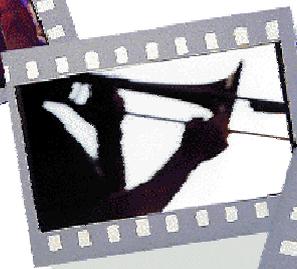




EVOLUTION

JAZZ



Gaëlle Buron - Marie Walbrecq - Gabrielle Marion-Poll - Elisabeth Voisin

<b><u>THE EVOLUTION</u></b>		
<b><u>OF JAZZ</u></b>		

<i>How has jazz music evolved since the 20th century?</i>		
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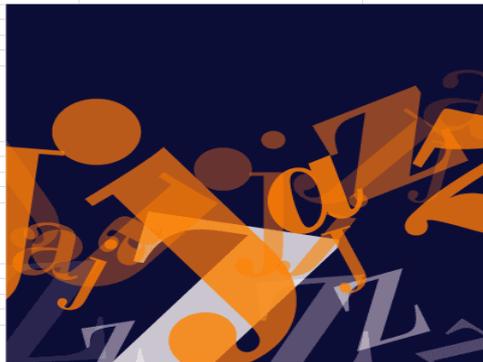
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## Introduction:

Jazz is characterized by many rhythmic processes, as for instance swing, blue notes and syncopation. It frequently uses polyrhythm, that is to say a minimum of two different rhythms at the same time. Moreover, in a jazz piece, the song is often just a starting point or a frame of reference for the musicians to improvise together. Jazz musicians accent or add notes or beats in unusual or unexpected places. They make up tunes as they play along.



In fact, it was originally developed around the 20<sup>th</sup> century by African-Americans. Jazz is the first indigenous American style to affect music in the rest of the world. Since early times, improvisation has been an essential element in African and African-American music; that is what made Jazz different from the other earlier forms of music and contributed to its great success. Jazz is the most distinctive musical style as it gained America's international popularity by the 1920's and spread out all over the world. Jazz music has changed, and today there are many different forms of Jazz.

Born during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, jazz still has success. That's why we have tried to retrace its history from its appearance to nowadays, wondering how jazz has evolved since the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Before being famous, jazz was used as a cultural practice. Afterwards, it became a leisure and, changing with time, different styles appeared until nowadays.







## I- Its birth and its growth

Before becoming a leisure, Jazz was used as a cultural practice. It was born thanks to slavery and evolved in the city of New Orleans which is considered to be its hometown.

### 1. The roots of jazz music

Jazz is composed of different musical sources. It includes Blues, Ragtime, and Gospel as well as European military band music. When jazz was born it represented a break from Western musical traditions. This kind of music comes from French, Spanish and colonial origins. The European immigrants settled in America bringing along a part of their culture. Moreover, it received influences from African slavery. From around the 16<sup>th</sup> century, during four centuries, fifteen million slaves were forced to leave Western Africa and were taken to the USA, the "New World", to work in the English colonies, after the Indians had been exterminated by the colonists. Jazz took examples in the cultural and the musical expression of West Africa.

African music featured complex cross-rhythm (a simultaneous use of contrasting rhythmic patterns within the same scheme of accents) and slurs (a symbol in Western musical notation indicating that the notes it embraces are to be played without separation) as well as melisma (a group of many notes sung melodically to a single syllable). But the singers also used falsetto (a singing technique that produces sounds that are pitched higher than the singer's normal range) and vibrato (a musical effect where the pitch or frequency of a note or a sound is quickly and repeatedly raised and lowered over a small distance for the duration of that note or sound) mixed with simple melodies.

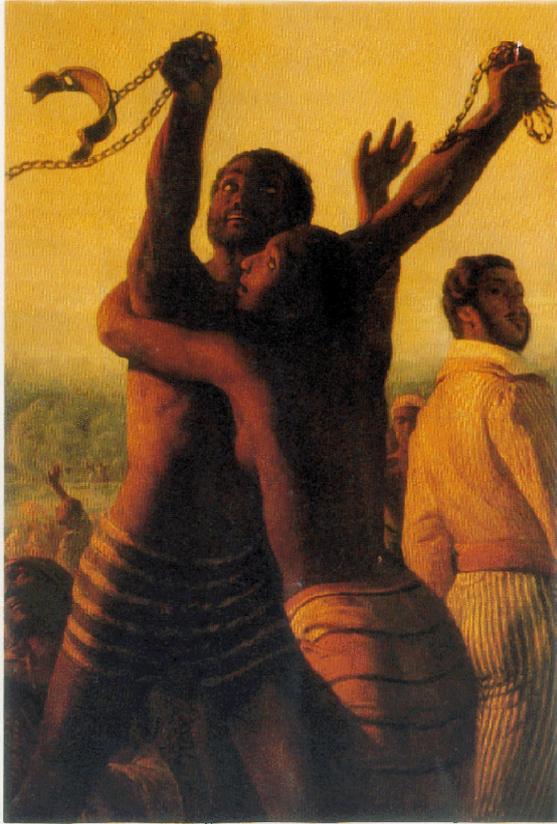
The Black Codes, name given to laws voted by southern governments, dictated the behaviour that slaves had to adopt. They were published in 1865 in order to erase the traditional African culture. These laws imposed severe restrictions on slaves such as the prohibition of their right to vote. The use of musical instruments was severely repressed and in particular the flutes and the drums, from African origins, as they could be used for messages. That's why the work-songs including for example Field Hollers, Boat songs or Corn shucking songs, were sung to ease the pain of hard work. They allowed slaves to keep their sense of music and a part of their culture. African-Americans created hundreds of work songs. The lyrics and melodies were simple and repetitive. Song lyrics had religious meaning, described the work at hand, imitated the sound of task being done, or told a story in ballad form. They were mostly sung in cotton fields, by railway buildings or in prisons. It was a "Capella song", using call and response. It consisted in the fact that a solist sang a phrase and it was started up again by the others.



*The song of Mary Blave,*  
African people playing music  
oil painting by Frank Buchser, 1867, Kunstmuseum

African-Americans modified European church hymns, folk songs and dance music to fit their own taste and traditions. Their children followed suit, and musicals were thereby passed down from generation to generation. The white Christian pastors were the first to care about slaves' education. They Christianized and baptized black people and taught them religious psalms. Lining out, a call and response form derived from African British roots, was used in white and black churches because there was not enough money for hymn books. Later, an African Baptist Church was created and the number of independent black churches increased. Black people soon adopted more lively hymns. Even if the harmonic shapes of the Protestants' hymns persisted, they were transfigured by the musical habits of black people: hand claps, distorts of the voice tone, vigorous rhythmic pulsations, syncopé and blue notes. The celebrant improvised choruses punctuated by the assembly's interjections. This new sort of religious songs was named spirituals. Spirituals songs were songs based on white hymns and spirituals meant to praise God. Inspiring themselves with these religious songs, a student group from the Fisk University of Nashville, constituted a choral, singing Negro spiritual songs arranged according to the classic songs norms. Doing this, they created a new music style, the jubilee, and had a great success. But even if the black population was satisfied by such a success for the Fisk Jubilee Singers, they were resentful that no music instruments were permitted in churches. But this changed at the turn of the century. Spiritual gradually became gospel.





*Emancipation of slaves in French colonies in 1848, by François Biard, detail, Versailles, National museum of the Castle.*

During the same period, there were many changes in black people's lives. The most important one was the Emancipation of slaves, in 1862, which did not occur at all as they had imagined it. They were spread out on little parcels of lands they had to cultivate. They hoped for better living conditions and expressed their disappointment using the word "blues" which meant at the same time a feeling, different kinds of songs, a poetic form and a musical style. This word is said to come from the expression "the blue devils" which steal depressed people's souls. Black people took over the word "blue", which also qualified the special notes used by the bluesmen, in order to express their sadness.

## 2. Jazz is born

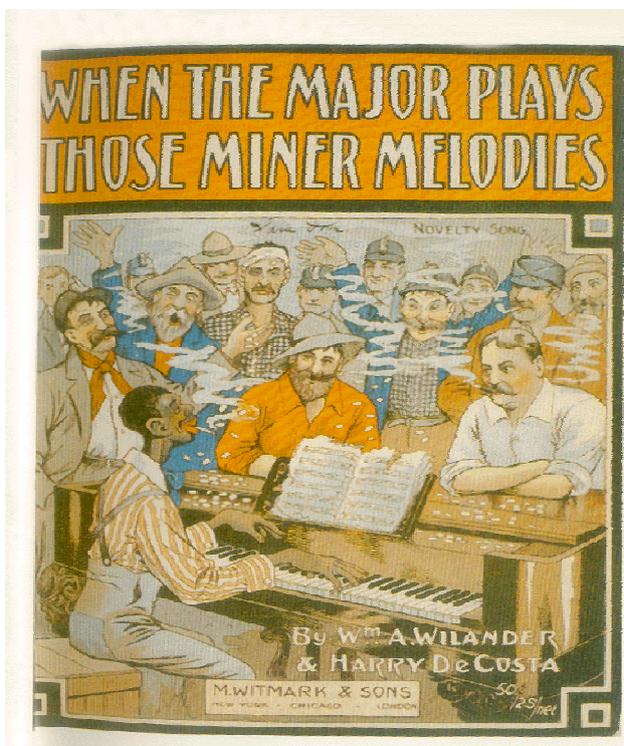
The blues are the roots from which, and the foundation upon which all jazz has developed. Indeed, without the blues there would be no jazz as we know it today. Every style of jazz, even the avant-garde, has been found to have a heritage in the blues.

Because of its personalized form, the popularity of blues music among blacks marked a unique period in the history of secular African American song. Prior to the emergence of the blues, solo music was atypical. Such individualized song had never been the main ingredient of black music. Prior song consisted of field hollers, which served as a means of communication among plantation workers, and works calls, which were chanted by peddlers in Northern and Southern cities. While field hollers and work calls had elements of personalized songs, they had never truly developed as solo songs.

As African Americans migrated north in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, they brought the blues with them. Coming from New Orleans, black-butt pianists who played the blues in Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, gave way to the Fast Western pianists who sang as they played, imitating Southern guitarists. Country singers joined the black-butt and the Fast Western pianists migration, and brought their style to Chicago, Detroit and New York, where the classic blues singers united with the New Orleans and Fast Western musicians, and introduced their blues style in clubs, theaters and dance halls.



The classic Blues style was popular among the newly arrived African Americans in the cities. The migration of many blacks to the cities gave them a new freedom from the church and community that had not been experienced in rural areas. The Blacks demanded entertainment, and black theaters, dance halls, and clubs were opened. Women stopped singing in their churches and schools and began to perform in theaters, clubs and dance halls.



*When the Major plays those Minor Melodies*  
An African improving his passion for jazz.  
partition by W.A. Wilander and Hany de Costa.

With time, white people were more and more interested in black music, and gave Black people the opportunity to improve their passion. In fact, Black people were at that time allowed to play the piano in bourgeoisie tearooms. This permitted them to develop their music thanks to this new access to musical instruments. The first black brass bands appeared at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The white Americans were so fascinated by the black music that some white actors, called the minstrels, were blackening their faces to sing slave songs. New Orleans was a dynamic city in which lived a lot of people of different cultures. Thanks to its opening to the

Caribbean and to its cool weather, the city offered many distraction possibilities. Its harbor contributed to the development of many places of amusement. All music styles could be heard: music was everywhere in the city. That's why, New Orleans featured in the early development of jazz music.

In Congo Square, located in the city of New Orleans, a grassy plain where the city fathers had permitted slaves to dance and sing for a few hours on Sundays, African dances were performed with music that featured drumming and stringed instruments. Congo Square was used by American Indians, slaves, and free coloured people to market goods, socialize and participate in drumming, music-making, sporting, and dance activities. There were numerous orchestras, where black and white people played together. New Orleans was one of the rare places to allow African music during slavery. A particularity of the city was that there was an important community of Creole people. A lot of them received a musical formation and were as brilliant as the others. However, rejected by the "racial laws", they were considered in the same way as black musicians. The competition between the two communities was a very important fact for the beginning of jazz. African people didn't know how to read music. That's why they played by ear. Some jazzmen refused to record their music. One of the reasons could be the fact that they always improvised and so their compositions were never the same. In fact, this idea came from Africa, with Griots who were African historians who kept complex records in their heads and related them via song. These facts depict why there are not any records of early Jazz music during this period.



Buddy Bolden (1877-1931)

Buddy Bolden (1877-1931), is the person who was often credited with inventing jazz. Since his career was over before the first recordings were made, all we know about his playing is legend.

He was the first "King" of cornet in New Orleans, and is remembered by the musicians of that time period as one of the finest horn players they had ever heard. His band started playing around 1895, in New Orleans parades and dances, and eventually rose to become one of the most popular bands in the city. In 1907 his health deteriorated and he was committed to a mental institution where he spent the rest of his life.

In fact, the first jazz recording was the Livery Stable Blues, by the Original Dixieland Jass Band in 1917.

The first recording of blues music was in 1895. George W. Johnson's recording of Laughing Song was the first blues song to be recorded. Thereafter, blues songs began to appear in music rolls. The 1906 series of Music for the Aedian Grand, listed one blues title among the forty-nine music rolls.

The blues entered the forefront in 1920, when Mamie Smith's recording of Crazy Blues became popular and opened the doors to others blues singers. The record was priced at one dollar and sold 75,000 copies during the first month of release.

The market for the recorded blues was almost entirely black during the 1920s and 1930s, and the records became known as "race records". Record companies advertised exclusively to blacks and only black stores sold the records.

The popularity of the blues marked a new era for black music. It combined the styles of the past with a new type of song. The result was the creation of a style of music that would eventually

contribute to the development of jazz. The blues were first sung by men at leisure and was called folk blues. Some folk blues singers sung in medicine shows and touring carnivals.

Ragtime, another kind of music which is part of jazz music, was a fusion of African-American folk with European band music. It originated in African-American communities in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It evolved in the playing of pianists along the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers.

By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it became widely popular throughout North America and was listened and danced to, performed, and written by people of many different cultures. Ragtime was one of the main influences on the early development of jazz (along with the blues). But jazz largely surpassed it in mainstream popularity in the early 1920s, although ragtime compositions continue to be written up to the present.

Many of the jazz musicians were no accurate sight readers and some could not read music at all. So they played jazz because it was a spontaneous music that they created. Most of the early jazzmen could not make a living out of their music and were forced to work. New Orleans jazz musicians formed small bands. They inspired themselves with the music of former jazzmen and increased the complexity and dynamic of their music, as well as gaining greater commercial success.



Louis Armstrong (1901-1971)

A young musician called Louis Armstrong (1901-1971) was then discovered in New Orleans. He soon became the greatest jazz musician of his era and eventually one of the biggest stars in the world. He defined what it was to play Jazz. Armstrong was a charismatic, innovative performer whose musical skills and bright personality transformed jazz from a rough regional dance music into a popular art form. His amazing technical abilities, the joy and spontaneity, and amazingly quick, inventive musical mind still dominate Jazz to this day.

Probably the most famous jazz musician of the 20th century, he first achieved fame as a trumpeter, but towards the end of his career he was best known as a vocalist and was one of the most influential jazz singers. He died in his sleep on July the 6<sup>th</sup> 1971.

Early African American folk was a fusion of African and European music to form work-songs etc. Europeanized African-American folk music was a fusion of African-American folk and European music to form Spirituals, Minstrelsy, etc. Its many roots are celebrated almost everywhere in the United States of America. Jazz is a blending of all these elements and this may have contributed to constitute the particularity of jazz. African American musical styles became the dominant force in the 20<sup>th</sup> century music.



## II- The evolution of jazz

During the 20th century, Jazz was influenced by many historical facts, the meeting of different cultures from all over the world in the United States of America, the evolution of the way people think and what they like that is why lots of new kinds were created.

### 1. From pre-jazz to jazz

Before Jazz there were many places where all kinds of music were mixed. What we know is that slaves in the USA had to be free in their mind. That is why they played their music while working. Indeed, slaves from Africa had brought their traditional music to America and had mixed it with white people's music (cf.: I). All the Black traditions depended on the oral transmission and was represented by religious and work songs, field hollers and later the blues. This music became the nucleus of Jazz. Moreover, slaves could not record it and had no instruments so their music was not recognized as a kind of music. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when slaves became citizens, they mixed their music with church and popular music.

The first recognised style of Jazz called the New Orleans' came about in 1900. In an orchestra there are two distinct sections. The first one, the rhythmic section made up of drums used for the tempo, pianos and banjos for harmonies and basses for playing the chords' roots. The second one, the melodic section with trumpets, clarinets and trombones. Musicians did not improvise often at that time.

Swing, which appeared in 1920, was developed in New York and single singers joined in to form big bands. Black leaders of those groups became famous such as two famous pianist and composer Fletcher Henderson that was African American and Duke Ellington, an other pianist, Count Basie.



**Fletcher Hamilton Henderson** was born in Georgia, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1897. During his life he was an important arranger and composer for the development of Swing. He first wanted to work in chemistry, but he was discriminated against. So he turned to music, being a famous pianist. In 1922, he formed his own band that quickly became one of the best Black's band in New York. Louis Armstrong joined his band two years later. Henderson joined Goodman's band, as an arranger. In 1950, he suffered from a cerebrovascular accident, which resulted in a partial paralysis. He finally died two years later, on the 28<sup>th</sup> December.



**Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington's** grandfather was a slave from South California. Duke Ellington (1899-1974) was born in 1899, in Washington, D.C, where his family settled in the 1880's. He became famous, as a Jazz composer, pianist and bandleader. He took piano lessons and began performing professionally when he was 17. Duke Ellington leaded a big American orchestra and was recognised for his compositions and his improvisations. He died on May 24, 1974.



**William Count Basie** was born in Red Bank, in New Jersey, on the 21st of August 1904. He worked as a Jazz pianist and in 1935, after Moten's death (Moten was also a noticed jazz pianist who recruited Count Basie for his band in 1929), he became the bandleader of the Bennie Moten band. Count Basie died of pancreatic cancer, on April 26, 1984.



**Woodrow Charles Herman**, better known as Woody Herman, was born in Wisconsin on May 16, in 1913. He was already a professional saxophonist when he was 15 years old. He had joined Isham Jones' band but when this band broke up in 1936, he formed the Woody Herman Orchestra, later called The Herman Herd. His band and him took Duke Ellington and Count Basie as a starting point. He broke this band in 1946 in order to spend more time with his family; however the following year he organized the Second Herd. Woody Herman led many other bands after this one. He died from an illness on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1987.

White men like a famous jazz musician Benny Goodman, also known as "King of Swing", the clarinetist and singer Woody Herman, Stan Kenton which was a jazz pianist and many others.



**Benjamin David Goodman**, also known as "King of Swing", was born on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 1909, in Chicago. He learnt how to play clarinet when he was young, and he joined nationally known bands as the one of Red Nichols, a cornet player, or Ted Lewis, a Clarinetist before forming his own band in 1932. He worked at the radio show "Let's Dance" with Fletcher Henderson who joined him and his band (cf.: Henderson's photography), developing "Swing". He finally died on June 13, 1986.

In Swing, improvisation is turned into arrangements and sometimes written compositions. European music like Mozart and Bach could be recovered as Swing had a regular beat. Because this music was a totally different kind of Jazz, it got its freedom. Swing was soon considered as an idealistic music until 1960 since musicians thought it was perfection as a result this way of thinking did not disappear during the whole Jazz' history.

Swing changed the way people thought; it changed their minds. In spite of that soon came Be-bop, which claimed mainstream status in the 40's. As well-known players had to go to the front on account of the World War II, new young players were able to give new ideas. Be-bop was the first jazz style that was not used for dancing. So, some good swing artists were not able to follow the expectations of be-bop musical world. Nowadays be-bop is considered as the main stream of jazz style.

Be-bop era is a new vision of music because artists stopped looking at the past and started to have a new view.

Afterwards cool-bop was like a "chamber Jazz", more calm and more sophisticated. It came from the West Coast of the United States. That is why it is also called " West Coast style ". Cool Bop is said to be influenced by European musical traditions. Up until then, horns, oboes and flutes belonged to the classical domain. The main representatives of this style were Lester Young, Gerry Mulligan, Lennie Tristano and Miles Davis.



**Miles Dewey Davis III** (1926-1991) was born in Alton, in Illinois. By the age of 10 Davis was playing trumpet and later performing in his band. He was a really influential and innovative trumpeter, bandleader and composer. Indeed, he played some of the more famous Bebop records, he recorded the first Cool Jazz compositions and he also participated to the development of Jazz-Fusion. He died on the 28 of September 1991.

Then, in reaction to the West Coast style, hard-bop advocated the return to a stronger sound. The hard-bop is Negro music, played by musicians coming rather from the East Coast, that is to say the return of the blues, gospel and work songs. Indeed, a new generation of black musicians wanted to wash away Jazz of any intellectuality and wanted a return to Jazz' roots. In addition, the trumpet player Clifford Brown, the beater Art Blakey and the saxophonist Sony Rollins appear in the world of Jazz thanks to hard-bop.



A horn, instrument used in Cool Bop.

The famous Jazz artist and composer Ornette Coleman, the American pianist Cecil Taylor, the saxophonist Albert Ayler and their colleagues introduced Free Jazz, which is Jazz from the 60's. This music was a totally different kind of Jazz especially different from be-bop. These Jazzmen did not like pre-set melodies, tempo or progression of accompaniment chords. Indeed he thought performances were more available with more freedom and spontaneity. Free Jazz became harsh since, in Coleman's music, loud screeches and shrieks from saxophones and trumpets were included.



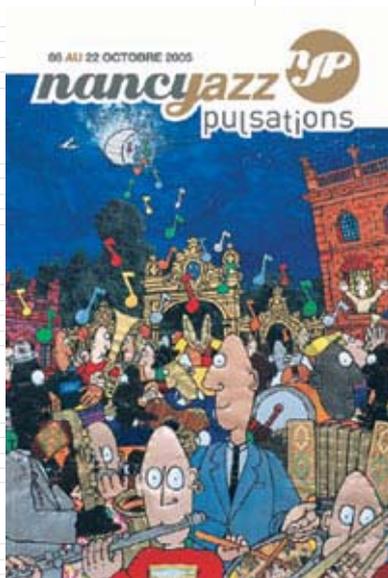
Ornette Coleman, one of the most notable figures in jazz history, is an American saxophonist and composer. He was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1930 in Fort Worth, in Texas. He was one of the innovators of the Free Jazz movement, in 1960. Nowadays, Coleman still gives concerts everywhere in the world.

Jazz took from the Rock music some of its instruments, as the electric guitar and the synthesiser. So rock Jazz in the 70's is opened to the electronic effects. However, improvisation always holds the main role. Afterwards, rock Jazz will evolve towards funk Jazz illustrated by Miles Davis and then, in the 80's, will be relieved by the movement of fusion Jazz. In fact some musicians of Jazz

introduced this movement. They took ideas particularly from Rock music. However most of these innovations are also drawn from the rhythms of dance of black musicians such as James Brown.

## 2. Jazz as a leisure

A lot of changes in Jazz helped it to be recognised. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jazz became more attractive to people and spread all over the world, as it evolved from a cultural practice to a leisure one. Therefore, nowadays many festivals are organised. They permitted jazz players to continue to diffuse it by playing what they enjoy and create. Many of those jazzmen are now well known because of their first step in some famous festivals such as the *Nancy Jazz Pulsations*.



Advertisement for the Nancy Jazz Pulsation of 2005

This festival lasts two weeks and takes place in Nancy. Over seven thousand people are invited. It is an opportunity to see major international artists beside emerging talents. In most countries, festivals are organised such as the *Montreal jazz fest*, the *Jazz*

*Mediterrannée* which, in 2006, will be celebrated in Vienna, will last for three days and will be the twenty-sixth celebration.



A jazzband, playing during a French festival (Festival de La Seyne-sur-Mer), in 2004

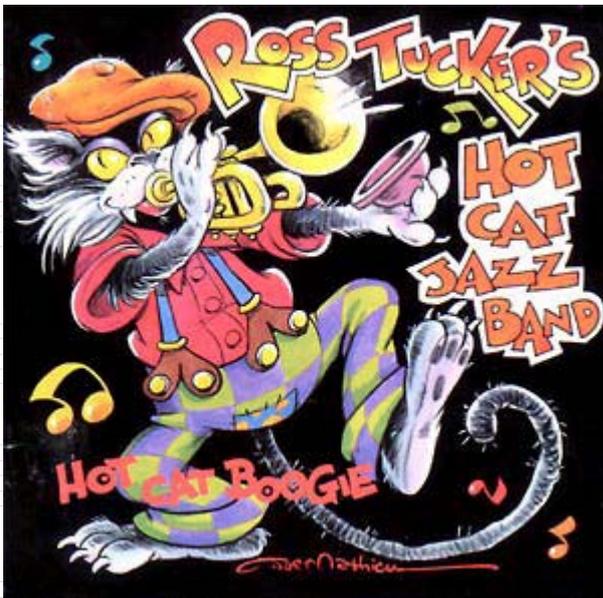
Moreover, many jazzmen practise their music in different places where they can "communicate" with the audience. For example, we can see that amateurs play Jazz in undergrounds where their music can help people to relax. Professionals mainly play in pubs, performing concerts in small rooms in order to be closer to the public and so to make them appreciate Jazz.



A Jazzband nowadays during a concert

So this music still continues to rise and affects more and more people, not only a generation of mature people, but also youth. Indeed the Walt Disney Studios used Jazz in their cartoon productions. Firstly we can mention *The Jungle Book* as an example.

This very successful story produced in 1967 was the last one realised by Walter Disney himself. It deals with Kipling's story *Mowgli*: a young abandoned child, raised by wolves in a jungle of India, who have to go to a "man's village" in order to escape from a wild tiger. In this cartoon, which is mainly aimed at children, you can find rhythmic jazz songs, which are hits for all generations. For instance, the song entitled "I want to be like you" and sung by King Louie has a really stirring rhythm. In fact, in the story, Baloo, a character, is so mesmerised by the jazzy song that the monkey performs that he forgets about his mission of rescuing Mowgli from the monkeys. Instead of doing his mission, he gasps: " Man, what a beat! " and he disguises himself as a monkey to join the music. This scene of the cartoon emphasizes the fact that Jazz is a style that gives people yearning for moving and dancing. And a journalist of the Birmingham Post newspaper, Diane Parkes, says: "*The show's set is colourful and imaginative, the music jazzy (I still have some of those songs ringing around my head) and the show great fun for children and adults*». So this cartoon is a real success not only for the story but also for jazz songs.



Hot Cat Jazz Band's Latest CD Release

What's more, one of the legends of jazz, Louis Prima worked as a voice actor to dub King Louie. Then, Walt Disney studios produced the *Aristocats* in 1970. This one relates the story of a mother cat

and her three kittens, who are saved from the jaws of a moneygrubbing butler by an alley cat, called O'Malley. After the success of the Jungle Book, Disney studios composed foot-tapping jazz songs, such as "Ev'rybody wants to be a cat", sung by O'Malley and his jazzband in their new production. A website that sells Aristocats DVD says: "As always, it is really the voices rather than the animation that are the heart of the Disney magic: Phil Harris, who also dubbed the bear, Baloo (Jungle Book), is brilliant as O'Malley, Eva Gabor as Duchess (the female cat) is... well... Eva Gabor". Here they name Phil Harris, who plays Jazz, saying that he is perfect as O'Malley. Therefore we can say that Jazz has an important role in these Disney's films. And in addition to this important role it permits Jazz to affect children, through these songs that kids enjoy.

To conclude, Jazz has been popular thanks to what musicians gave to each kind and makes its diversity, how and where it is played and most of it the diversity of the audience.

## Conclusion:

Jazz is a type of music resulting from numerous and varied origins. Jazz took form, for instance, in African American and European folk music. At the beginning, it was used by slaves because it was the only way they could express themselves. After that, it appeared in churches under the form of Spirituals and Gospels. Little by little, jazz gained the interest of more and more people. This culture gave way to leisure. Moreover, in the course of time, diverse kinds of music tied in with jazz. This makes us understand why it has had more and more success according to the custom of the day.

Jazz is now considered as a leisure, in fact, some people play or listen to it during their free time. We can also say that jazz is no longer used as a cultural practice and the way people play it has really changed. We can find jazz professionals who made jazz their job. Jazz is now spread all over the world and a lot of events commemorate its history; for example, there are many festivals. Thanks to that, everybody has now access to jazz.

So, the history of jazz has not finished yet, jazz may continue to evolve with time and we will probably still be able to talk about jazz in years to come.



acrylic on  
canvas by  
Beverley .

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