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Modern Jazz Quartet

Front Cover:
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All
about

Jazz

Jazz music began

about 100 years ago in the southern part of the United States. It started in New Orleans, Louisiana, where people from many different cultures traveled,

and settled. Each culture brought its own musical traditions, and in New Orleans, they all came together.

mixed African American musicians in New Orleans created jazz by combining African rhythms and harmonies with elements of blues music, European orchestral and band music, popular songs, and African American spirituals and work songs. The hybrid culture of New Orleans was essential to the development of jazz. European musical structures were combined with an African approach to performance, which included more flexible rhythm and the use of the blues scale.

The first jazz was dance music. It was not written down but was passed on by ear because the musicians often did not read music. Today, jazz remains an oral tradition, comparable to storytelling. Most jazz musicians start with a basic tune or melody and then change and recreate it as they go along.

This is called improvisation, and it makes jazz different from classical and popular music. In many ways, **jazz is a musical language.**

Through improvisation, musicians talk to each other while playing music.

Early jazz bands played at dances, festivals and even funerals. Dixieland jazz, as it came to be known, flourished in and around New Orleans during the first part of the 20th century. These bands included a bass section, several brass instruments, banjos, and an occasional piano. Ragtime music, which was written for the piano and developed concurrently with jazz, was very popular throughout the United States, and the two emerging musical genres influenced each other.

Dizzy Gillespie



The Jazz Age

In 1918, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band released a recording, now considered to be the first jazz record. (Although the record player had been invented around 1890, jazz was still emerging as a distinct musical form at that time.) By 1918 most middle class Americans could afford family record players, and the demand for recordings was high. The radical new sound of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band's release created such a sensation that by the mid-1920s, **the young, hip generation called**

their era the "jazz age."

As Dixieland music spread throughout the country to New York, Chicago and Kansas City, the music and its audience began to grow and change. Dance halls sprang up in every city as people clamored to dance to jazz. In order to fill these venues with sound, jazz bands grew from a dozen members to the size of whole orchestras. As the bands got bigger, the dancing grew freer and **the beat picked up and began to swing.**



Bessie Smith



The Original Dixieland Jazz Band



Clockwise from top:
Tommy Dorsey
Duke Ellington
Benny Goodman
Cab Calloway

Swing and

Swing music continued to grow in popularity during the 1930s. While the economic hardships of the Great Depression caused a drop in record sales, radios became household objects and families could listen to new swing music all the time just by tuning in. The 1930s and '40s were the age of Big Band music, and musicians such as singer Cab Calloway, pianist and composer Duke Ellington, trombonist Tommy Dorsey, and clarinetist Benny Goodman were the leading artists of the Big Band era.

B Bo Bop op p



Max Roach

Sonny Rollins

As the popularity of swing began to wane during the mid 1940s, *some players from the big bands began to stand out and play solos that were faster, louder HARDER and*

than anything that had been heard before. They filled their solos with as many notes and as much feeling as they could. Some of these upstarts included saxophonist Charlie Parker, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and drummer Max Roach, among many others.



Dizzy Gillespie's big band



Tommy Potter

Charlie Parker



Thelonius Monk



"Baby" Dodds

A playing style known as bop evolved out of swing and big band music. Bop developed a new format involving smaller ensembles and whole group improvisation. Songs were designed to showcase solos, and everyone in the band took a turn showing off as many notes, chord changes and fast rhythms as possible. These musicians told stories in their music, but they were so fast and hard that they were sometimes difficult to hear.

The Cool School

During the 1950s a new group of musicians decided to slow things down and mellow the sound of jazz. These artists preferred even smaller ensembles of 4 to 6 musicians, and they approached jazz at a slower pace, with a laid back, “cool” feeling.

Known as cool jazz, these compositions were longer in duration than those of previous jazz eras. The long playing record became popular during the 50s, and this coincided nicely with the development of a longer, more straightforward jazz style.

Baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and trumpeter Chet Baker were the major proponents of this mellow style, along with the early work of trumpeter Miles Davis.

Another style of jazz, known as Third Stream, emerged in the early 1960's. Finding inspiration from European classical music for form and structure, Third Stream composers and musicians, such as the Modern Jazz Quartet, explored elements of classical music and jazz and then combined them to create a new music.

Gerry Mulligan



Billie Holliday

Sarah Vaughan



6

Chet Baker

Miles Davis



Free, Funk and fusion

Charles Mingus

Despite the changes in style that had taken place in jazz through the 1950s, many basic elements had remained the same. Harmony and rhythm remained constant in any piece, and although bop players were more concerned with energy than melody, some semblance of a basic tune could still be traced in their performances.

All of this began to change in the late 50s, as an avant garde group of musicians decided to push music outside of conventional harmonic, rhythmic and melodic structures. They were concerned with direct communication through sound alone. Pianist and composer Cecil Taylor and saxophonist Ornette Coleman were important artists in this movement, known as Free Jazz.

Simultaneously, another development took jazz back to its roots, using African American call and response patterns and slow, dirge-like blues and giving them an updated, harder edge. Funk players, such as bassist Charles Mingus and drummer Art Blakey often included a political message in their music.

Finally, by the mid 1960s musicians such as trumpeter Miles Davis began to merge elements from all eras of jazz and other forms of music into a hybrid known as Fusion. In addition to jazz, rock and blues, elements from classical music, Asian and African music began to influence instruments including sitars (an Indian stringed instrument), flutes, organs and synthesizers were added to the standard ensemble mix of brass, saxophone, piano, bass and drums.



Don Cherry

Ornette Coleman

Today, jazz is more diverse than ever. Musicians play variations of dixieland, swing, bop, cool, funk, free and fusion, or they bring elements from several of these eras together in new compositions.

Artists such as trumpeter Wynton Marsalis (who came from a jazz and classical music background) are largely responsible for the revived popularity of jazz in its many forms.

The first jazz bands usually had six members. Today, jazz groups can be made up of many different numbers and combinations of instruments. One person can play jazz equally as well as a big band of 18 players. Most often each group or line-up usually has two parts: the rhythm section, usually a piano, drums and bass; and the front-line.



Wynton Marsalis



Uri Crane



Regina Carter

The rhythm section is like the engine of a jazz ensemble.

The instruments in this group collectively keep time and move the music forward. Front-line instruments have traditionally been the main soloists in a group. Standard front-line instruments have included woodwind and brass instruments, such as the clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, and trombone. However, a variety of instruments, including violin, cello, guitar, flute and other percussion instruments have also found their way into the line-up throughout the evolution of jazz.

Like classical music, jazz has developed many styles over its short history. While new styles have emerged, they have not replaced older ones. All are still played today, and all are equally important to the future of jazz as it continues to evolve.



Stefon Harris

Jazz Terms

Avant garde Describes artists whose works can be characterized as experimental or unorthodox.

Blues scale A five-note scale of African origin. The relationship between the notes gives jazz and blues melodies a sound that is uniquely different from melodies based on the seven-note European scale.

Blues Music which was a product of African American culture during the late 1800s. It often follows a particular form and scale and uses elements of African music such as call and response and instruments imitating the human voice. The blues is present in all styles of jazz.

Blues form A form that usually consists of 12 measures with a particular pattern of chords. The measures are most often divided into three sections of four measures each and use three different chords.

Call-and-response One player or section responds to another player or section.

Chord A combination of three notes played together or one after another.

Harmony The sound created when two or more notes are played or sung simultaneously.

Improvisation To invent music while playing, usually by experimenting with the theme or form of written music.

Melody A series of notes that together form a complete musical statement

Polyrhythm Two or more rhythms played at the same time.

Spirituals African American religious music characterized by a singing style in which the singer starts each line high and lets his or her voice fall to a low-pitched whisper.

Swing A feeling of forward momentum that's essential to all jazz. It's a quality that's hard to describe and which can't be written into the music. It just happens when musicians play well together, with a lot of energy and style. Swing also refers to style of jazz which first appeared in the 30s. It's used for dancing and makes use of big bands playing complex arrangements.



Art Blakey

LIST OF RESOURCES

Recommended Recordings

All listed recordings are available at the San Francisco Public Library.

Louis Armstrong
Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington
Roulette Jazz p. 1990
CD 781.65 ARM

Count Basie
April in Paris
Verve Records p. 1955
CD 781.65 BAS

Sidney Bechet
The Best of Sidney Bechet
Blue Note p. 1994
CD 781.65 BEC

John Coltrane
Live at the Village Vanguard
MCA Impulse p. 1962
CD 781.65 COL

John Coltrane
My Favorite Things
Atlantic p. 1961
CD 781.65 COL

Miles Davis
Kind of Blue
Columbia p. 1984
CD 781.65 DAV

Miles Davis
'Round About Midnight
Columbia p. 1987
CD 781.65 DAV

Roy Eldridge
Little Jazz
Columbia p. 1989
CD 781.65 ELD

Duke Ellington
The Blanton-Webster Band
Bluebird p. 1986
CD 781.65 ELL

Ella Fitzgerald
Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song
Verve p. 1993
CD 781.65 FIT

Coleman Hawkins
Body and Soul
Topaz Jazz p.1995
CD 781.65 HAW

Joe Henderson
The Best of Joe Henderson
Blue Note p. 1991
CD 781.65 HEN

Billie Holiday
Love Songs
Columbia/Legacy p. 1996
CD 781.65 HOL

Marian McPartland
Marian McPartland Plays Benny Carter
Concord Jazz p. 1990
CD 781.65 MCP

Modern Jazz Quartet
Dedicated to Connie
Atlantic Jazz p. 1995
CD 781.65 MOD

Jelly Roll Morton
The Pearls
Bluebird p. 1998
CD 781.65 MOR

Original Mambo Kings
An Afro Cubop Anthology
Verve p. 1993
CD 781.657 ORI

Oscar Peterson Trio
Night Train
Verve p. 1963
CD 781.65 PET

Bessie Smith
The Collection
Columbia Jazz Masterworks p. 1989
CD 781.65 SMI

Art Tatum
I Got Rhythm
GRP p 1993
CD 781.65 TAT

McCoy Tyner
The Real McCoy
Blue Note p. 1987
CD 781.65 TYN

Fats Waller
Turn on the Heat
Bluebird p 1991
CD 781.65 WAL

Books

All listed books are available at the San Francisco Public Library.

The World of Swing by Stanley Dance.
Call number: 781.51 D195w.

The World of Duke Ellington by Stanley Dance. Call number: 781.51 EL56d.

What Jazz is All About by Lillian Erlich. Call number: j785.4 Er:2.

Bass Line by Milt Hinton. Call number: 780.2 H597a

The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz edited by Barry Kernfeld. Call number: 781.51 N42.

The Eye of Jazz by Leonard Herman. Call number: 779 L552e.

The Story of Jazz by Marshall W. Stearns
Call number: 781.51 St31.

The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes edited by Arnold Rampersad. Call number: 811.52 H874c

pp.35, 44, 50, 59, 60, 65, 68, 70, 72, 76, 77, 90, 91, 94, 126 contain blues and jazz-inspired poems.

Sonny Rollins

