

## Roundtable #2: Reconnaissance – W Mar 27 / F Mar 22

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### Overview

A loosely-structured seminar discussion is the typical format of upper-level undergraduate courses as well as all graduate work (masters and doctoral level). The point of a seminar discussion is precisely that: to discuss. In the process of discussing, you are forced to clarify what you think by articulating your ideas in a clear and persuasive manner, and at the same time you learn from the wide array of perspectives and experiences that your peers bring into the conversation. The discussion may organically move to unexpected topics, but the main takeaway from a learning experience like this one is that all of your knowledge and resources are related—there is no such thing as a separation of academic subjects when you really approach a topic critically. Your familiarity with the assigned material, your own initiative in doing additional research, and your engagement with each other is what will make for an effective and enjoyable class.

### The assignment

For this assignment, you will research a living classical musician and a New York City-based classical music organization. Each student will learn about a different musician and a different organization and prepare a Reflective Writing *before* the Roundtable discussion. During the in-class discussion, a group of students will be randomly chosen to discuss their individual musicians, and the remaining students will listen and take notes. After approximately 30 minutes, the remaining students will discuss their organizations, and the first group will listen and take notes.

How to prepare for an effective Roundtable and Reflection #4:

1. Research your musician and your organization.
  - a. Read their materials online: website, Twitter, Facebook, and anything that comes up via Google or another search engine
  - b. Listen to the musician's work (e.g., YouTube, Instagram, website). What kind of music do they make? Who do you think it appeals to?
  - c. Visit the organization (if possible). Is it easy to get to? Is it inaccessible for certain groups of people?
  - d. Put your previous Reflective Writing experiences to the test: What is the soundscape like at the location, whether on the street or inside the building? What do you notice about their aesthetics, in terms of their music, their visual presentation, and/or the physical location where their work takes place? Why do you think they chose this aesthetic?
2. Refer to notes you've taken in class over the course of the semester, past lecture slides, and previous Online Discussions to make sure you're correctly understanding as many concepts as possible. Read additional sources as necessary to ensure that you know what you're talking about with this topic.
3. Prepare thoughts, questions, and ideas that you have about both your individual musician and your organization—you won't know which discussion you'll be participating in until you arrive in class. Draw upon your other educational experiences, life experiences, or

other expertise. Make use of the various brainstorming methods you've come across in your other classes.

Be ready to have a rich, engaging, and involved discussion with each other as an entire class. Ask each other questions. Offer comments. Respond to each other. I will not participate in this discussion.

### Grading

This assignment is graded on a scale of Credit/No credit. Any student who is present for the discussion but who receives a grade of "No credit" has the opportunity to write a thoughtful response in order to change their grade to "Credit." Any student who is not present for this assignment will receive a grade of 0. The process letter accompanying any written rewrite should describe what you think you missed by not being able to participate in the discussion as it took place.

Good discussion and conversation come from being able to contribute three things to the experience, and each student must contribute at least two (2) high-quality examples of each of the following in order to receive a grade of "Credit" on this assignment (e.g., if it's not high quality, it doesn't count towards your grade):

- **Contributing your own ideas** (not just restating or summarizing what's said in the article) – You have to have something *interesting* to say, and it should be based on verifiable, factual evidence or reasonable assumptions. A good contribution goes beyond repeating what someone else has said or summarizing the article.
- **Responding to someone else's idea** – You have to listen to and think about what others say. A good response thoughtful, accurate, and engages with another student's idea in a meaningful way; it's not a repetition of something that's already been said, a summary of the article, or inaccurate, and it doesn't ignore what has previously been said.
- **Asking a question** – You seek to learn from the experience. The best questions are "open-ended," meaning they can be answered in many ways, rather than framed as "yes/no" questions.
  - Example of a "yes/no" question: "Do you guys think that..." or "Has anyone ever..."
  - Example of an "open-ended question: "What happens if..." or "Why do you think that..." or "How does that work?"