Section 40 of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* is entitled “On Taste as a Kind of *Sensus Communis*." It consists of an analysis of the capacity of judgment “shared by us all,” which has been understood by 20th century commentators as a model of both aesthetic judgment and political judgment. It is a form of judgment that promises to lead us beyond prejudice by ensuring that we reflectively take account of the point of view of others. Yet which points of view? Which others? This course will investigate the passage in detail, first setting it in its context in Kant’s work and then studying the challenges it poses to contemporary democratic theory. We will work on interpretations and responses by Arendt, Lyotard, Nancy, Derrida, Rancière and DeDuve.

*Philosophy of Jazz*
Harvey Cormier
Thursdays, 6 – 9 PM

Jazz is sometimes described as the only art form that originated in the United States. What is this art form? What does it do for its listeners, and how does it do it?

Music generally is sometimes described as a language, but what, if anything, do music in general and jazz in particular have to say? If jazz is a language, does that mean that it works by "representing" anything? What and how?

If jazz and music generally are not representational, then how do they function as art works? Much "modernist" painting and sculpture was described as non-representational. Do jazz and music in general work in the way those other non-representational art works do, perhaps by invoking emotions? Can jazz be identified by the particular kinds of emotions it creates? (Is that what "swinging" is about?)

In the recent period of art history dominated by "modernist" art, critics and artists spoke of the difference between high, serious art and low, popular, or commercial art. Jazz seems to function like comic books, movies, and television as part of popular culture. But does it really make sense to divide the art world up this way? And if it does, on which side of the line does jazz go? Is there a difference between "modern" and "traditional" jazz in this regard?

If jazz is popular art, it has always been a comparatively unpopular one. Is this because jazz listening requires training and historical knowledge? Do we have to know things about the intentions, feelings, and social and cultural circumstances of the creators of jazz to appreciate the music they have made?
And, finally, among those social and cultural circumstances there is, of course, race. Jazz is considered not only American music but black American music. Why? Is this important? Has any of the best jazz been made by people other than African Americans? Has black American culture moved on and left jazz behind, or is there a persisting connection between jazz and contemporary black musical culture?

We will listen to a lot of jazz and consider these and other questions about jazz and art.

*The Phenomenology of Color*
Megan Craig
Wednesdays, 4:15 – 7:15 PM

Primary colors are often thought to be basic and elementary. What do the names given to specific colors really mean and where have they come from? What are the relationships between color experience and language? Are colors themselves primary or secondary qualities? Do colors exist only in perception? What is their ontological status? Can color be quantified or explained by theories of light, vision, or another paradigm? This course explores issues relating to color theory, color perception, the material, political and psychological history of color, color naming, synesthesia, color-blindness, and the far-reaching ethical implications of color experience. We will read major texts in the history of philosophy with a special focus on phenomenological discussions of color in Goethe, Merleau-Ponty, Bergson, Wittgenstein, Josef Albers, Kirsteva, and Deleuze. This is a writing intensive seminar.