

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a saxophone and the bell of a trumpet. The instruments are illuminated with warm, golden light, creating a dramatic and artistic composition. The saxophone's keys and body are visible on the left, while the trumpet's bell curves into the frame from the bottom right. The background is dark, making the metallic surfaces stand out.

David Megill

Fourteenth Edition

Jazz

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jazz

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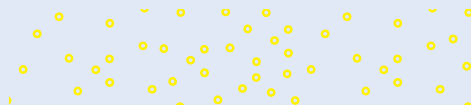


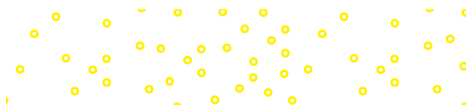
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JAZZ

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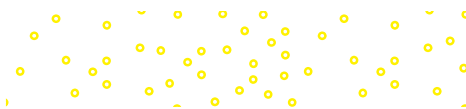
ISBN 978-1-266-23095-0

MHID 1-266-23095-5

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preface

We designed this new edition of *Jazz* to offer students a listening-based approach to the evolutionary development of America's unique art form. We have increased the number of musical selections to offer a more comprehensive overview of important musical performances that anchor our historical overview. This edition is also meant to support instructors in their individual approaches to the jazz experience. Comprehensive citations to additional listening are given throughout the text. Online via Connect provides numerous enrichment activities to accompany the readings in addition to Spotify links to stylistic musical examples. Jazz is a history of individuals connected to their culture through their musical art. Jazz is a wonderful reflector of the cultural crosscurrents at work in America. When we study jazz, we also study our own cultural development. As we unfold the rich history of jazz, we hope that we will also connect you to the vitality of the American voice heard so clearly in the performances presented here.

CHANGES IN THE FOURTEENTH EDITION

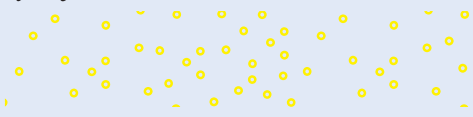
- Listening guides are now tied to free recordings found on Spotify. The Spotify icon will appear next to listening guides throughout the text to remind readers that they can listen to the featured song in Spotify. In cases where a listening guide links to an Interactive Guide Excerpt, a headphones icon will appear to direct readers to the Interactive Listening Guides for various jazz styles (www.emegill.com/listening/).
- All the jazz styles are tied more directly to the developing jazz canon to create a historical overview of jazz as a American art form.
- Text now is based on online listening that greatly expands the number of musical examples for each performer and style. This allows for a truly oral-based study of jazz.
- Features found in previous editions on the CD-ROM can now be found online via Connect, including the following:
 - Demonstrations are now also found on Spotify with the other listening examples.
 - Matching quizzes

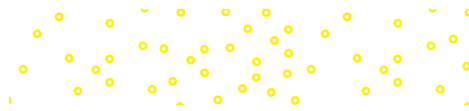
SPECIAL FEATURES

- **Witness to Jazz:** A series of essays featuring the images of renowned journalist/photographer William Gottlieb conveys personal anecdotes about musicians such as Dizzy Gillespie, Mary Lou Williams, and Louis Armstrong.
- **Profiles in Jazz:** Biographical sketches highlight key figures from the jazz community.
- **Breakouts:** Interesting asides interspersed throughout the text add color to the presentation and enhance student understanding of the world of jazz.
- **Effective Learning Tools:** Summaries, suggestions for further study/listening/reading, and listening guides provide students with extensive support to master the material and enhance their knowledge of jazz.
- For those students with some musical training, we offer **optional material in the appendices** that includes notated musical examples and more advanced theoretical discussions.
- The text-specific **Connect** provides a wealth of additional resources such as links to listening examples, multiple-choice quizzes, enhanced coverage of jazz around the world, and links to useful websites.

We offer additional listening guides in the text for selections found on the *Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*.

The primary author of the text, Paul Tanner, who was the lead trombonist for the Glenn Miller band and the first educator to introduce jazz studies in higher education at UCLA, offers some personal insights





throughout the volume. You may also correspond directly with the author on the Internet at *dwmegill@gmail.com*.

RECORDINGS

All the recordings for the listening guides found in the text are available free on Spotify. You can learn more by visiting Connect.

SUPPORT FOR INSTRUCTORS

For the instructor, we offer an Instructor's website that includes the following elements:

- Instructor's manual
- PowerPoint slides prepared by Richard Condit

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

A text-specific Connect is available for students, which offers learning materials to help underpin the reading as well as supplemental activities for personal and classroom use. These activities include multiple-choice quizzes, links to useful websites, and many additional resources. Information for accessing the listening examples can also be found here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book could not have been written without the careful manuscript reviews by a number of professors. I would like to thank the following:

Edward Orgill, Westfield State University

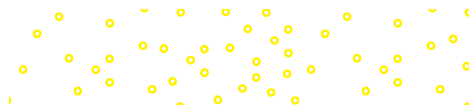
Reed Gratz, University of La Verne

Barry W. Bernhardt, Florida International University

Jenna Sehmman, Southeast Missouri State University

Gordon Vernick, Georgia State University

Steven Edwards, Delgado Community College





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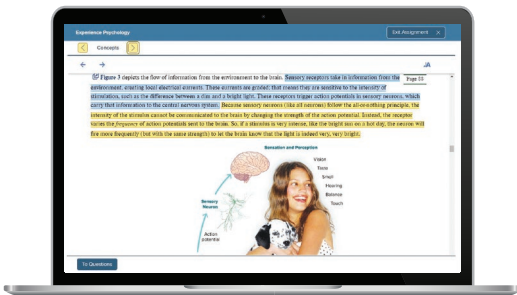
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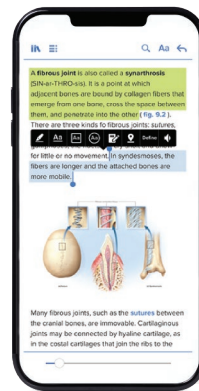
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- Jordan Cunningham,
Eastern Washington University

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jazz



1

Listening to Jazz

AN OVERVIEW

Jazz is both indigenous to the United States and among the most democratic music ever to evolve. Performers in an improvised jazz ensemble are equal partners in the developing musical expression. As the music unfolds, the musical leadership may shift several times as the players contribute their expressive ideas. Jazz is defined by this balance between the individual voices that constitute an ensemble and the collective expression unique to that ensemble.

In its early development, all music not clearly classical was generally considered jazz, thereby putting jazz, country and western, and all popular and other types of music into one category. As jazz developed, the lines between it and the other musics in America became much clearer. In fact, even the distinction between “good” and “bad” jazz seems to have settled into a general consensus, but this consensus has seldom developed free of controversy.

The music of America has many faces. Few of these musical expressions survive a temporary popularity, but jazz ultimately matured in a way that wove it into the American fabric itself. It is often called “America’s classical music,” and it has proven to be an appropriate subject of study in colleges and universities around the world. Although there were other musical activities during this time—such as country and western, blues, rhythm and blues, and the popular songs of musical theater—jazz was the first to claim a dominant foothold in the American identity.

This musical and cultural phenomenon was not to be replicated until the advent of rock and roll, which now appears to have an equal amount of cultural energy to etch itself, as jazz did, into the American identity. Jazz embodies the irony of how a music can move from such lowly origins as the heartfelt expressions of American slaves, the music of the church, and the dance hall to the American academy and the concert stage.

When jazz first took shape, players did not foresee its acceptance as an art form. If this fact had been known, perhaps better records would have been kept of just how the transformation occurred. Jazz coalesced out of the many diverse musical influences present at the turn of the century. It is a music that could have developed only in the United States. It required all the elements, good and bad. It needed the rich African oral tradition of the Negro slave culture and the formal schooling practices inherited from the Western European musical tradition. It needed the urban and rural folk music as well as the white and black church music practices. It needed the songs of

Jazz is considered by many to be America’s greatest contribution to music. Its impact on American society has been enormous and its influence on world culture has been far reaching. Its message has been direct, vital, and immediate, enabling it to hurdle cultural, linguistic, and political barriers.¹

Robert Hickok

Tin Pan Alley, the “Roaring Twenties,” the marching bands, the jug bands, the tenderloins, the blues, the religious fervor of the Great Awakening, and the hopelessness of slavery. Without all of these elements, the recipe for jazz would have been incomplete and not the American expression it is today.

HISTORICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE

Trying to re-create the actual blend of musical cultures from which jazz emerged leaves a great deal to speculation. The musical examples we do have are limited by the recording capabilities of the time, and these examples often stand stripped of the cultural associations that they reflected. To describe the music, the written accounts tend to use a theoretical system that is tailored to European classical music, a literate system that is significantly limited when applied to music that developed from an oral tradition. Consequently, we cannot notate the expressive singing style typical of the musically nonliterate practice at that time.

Without appropriate notation and audio recordings, only written descriptions are available. Like all historical accounts, these documentations tend to reflect the dominant cultural view. The language of the descriptions often reflects a frame of reference external to the musical culture being described. Such a report from the outside would tend to overlook potentially important nonmusical associations significant to the inside participants. What did the expressive church music mean to the enslaved black? How was jazz influenced by the strong emotional crosscurrents of the Civil Rights movement? From a distance, such cultural forces may unfortunately lose much of their significance. As we look at the substance of the music, we must also strive to place it in a framework that reveals its meaning.

UNDERSTANDING JAZZ

Understanding jazz requires an understanding of the jazz performer. Unlike music of the Western European tradition, which traces the history of musical composition, jazz traces its history through the performance of individuals. Jazz is about personal, unique expressions, and those performers most remembered by history have always stood above others in the power of their personal expressions. These expressions have always depended on the unique balance of the technical and aesthetic prowess of the performers themselves.

Because jazz is defined by the personal voices of its performers and only secondarily by its composers, it is misleading to force the musical styles used to define jazz into overly rigid categories. The stylistic similarities among players of a particular era are useful in understanding the evolution of jazz, but they are only a shadow of the individual creative voices that propelled jazz's evolution.

An important first step to understanding jazz is recognizing that jazz is not static within its own tradition. This must be established before trying to distinguish it from the other musical traditions in America, a task that at first seems obvious but that ultimately proves more elusive than one would expect. What characteristics are common to almost all jazz and are not typical of other musical traditions? It is much easier to recognize something as jazz than to state how one knows it is jazz and not something else. The more technical musical activities understood only by the practitioners of music somehow signal to even the untrained listener that it is jazz rather than some other musical style. Actually, the musical elements of jazz are similar to those used in other musical styles.

WITNESS TO
jazz

mary lou's salon



Photo and text: William P. Gottlieb/Ira and Leonore S. Gershwin Fund Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress. Bill Gottlieb stopped taking jazz photos in 1948; but, in 1979, after retiring, he began an intensive involvement with those old, now classic, images. Several of these images are featured in this text accompanied by his personal comments. Gottlieb received the jazz photography “Oscar” of 1999 at the Bell Atlantic Festival in New York. In 1997, he received the annual *Down Beat* Magazine Lifetime Achievement Award, the first given to a photographer.

“The all-time greatest woman jazz musician!” That’s a typical description of Mary Lou Williams. Mary Lou was, beyond dispute, a fabulous pianist, as well as a noted arranger and composer.

She also had another role of distinction: that of a sort of “mother spirit” for musicians. Her spacious Harlem apartment was a “salon” where, in the 1940s, many prominent jazz people hung out, especially—though not exclusively—those musicians whose style was at the cutting edge.

I was a friend of Mary Lou and particularly remember when, in 1947, she had me show up at her place for an evening gathering. The turnout was small but choice. Among the group that appeared were three disparate geniuses who were, or became, members of the *Down Beat* magazine “Hall

of Fame”: Dizzy Gillespie, the trumpeter and bebop icon; Jack Teagarden, the premier trombonist of the era; and Mary Lou, herself. To top it off, there were two of the most prominent boppers: pianist–arranger Tadd Dameron, and pianist Hank Jones.

It was a serious social gathering. No jamming. Just serious talk, mostly *about* music . . . with some attention to recordings played on Mary Lou’s small phonograph and occasional moments at a piano by one or another of the guests to illustrate a point. As for the usually flamboyant Dizzy, he had no horn but smoked a pipe, looking on as if he were an elder statesman. The hostess, for her part, was all dressed up, with a corsage pinned to her dress.

A memorable evening!

As we track the historical development of jazz we will see that how jazz is defined can change. As jazz evolves, the balance between a highly improvised style and more composed music can shift dramatically. Also, most of the musical forms (or structures) of jazz are not new to American music. However, jazz is still recognizably different, its most distinctive attribute being the manner in which all these elements and forms are performed and the improvised context in which this jazz interpretation is carried out.

The interpretation of music in the jazz style originally came about when African Americans attempted to express themselves on European musical instruments. These early instrumentalists tended to think of their musical lines in terms of how they would be treated vocally. Eventually, the attitude developed that *what* was played was not as important as *how* it was played. In fact, much of the music performed came from other popular music styles like the songs written in Tin Pan Alley but was now placed in a jazz context and performed in a jazz style.

In jazz interpretation, the player restricts interpretative ideas to his or her conception of the melody, coloring it with the use of rhythmic effects, dynamics, and any other slight alterations that occur to him or her while performing. The player remains enough within such melodic restrictions to allow a listener to recognize the melody easily, regardless of the player's interpretation. Almost any kind of melodic line can be performed with jazz interpretation. Most jazz musicians will agree that to write down an exact jazz interpretation is next to impossible, and all will agree that only a musician who has played jazz can even approximate the notation.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN JAZZ

"There need be no mystery about jazz, but each listener has a right, even a duty, to be discriminating."²

To appreciate music, the listener must be actively involved, and understanding and enjoyment go hand in hand. Passive listening will not bring intelligent musical enjoyment. Rather, such enjoyment is fostered through active participation that includes understanding, careful listening, and emotional response. The thrust of all musical learning should be to develop a sensitized awareness of those expressive elements of music that will foster a wide range of musical interests and activities and a variety of musical pleasures.

The primary aim in listening to a composition is to focus attention on the various musical events as they unfold—not an easy task. Mental concentration of a high order is needed. The mind is so conditioned to hearing music as a background **accompaniment** to daily activities—in the dentist's office or at the supermarket—that it is difficult to devote full attention to listening to music.

In daily living, one encounters many spatial relationships—high walls and low walls, houses and garages, sidewalks and streets, country and urban vistas—that are immediately visual and easily identified. In listening to music, one must forget the visual and learn to concentrate on the nonvisual elements.

Another difference is that music moves in time, and time relationships are less obvious in daily living. For example, a painting can be viewed at leisure and its parts observed in relationship to the whole, but not so when listening to a musical composition, when memory becomes important. The mind must remember at one point what has transpired so that one part of a piece of music can be compared or contrasted with another part.

Finally, if one is to learn more about the structure of music, it is important to develop the ability to separate juxtaposed musical sounds and to focus attention on a

single musical element. For example, when identifying the **ostinato** bass employed in boogie-woogie playing, one must be able to shut out the right-hand piano sounds to recognize what the left hand is realizing at the keyboard.

Sounds Associated with Jazz

In classical music, each instrument has an “ideal” sound or tone, or at least there is a consensus as to what the ideal sound is. The jazz musician, though, finds such conformity of little importance. As long as the sound communicates well with peers and listeners, the jazz musician appreciates the individuality of personal sounds. This situation, in which personal expression is more important than aesthetic conformity, often causes listeners not accustomed to jazz to question the sounds that they hear.

Certain sounds peculiar to jazz have their origins in oral tradition and are the result of instrumentalists attempting to imitate vocal techniques. Jazz singers and instrumentalists use all the tone qualities employed in other music and even increase the emotional range through the use of growls, bends, slurs, and varying shades of **vibrato**, employing any device they can to assist their personal interpretation of the music. Jazz musicians have always had a great affinity with good singers, especially those whose interpretation closely resembles their own. Such singers include the early great blues singers and other talented performers such as Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra, Sarah Vaughan, Billy Eckstine, and Betty Carter.

Distinctive jazz **instrumentation** produces unique sounds. For example, a featured saxophone section or a **rhythm section** is seldom found in other types of music. Although it is a mistake to claim that trumpet or trombone mutes are indigenous to jazz (mutes were used in the 1600s), it is true that a larger variety of mutes are used in jazz.

To many listeners, the sounds of jazz are personified and identified through the musical interpretation of specific artists. Listeners who have not heard much jazz are often surprised that the well-initiated can recognize a soloist after hearing only a few notes—at least within the listener’s preferred style. Talented jazz musicians seem to have their own personal vibrato, attack, type of melodic line, choice of notes in the **chord**—indeed, their own sound. Comparatively, few classical connoisseurs can say for sure who is conducting a standard work, let alone identify the individual soloists or section leaders.

Go to the listening examples in Connect and listen to the Interactive Guide to Jazz Styles to hear how a classically played melody can be given a jazz interpretation, and then hear a possible improvisation of that same melody. (Click on the links to Jazz Interpretation. See Appendix A for notational examples.)

Important Study Links

Throughout this text you will find references to two sites that contain important information and musical examples: 1. [a Spotify playlist](#) where song examples will be available and 2. direct links to [Interactive Listening Guides](#) for various jazz styles.



Sarah Vaughan

Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

Improvisation and Composition

What is the jazz *idiom*? Classical music and jazz music differ primarily in idiom. A classical musician plays the notes, but the playing lacks the idiomatic execution usually found in jazz. The European system of musical notation cannot represent this kind of expression. “The conventional symbols could, in other words, indicate in a general way *what* should be played, but could not indicate *how* it should be played.”³ Idiomatic expression in jazz is the result of African American musicians interjecting African music into European music.

The Western European musical tradition is a history of literate composition. We study it through whatever written music remains from early musical periods. Without recordings, all that remains is the notation itself or descriptions of musical practice. This shortcoming no doubt influences the way we study Western classical music. The African American oral tradition is a history of performers and performances. How the music is played is more important than how the music was composed. Fortunately, jazz history is relatively recent and there are recordings to help us understand the true musical practice of most styles.

Within the Euro-American culture, literacy was always held in high regard and aural traditions were considered more primitive and less valuable. This perception gave jazz a racially charged context that would play out throughout its entire history. Jazz was often criticized as illegitimate and in some cases even dangerous. So the two cultural streams did not meet on even terms. It should be remembered that literacy was illegal among slaves. As jazz matured, it also had to find legitimacy and establish the oral tradition as a valid musical tradition.

A jazz composition can strike any number of balances between improvisation and composition:

1. The most composed composition is completely notated and the performer is expected to play exactly what is written. An example might be the way a member of the trumpet section of a big swing band would be expected to play his or her part.
2. The performer may play a melody that is an accurate reflection of the notation but do so in a distinctive interpretive style by bending notes, adding vibrato, altering the rhythm, and so on. An example might be the way a blues singer interprets a familiar melody.
3. The performer may make so many changes in the melody that it is barely recognizable. Swing soloists often made use of this type of improvisation, which would not be written by the composer but rather created by the performer.
4. The performer may play over the chords of a song but not try to include any of the given melody at all. In this case, there would be no written melody—it would be created entirely by the performer.
5. The performer may create the entire musical performance without any reference to a known musical melody or composition. The free jazz players often improvise everything with no previously known chords or melody.
6. Performers can improvise collectively to create new musical performances. All the players in a group make up their own parts, and little or no notation is needed. All the levels of improvisation mentioned above can be used to improvise collectively. For example, the Early New Orleans ensembles created their music by improvising all the parts, while arrangements written for the big bands, like those of Benny Goodman or Glenn Miller, might be completely composed in advance, expecting only the drummer and guitarist to improvise their parts.

The development of jazz can be viewed as a balancing act between the literate tradition of composition and the oral tradition of **improvisation**. These two dominant forces in jazz emanate from the musical cultures that have contributed to the developing art form,

in particular, the African Americans and the Western Europeans. Each of these large groups carries sensitivities and preferences that play themselves out in the way each approaches the writing and performing of jazz. Depending on which influence is dominant at any one time, jazz has changed to reflect that influence. This balance is quite unstable and has shifted dramatically from the inception of jazz to the present.

If forced to reduce the contrast between the artistic approaches of the African American and Western European cultures to a single theme, one might consider the African American influence to be one of an oral tradition that expresses itself in the improvisatory actions of performance as contrasted to the literate tradition of Western European compositional practice. The exceptions to this general statement are many and obvious. However, this distinction proves to be quite useful for tracing an evolutionary line through jazz that describes the influence of these two cultures.

It may be useful as you study the musical jazz periods to identify the balance between these musical forces. Some jazz styles tip the scales strongly in one direction while others show a careful balance. Of course, even within a stylistic period, different performers strike a different balance. The Western European contributions to jazz often emerge most clearly in those stylistic periods where composition is stressed (cool, third stream, early jazz/rock, the theoretical side of avant-garde, and fusion). These styles form an identifiable evolutionary thread that is interwoven with a parallel thread that is more typical of the African American oral tradition that stresses improvisation (Early New Orleans, bop, hard bop, the free side of avant-garde, and mainstream).

As you will see in later chapters, it was Duke Ellington who best controlled the balance between improvisation and composition. His compositions exhibited a complexity



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