions.
 - Play-along/backing tracks will be used as examples.
- Class is limited to 15 to 20 so that as many as possible can play for each other each session for comments – mine and from other students.
- You can use recording that are available on YouTube or ones you already have. I can help you find ones on YouTube if needed.
- I will be providing PDFs with practice material and suggestions. I will also offer recorded examples that are available on YouTube.
- I will be giving you ‘quizzes’ from time to time to challenge your skills. Trust me, the quizzes will not hurt but be quite helpful

Ideally you will attend class or view the recordings every week so that you can progress consistently. I understand that you might not be able to make each class or that you were not part of the 20 to sign up in time. That’s OK, I will record and each class will be available – and I encourage you to send your recorded material for comments.

No guarantee but it has been my experience that you will grow musically and as an improviser and jazz musician. You can anticipate:

- Expand your listening skills.
- Gain a greater appreciation of compositional and performance practice.
- Be able to describe melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and stylistic elements.
- Be able to more effectively use play-along/backing tracks. How not to get lost.
- How to successfully learn and apply more complex harmony in a tune.
- How to improvise in a jazz-like manner appropriate to the tune and style.
- How to memorize efficiently.