Instructor: Mariko Takano  
Office: 105  
Office hour by appointment.

Course Website:

Course Description: This course introduces students to the various popular music in modern Japan. Through listening to different forms and genres of music together and reading articles, students will learn cultural history around music, such as social contexts, genre, music production and reception. We will also interrogate categories and questions that often comes up in discussing modern culture, such as modernity, tradition, “Japaneseness,” authenticity, and nostalgia.

Course Objectives:
• Students will be exposed to various music that may or may not be familiar. Students will be encouraged to think about affects in popular music.  
• Students will develop skills in critical reading of academic writings on cultural history.  
• Students will gain insights into the historical, cultural, and social contexts behind popular music.

Requirement

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Class Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>2. Weekly Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>3. Presentations</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>4. Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Final Exam: Date TBA.

Accommodation for students with disabilities:
Any students requesting academic accommodations is requested to speak with me before the 2nd week of the semester.

Required Book
• Michael Bourdaghs, Sayonara Amerika Sayonara Nippon (2011)
Schedule (tentative, might change)

*Please read the assigned readings before coming to the classroom.

Week 1: Introduction

Sep.

“Introduction” from Michael Bourdaghs, Sayonara Amerika Sayonara Nippon(2011)

Week 2: Meiji modernization and advent of record

Sep.

Reading: Gerald Groemer, “Popular Music before Meiji period” from The Ashgate Research Companion to Japanese Music (2008)

Sep.


Week 3: Modernism and encounter with jazz

Sep.

Reading: ET Atkins, “The Soundtrack of Modern Life, Japan’s Jazz Revolution” from Blue Nippon (2001)

Sep.


Week 4: War, music and its aftermath

Oct.

Chikako Nagayama, “The Continental Melody’ – Soldiers and Japan’s Imperial Screen” from Film Music in “Minor” National cinemas (2016)

**Week 5: Early post-war film and music**

Oct.
“The Music will set you Free” from *Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon*

Oct.
Film: *Carmen comes Home* (1951) or *Drunken Angel* (1948)

**Week 6: Early reception of rock**

Oct.


Oct.

Reading: Bourdaghs, “Mystery Plane: Sakamoto Kyu and the Translations of Rockabilly” from *Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon*

**Week 7: Enka and discover Japan**

Oct.
Reading: Yusuke Wajima, “The Birth of Enka” from *Made in Japan: Studies in Popular Music*

Oct.


**Week 8: On language and music**

Nov.
Reading: Bourdaghs “New Music and the Negation of the Negation” from *Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon*

Nov.

Reading: “New Music and the Negation of the Negation” from *Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon Yuming Part 2*
Week 9: Synthesizer in Japan/Neo-ethno music
Nov.
Bourdagh “New Music and the Negation of the Negation” from Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon Yuming Part 3

Nov.
Film: Akira

Week 10: Music and sense of space
Nov.

Nov. TBA

Week 11: What is J-pop anyways?
Nov.

Nov.
Readings: TBA

Week 12: Hiphop and black culture in Japan
Dec.
Reading: Chapter 0 of Dissertation by Dexter Thomas (2020)

Dec.

Week 13: Shibuya-kei, City-pop and era of global digging
Dec.
Reading: Paul Ballam-Cross, “Reconstructed Nostalgia Aesthetic Commonalities and Self-Soothing in Chillwave, Synthwave, and Vaporwave” (2021)

Week 14: Field work and listening session week
Dec.
Final Exam TBA