

What's Going On?

Jazz in Cleveland: 1960s to the Present

By

Andrea Jackson-Alexander

A Thesis submitted to the

Graduate School-Newark

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master of Arts

in Jazz History and Research

Written under the direction of

Professor Lewis Porter

And approved by

---

---

Newark, New Jersey

May, 2016

Andrea Jackson-Alexander

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

©2016

## Abstract of the Thesis

What's Going On? Jazz in Cleveland 1960s to the Present

Andrea Jackson-Alexander

Thesis Director: Dr. Lewis Porter

The idea behind this research project was to uncover the jazz scene in Cleveland, Ohio that most know nothing about. My hope was that this research would also highlight some of the racial injustices that African-Americans had to face. Many local heroes dedicated themselves to making sure this art form thrived through, performances, education, and aspiring young musicians.

## Preface

While in the process of trying to find a very interesting thesis topic, I got the thought to write about my hometown Cleveland, Ohio. The thought didn't occur to me until about the ninth hour. Although I'm a Clevelander I didn't think there was a heavy jazz scene or ever having been one at all. As I began my research I was thoroughly surprised by how rich the tradition had been and is still going strong today. I came across a very detailed book by Joe Mosbrook entitled *Cleveland Jazz History*. This book proved to be very helpful in my research. He brought to light a lot of great stories about jazz musicians while they played in Cleveland, and also the vibrant jazz club scene of the early years.

## Acknowledgments

This project was my way of paying homage to my hometown; it allowed me to appreciate what it had to offer. I would like to send a special thanks to Joe Mosbrook, because he was very helpful and easy to talk to. The Cleveland State University Library was very helpful, and guided me to the right people. Also I would like to thank my professors Dr. Lewis Porter for being an awesome teacher, and guiding me through the program with such care. A very special thank you to Dr. Henry Martin for making sure my transcriptions were correct, and for always being pleasant. I will be forever grateful for the both of them. I am also very thankful to Mr. Joe DeJarnette Jr who took the time to allow me to get to know him better. Also I would like to extend much gratitude to the IJS for their abundance of resources and books. I would like to also thank my family for their support. Last but not least to God who has given me the strength and ability to conquer my greatest fears.

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Chapter One: Humble Beginnings</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter Two: Jazz Clubs and performances in Cleveland</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter Three: Racial Tensions and its effect on the Jazz Scene</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chapter Four: Interview with Joe DeJarnette Jr.</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Chapter Five: Prominent Musicians affiliated with Cleveland</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Chapter Six: Jazz Now</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Strange Fruit Analysis</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Web Links</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Discography</b>	<b>59</b>

## *Chapter One: Humble Beginnings*

On July 22, 1796, Moses Cleaveland and the company surveyors reached the mouth of the Conneaut and Cuyahoga rivers. It was one of the first European settlements in the Connecticut Western Reserve by the Connecticut Land Company, which was a group who purchased approximately three million acres in the Western Reserve. The Western Reserve area architecture reflects the Connecticut influence. The city of Cleveland was named after General Moses Cleaveland who served under General George Washington during the American Revolutionary War. General Cleaveland was an investor in the company. The village of Cleaveland was incorporated on December 23, 1814. The first “a” was dropped out of the name to fit in the newspaper’s publishing in 1831. In its early years Cleveland’s population was very small, because the company charged fifty dollars per lot. They soon found out very few were willing to pay that extreme amount. The lack of roads made it hard to get to the surrounding areas.

The construction of the Erie Canal in the 1820s allowed the city to experience significant growth. The canal connected the city with the Atlantic Ocean, and made trading easier. By the 1830’s the construction of the Ohio and Erie Canal that connected Lake Erie to the Ohio River was complete. The Baltimore and Ohio railroad was the first railroad to cross the Appalachian Mountains into Ohio, providing Ohioans with much quicker access to eastern states. To help assist with railroad construction, the Ohio legislature passed the Ohio Loan Law of 1837. The Ohio Loan Law was designed to assist the building of additional canals within the state. Cleveland’s very first person of African-American descent was settler George Peake. He owned over a one-hundred acre piece of land. He even invented and patented a machine that was able to produce mill from grain much easier.

This period is known as the “Progressive Era” and became a national movement when Theodore Roosevelt became president. A huge emphasis was put on social activism and political reform from the 1890s to the 1920s. Ohio like every other state had to go through some type reconstruction period to grow effectively. Mostly known to have a Republican dominance since the beginning, Ohio was very progressive especially dealing with labor laws and making sure it was conducive for “everyone.” There was a lot corruption in the representatives that were in office. Unions were built, laws were put in place to help working women, workmen’s comp was established, and child labor was abolished just to name a few. By the early 1920s, Cleveland was the city to be developed into the “All-American City” (Warner, 1964).

African-Americans were some of the first to become residents in Ohio. Some were free, but there were still a small number of them that were slaves. To accurately understand voting among blacks before the Civil War, we have to consider the state Supreme Court ruling. In 1842, it was ruled that “mulattoes with less than one-half Negro blood, on the grounds that such persons were more white than Negro.” This was shown in the cases of Edwin Thacker v. John Hawk and Parker Jeffries v. John Ankeny. Laws were later passed that allowed whites to challenge any voter they assumed to be black. The voting privileges and Black Laws in Ohio weren’t as clear cut or easy to understand. Ohio’s first constitution was the Ohio Constitution of 1803, which failed by one vote to allow African-American men suffrage. This law was not very protective; blacks weren’t allowed to the join military, testify against whites, receive assistance, or send their children to public school. Black residents weren’t allowed to settle in the state without first paying a five hundred dollar bond. This was one of the various things placed under the Black Laws (Kusmer, 1978).

The state of Ohio has always had it qualms about the African-American race. The fear of blacks taking the jobs of racist whites caused a lot of resistance. Although the conditions in the North weren’t favorable many stayed favoring it over being in the south. During this tough time there were many whites who helped blacks escape their owners along the Underground Railroad and fought for equal rights. Alfred Greenbrier owned a



farm and it also served as a link to the Underground Railroad safely assisting a total of 275 runaways to Canada. Early on because of its location Cleveland became a main source for trading. The ending of the Civil War propelled Cleveland into one of the top manufacturing cities. As the population grew Cleveland became the fifth largest city in the United States during the 1920s. It was named the All-American City in 1950; the population had reached 914,808. This made Cleveland the largest city in the United States.

### *The Great Migration*

In the south an innumerable amount of blacks were suffering politically and socially. The Jim Crow laws had tightened its reigns on the already oppressed people. Lynching was at an all-time high as many as three a week, and the intimidation and violence were an imminent cloud that were ever present. The morale among the people was low, and many thought that there had to be another way of life. A series of floods in the Gulf States and the spread of boll weevil ruined cotton and crops. The migration up north presented a better opportunity. The report of work above the Mason-Dixon Line was exciting, and many began to decide who would travel to the foreign northern parts. The families had to devise a plan so the members left behind would be taken care of. The trip was long and grueling and included stops along the way. The "Promised Land" did offer opportunities, but it wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

During the Great Migration over six million African-Americans moved to the northern, Midwest, and eastern coast states. The hope of a better life was in view, while trying to escape the stifling and terrorizing Jim Crow south. This was the largest migration in U. S. history. The U.S. entered the First World War in 1917, leaving plenty of job openings, and the opportunity was seized. In desperation, there were even cases where the Pennsylvania Railroad offered to pay the travel expenses of twelve thousand African-Americans. In the south most were denied any access to maintain their livelihood, because of white supremacy groups, laws, or just blatant discrimination. When jobs were

found in the south the pay was very low or nothing at all which was experienced in the north as well. Sometimes the living and working conditions were deplorable, barely habitable, and unsanitary. The black population began to grow so ferociously it left the housing space limited.

"On a single day in Chicago, real-estate brokers had over six hundred black families applying for housing, with only fifty-three units available. When the migrants did find housing accommodations, they were usually dilapidated and barely habitable. Landlords maximized their profits by dividing larger units, with no alterations, into several tiny flats. Black neighborhoods became seriously overcrowded as a result. In Cleveland, the population density in black areas was thirty-five to forty persons per acre, while citywide it was only half that." Schomburg Center for Black Research and Culture

The population of blacks increased in Cleveland by 308% during the 1910s and 1920s. These overcrowded and self-contained places became known as the ghetto. Primarily in what is known as Central, a neighborhood located just east of downtown Cleveland. The Central area held about one half of Cleveland's black population. Like many other cities at this time, the urban lifestyle led to the inevitable development of a "red light district." These areas consisted of saloons, speakeasies, gambling, and brothels. It is stated that the secretary of the Real Estate Board in August of 1917, requested as many as one thousand more units. But surprisingly the growth that was experienced in Cleveland was very minimal compared to the other big cities.

The Ku Klux Klan had a very strong presence in the north, but really didn't become an important factor in Cleveland's racial problems. It is stated in *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland 1870-1930*, that by 1924, at least one million whites had joined this organization. The goal was to emulate the same menacing behavior that was known in the south towards not only blacks but foreigners, non-white racial groups, and non-Protestants (Kusmer, 1978).

### *Harlem Renaissance*

Harlem at this time was known as the black metropolis and “the hub of literary activity.” It was a participant in the new awakening of black culture in the United States. The Renaissance movement was in effect as well, Harlem had become the home to a lot of blacks. Cities like Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Detroit experienced an influx of growth as well. This was a movement that allowed blacks to be seen as intellectuals. Through literature, art, fashion, music, and poetry their voices were being heard. The likes of Langston Hughes, Marcus Garvey, and James Weldon Johnson can be easily associated with this time. Marcus Garvey took a different approach preaching to the masses that blacks should depend on themselves and go back to Africa. When he arrived in Harlem he reestablished the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Occasionally calling this movement the Black Zionist, a lot of people didn’t agree with his flamboyant militant take on the new movement.

The concept of the “New Negro,” explained by Alain Locke was in full effect. The goal was to eliminate the stereotypes by promoting and challenging a new complex way of thinking and perception. Locke further states that

“Up to the present one may adequately describe the Negro’s “inner objectives” as an attempt to repair a damaged group psychology and reshape a warped social perspective. Their realization has required a new mentality for the American Negro.” (Locke, 1925)

The term “New Negro” was actually first seen in the *Cleveland Gazette* in June 28, 1895, when the magazine wrote an article about the new class of blacks with education, sophistication, and money that had emerged since the Civil War. The term is best understood when you consider the “culmination of extensive social and intellectual developments within the black community in the years following Reconstruction,” as stated

by Cary D. Wintz in the book entitled "*Black Culture and the Harlem Renaissance.*" The "New Negro" concept highly influenced artists like art music composer William Grant Still, which was reflected in his concert works, and Duke Ellington's "Black, Brown, and Beige" jazz suite (Wintz, 1992).

Religious groups called the Black Hebrew Israelites emerged. Their belief is that they are in fact descendants of the ancient Israelites, but not identifying as strictly being Jew. This was popular among black Americans and those of West Indian descent. Islam and Christianity were practiced as well. Blacks began to have a sense of pride in both themselves and their abilities which began landing them on a larger platform. Like any movement it was met with some controversy. Racism wasn't completely escaped and was experienced in these northern cities as well. The Renaissance movement was geared to help possess a sense of pride and equality through not only literature, but sociologically. A quote by Zora Neale Hurston says it best;

"Sometimes I feel discriminated against, but it doesn't make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can anyone deny themselves the pleasure of my company? It's beyond me." (Hurston, 1935)

Hurston was known for her wit and folk writing style; she was recognized more posthumously. Her most famous writing was *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The literature of this time increased the awareness of African Americans of their own African history. The emergence of black newspapers and magazines helped spread the news of things happening in the black neighborhoods. In Cleveland there were examples of the "New Negro" concept like one of the city's most prominent physician Dr. Charles H. Garvin. He took the task of specifically studying diseases that affected those of African ancestry (*Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*).

The movement began to decline around the 1930s, when the economy collapsed. The literature was still there, but it wasn't just centered around Harlem anymore. It eventu-

ally became stagnant, because no new ideas or talent were being presented. The fore-runners of this movement began to disconnect. The lack of support from patrons made it even more difficult. Some like Claude McKay stated that several Renaissance writers held resentment towards the patrons of this Negro art, because of being picked up for a brief moment and suddenly getting dropped. It should also be stated that not everyone held this same sentiment.

Musically, America flourished there was no denying this hot music that was spreading throughout the states. Dixieland jazz was being exposed to various cities when the bands and southern migrants traveled there. This sound is easily associated with the Original Dixieland Jazz (Jass) Band, King Oliver, Sidney Bechet, and others. The different styles that were developed in some other cities help add new dimensions to this art form. This style became known for its polyphonic improvisation and the combination of earlier brass bands. Soon the emergence of stride piano took place. James P. Johnson is considered to be one of the greatest composers of this era along with Fats Waller, and Willie "The Lion" Smith, and fellow Ohioan Art Tatum.

### *Cleveland Years*

Out of this overcrowded housing situation, some of the best musicians were shaped and trained in Cleveland. Central High School had been mostly white in its early years, and had only six black students in 1906, according to Noble Sissle. By the early 1930s, it had become a predominately black school. This was the first public high school in Cleveland and was established on July 13, 1846, and also known as "the first public high school west of the Alleghenies." In spite of the integration, black students didn't always receive equal treatment.

The core curricula of the school changed; by 1930, the student body consisted of 60% of blacks. Majority of all black high school students went to Central High School even if they were close to other high schools. There eventually was a mass exodus of the white students, because they were of course given the option to transfer. Eventually classes

like foreign language were dropped, and it was soon discovered that at this time over half of the tenth graders attending had no instruction in mathematics. The economics class eventually dropped from the curriculum as well, not giving the students any chance of attaining higher paying jobs.

Although this may be true, Mosbrook states that the high school had a music program that was geared to help prepare students to teach and perform music. At this time Mr. James Lee was the music director, and he expected nothing but excellence from his students and would often get them passes to The Palace Theatre to see Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, and Tommy Dorsey. William "Shep" Shepard later quoted that Lionel Hampton and Teddy Wilson was there also (Mosbrook, 2003).

Under Mr. Lee's instruction musicians like saxophonist Willie Smith, Gay Crosse, William "Shep" Shepherd (who played in Gillespie's big band), pianist Tadd Dameron, and trumpeter Freddie Webster went on to make major names for themselves. Andy Anderson, a bassist and saxophonist, went off the play with the Marion Sears Orchestra. Anderson recalls an interesting story from later in his career when he was in Los Angeles gigging with Ben Webster and Paul Gonsalves (Mosbrook, 2003).

"One night while jamming with Webster, Lester Young walked in and wanted to sit in with the group. Ben and I were sitting there playing and pretty soon, here comes Lester. Ben says, "I can't play with him!" I replied "Shoot! Now he's here and I'm in the middle and here he comes. "Now what am I supposed to do?!" Before long Charlie Christian and Jimmy Blanton joined the jam session." (Mosbrook, 2003)

Langston Hughes although closely connected to the Harlem Renaissance movement, was very active at Central High School. Being named the chief editor he contributed to articles and edited the yearbooks. This was the beginning of him writing his first short stories, poetry, and dramatic plays. There are numerous more notable students of Central High along with doctors, inventors, and politicians who left their mark on the city. As

stated before the musicians traveling from places like New Orleans were exposing the Clevelanders to jazz. Years later when the Great Depression hit, it caused many businesses to go bankrupt. Cleveland was among the five main oil refining centers in the United States. The thriving steel and oil companies suffered tremendously.

"Would America have been America without her Negro people?"

(Du Bois, 1903)

As the black community transitioned the white newspapers weren't very informative. Newspapers like *The Cleveland Gazette* (1883) served as a source of information on civil rights issues. Harry C. Smith (a Central High graduate) was the co-founder and editor. Smith continued publishing this newspaper until his death in 1941. He was what we would call a pioneer of the black press. The *Cleveland Journal* (1903) and the *Cleveland Advocate* (1914) were less likely to be as liberal about race relations. The *Call and Post* (a merge between the *Cleveland Call* and *Cleveland Post*) was formed in 1928. Among its founding members was inventor Garrett A. Morgan. Listed in the *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, this newspaper played a huge part in reporting the tragedies and triumphs of the city. Unfortunately the paper had to file for bankruptcy in 1995, but was bought by boxing promoter Don King. In later years *Cleveland Life* magazine (1994), *New Day Press* (1969), and *The Black Press* helped to keep African Americans inform about community events, and racial tensions that came about as the Civil Rights Movement progressed (Kusmer, 1978).

There was also an appreciation for other art forms like theatre. There were various cultural arts centers like the Karamu (Theatre) House. The name is Swahili for "a place of joyful meeting." The idea was to get black and white youth involved in the visual and performing arts and theatre. The Karamu House was originally located at E.38<sup>th</sup> and Central Ave. It was established by two white social workers Russell and Rowen Jelliffes from

Chicago. This eventually led to more African oriented things as well. The Dobama Theatre named was after the first two letters of the three founders (Donald and Marilyn Bianchi, Barry Silverman, and Mark Silverburg). The theater was founded in 1959, and has stayed true to its mission by exposing the community to excellent plays that may have gone unnoticed. There were also literary societies provided through various churches in the community, and remained popular for a while as stated in the *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*.



## *Chapter Two: Jazz Clubs and Performances*

Like most cities during the jazz age Cleveland had a lot of jazz clubs. There are over forty documented jazz clubs/spaces between the 1920s and 1960s. The decline began as different genres became more popular than the “old-time” jazz. The times were changing and many of these clubs suffered because of it. Referring to Mosbrook’s extensive research of these jazz clubs there is a very long list of all the clubs and their history. I won’t list them all, but will make a reference to a few that aren’t well known but were frequented by a lot of the jazz greats.

### *Majestic Hotel*

The Majestic Hotel beginning in 1907 was the primary hotel for African Americans and one of the few quality places to stay or visit. Located at E.55 and Central Ave, it housed many of the jazz artists and black entertainers traveling through Cleveland. It was a place to relax free from discrimination offering food and relaxation, and of course musical entertainment. The Furnace Room was located inside the Majestic Hotel, interestingly enough Red Callender played as the bassist in the house band from 1934-35. The club was later renamed Heat Wave before it closed down. Finally reopening under the name Rose Room from 1952-57, under the musical direction of pianist Duke Jenkins. In 1952, Gay Crosse's band at the Rose Room included John Coltrane (Mosbrook, 2003).

It eventually was known for its Blue Monday parties where musicians would play from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. The likes of Kenny Clarke, Nancy Wilson, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, and Ben Webster could be found there when they were done performing at surrounding clubs. Quoted from Duke Jenkins himself, he recalls Errol Garner coming in on one of the sessions.

### *Café Tia Juana*

Café Tia Juana was the first jazz café owned and operated by a black woman. Catherine Drake decided to open her own club after being racially discriminated against while trying to enter another downtown jazz club with her husband's business partner Willie Hoge. The club only wanted to allow admittance to Hoge because he was white. She and her husband Arthur "Little Brother" Drake along with Hoge devised a plan to open their own lavish jazz club in the district known as Cleveland's "second downtown" in early 1947. Meeting with top Cleveland and Akron club promoter Johnny Waters, and a few other family members the plan was put in place. Waters hoped this would replicate the success he'd had in the Akron area at the High Hat. The building that was previously owned by Hoge's brother was eventually bought. The two bottom floors of the building were renovated and became the Café Tia Juana.

There were already at least twelve clubs owned on this strip, but what was different about this club was the acceptance of black and white patrons. The area in which Drake intended to put her establishment was also known as the Gold Coast because of all the thriving businesses along the strip. Charles L. Sallee Jr (the first black admitted into the Cleveland Institute of Art in 1934) was hired to decorate the club. Arthur Drake and Hoge began to butt heads because the cost that they had decided to split was beginning to really skyrocket (Midday, 2015).

"Using a south of the border theme, Sallee turned the space into a swank café, hanging large mirrors on the wall, laying down luxurious carpet, painting beautiful murals, and creating a smooth ambience with warm-colored spotlighting. He installed classy-looking, curved leather booths. On the walls behind each booth, he painted large Mexican themed murals. He designed the Tia Juana's bar area into the shape of a four-leaf clover and renovated the second floor for special guests and parties, which, occasionally, served as a dressing room. The centerpiece of Sallee's design became the Tia Juana's signature, an elevated music stage that slowly revolved during the performance. The lever, located behind the bar, had a "creeper gear," that provided the slow, steady turning of the stage. It was not always smooth. Real or imagined, some performers had problems with the movement. Although

she recovered quickly, the staff was mortified when jazz great Billie Holiday got sick while performing. The expenses continued to climb with their choice of cuisine. In fitting the Cosmopolitan aesthetic, they hired a chef from Hong Kong to serve Cantonese food." (Miday, 2015)

On August 28, 1947, Café Tia Juana opened her doors. The approximate cost was seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars in today's figures that was well spent. 1045 E.105<sup>th</sup> Street, on the corner of Massie and Parkgate Ave was a line of well dressed patrons awaiting the exciting night ahead of them. Bartender Delores "Battle Axe" Samuels was ready and capable of handling anyone who became too intoxicated. Drake recalls hiring William "Gorilla" Jones (who was inducted into the boxing Hall of Fame) as the escort.

"We had to re-seat them," she said. "We were trying to break that mess up," she said, referring to segregation, but "he was trying to promote it." (Miday, 2015)

For opening night, the headliner was international stage and recording artists, "The 3 Cats & the Fiddle," a quartet of Shirley Moore, Ernie Price, George Steinback, and the leader Austin Powell. Co-starring as headliner was John Lewis, whom was billed as a guitar and singing sensation from NYC Club 845. The Cats & the Fiddle were a smashing success. Johnny Waters quickly booked them to return at the end of September. People began traveling from all over the city and Europe; even notables like Dizzy Gillespie and Billy Holiday were seen there also. The very popular Herman "Scatter" Stephens the owner of the Scatter's BBQ in the Glenville area, was very helpful with assisting the club with such acts like, Count Basie (a personal friend), and Eddie "Lockjaw" Vinson. Jimmy Saunders another graduate of Central High School was the leader of the house band. Saunders remembers what a beautiful experience to see on separate occasions Miles Davis and Charlie Parker play on the revolving stage.

Eventually Hoge and Little Brother were sent to prison; their number racket schemes had caught up to them. This unfortunate incident left Drake as the sole owner with her two sons. If it hadn't been for the black-owned newspaper *Call and Post*, Catherine Drake would only be a memory. It wasn't uncommon for the newspaper around at that time to deem this accomplishment as unimportant. The area slowly began to decline, and Café Tia Juana closed her doors in the early 1970s. The integrated café served as a place where blacks as well as whites were treated equally and could have a good time together (Miday, 2015).



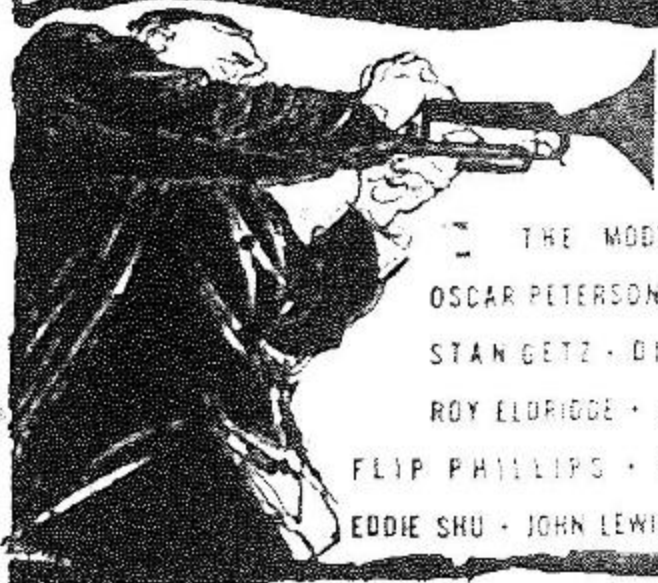
Permission to use by Cleveland SGS

NORMAN  
GRANZ'

# JAZZ

at the

## Philharmonic



ELLA  
FITZGERALD  
GENE KRUPA  
QUARTET

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET  
OSCAR PETERSON TRIO • JO JONER  
STAN GETZ • DIZZY GILLESPIE  
ROY ELDRIDGE • ILLINOIS JACQUET  
FLIP PHILLIPS • SONNY STITT  
EDDIE SHU • JOHN LEWIS • MILT JACKSON

# Wed. Eve. Sept. 19

CLEVELAND MUSIC HALL, 8:00 P.M.

Permission by Cleveland SGS

### *Gleason's Musical Bar*

Gleason's was one of the most popular jazz nightclubs in Cleveland spanning over two decades from 1942 to 1962. Located at E.55<sup>th</sup> Street and Woodland Ave, the club owner William "Jap" Gleason welcomed everyone. He would include the acts of world-renowned performers like the Nat King Cole Trio, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Ahmad Jamal. Every time Tiny Grimes was in Cleveland he played exclusively at Gleason's, and Grimes was loved by the Clevelanders. While playing at Leo's Casino Freddie Hubbard is quoted about his experience while traveling in Cleveland.

"The people in Cleveland want the real thing. They want straight-ahead bebopping and the jazz like Coltrane, Bird, and myself play. They're true listeners, not people who go with whatever is hot and commercial. When you come to a place like Cleveland, the people want to accept you in their homes and get to know you as a person. In most places, they just want to do business with you and you're gone. That's one of the traits I like about Cleveland. The people are nice and they want to treat you to a nice meal and treat like real people." (Mosbrook, 2003)

### *Cotton Club*

The Cotton Club was the second Cleveland club named this paying homage to the infamous club in New York and was owned by Sam Firsten. In 1957, the club was bought by Fats Heard, a drummer and graduate of Central High who recorded with Erroll Garner. Located at E.4<sup>th</sup> and Huron Ave what is near what we know now as the Quicken Loans Arena. The name was later changed to the Modern Jazz Room. Artist such as Horace Silver, J.J. Johnson, and The Modern Jazz Quartet could be found on the bill. On June 24, 1956, a Sunday night the club featured Clifford Brown, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Richie Powell, and George Morrow on bass. The all-star group was booked from May 28-June 3, 1956. This was one of the last places Brown and Powell played before passing away in a car accident while driving to Chicago.

Cleveland was one of those areas that many musicians passed through whether traveling to Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, or the East Coast. George Wein a well-known festival promoter thought of the genius idea to have a sponsored tour named after Kool cigarettes and Schlitz beer. This presented Cleveland with one of the many opportunities to hear Thelonious Monk. Referring to Chris Sheridan's book *Brilliant Corners: A Bio-Discography of Thelonious Monk* there was a performance at the Public Auditorium on August 11, 1966, for the Schlitz Salute to Jazz concert, and June 24, 1964 at the WHK auditorium. This venue has been listed under several names, but is currently called The Agora Theater and Ballroom located at 5000 Euclid Ave.

Charlie Parker spent quite a lot of time in Cleveland there is documentation of stories surrounding his stay and various performances. There was the JATP concert which featured artists like Flip Phillips, Dexter Gordon, Barney Kessel, and Sarah Vaughan. An advertisement of this performance at the Music Hall was found in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* printed on April 23, 1948. Another *Plain Dealer* ad showed that the JATP tour stopped in Cleveland later that year on November 28, 1948, with a completely different lineup including Sonny Criss, Al Haig, Tommy Turk, and Coleman Hawkins. Parker's third appearance in town was on September 30, 1949, with the Norman Granz JATP.

On February 13, 1949, the Charlie Parker Quintet was featured at Cafe Tia Juana. The personnel were Miles Davis, Duke Jordan, Tommy Potter, and Max Roach. This performance was alongside the Paul Gayten Trio and vocalist Annie Laurie. There is an ad found in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* with the headline "Yesterday's Song Hits Gives Supper Club a Fresh New Trend," printed February 15, 1949 (Peterson 2016).

Parker officially came to Cleveland as a solo artist where he performed in 1951, from May 7 to the 14, at Lindsay's Sky Bar located at E.105<sup>th</sup> Street and Euclid Ave. It is noted that he brought strings with him on this occasion with Roy Haynes as his drummer. An

ad was printed on May 6, 1951, in the *Plain Dealer* entitled "Swinging down the Avenue." He was such a hit in Cleveland he was scheduled to come back for another several days starting on August 27, 1951 (but it appears to be a mistake because Stan Getz appears to be on this date K. Vail *Bird's Diary*). He appeared one last time that year on November 26, 1951. An ad in the *Cleveland Press* lets us know that he was in Cleveland from April 16-25, 1954, at the Loop Lounge located at 614 Prospect Ave.

The club was managed by Ted Blackmon. Parker played with house band that included Fats Heard (dr), Rodney Richardson (b), and Jimmy Saunders (pno). Joe Mosbrook records an interesting story in his *Jazzed in Cleveland* series Part. 136. As Saunders was preparing for Parker to come into town he went to the local record shop to get a full knowledge of all of Parkers recordings. But Lo and behold one night Parker begins playing "Stella by Starlight" in F# and Saunders didn't know the song at all but Parker continued to play. This was last time Parker performed in Cleveland before passing away at the age of 34.



Permission to use by Joe Mosbrook

There are many instances where John Coltrane was found in Cleveland performing. His early years were playing with Clevelander Bull Moose and the band included the likes of Tadd Dameron, Bill Doggett, Frank Wess, Philly Jo Jones, and Benny Golson in 1951. By 1952 Coltrane was with Clevelander and Central High graduate Gay Crosse.



In particular Coltrane frequented Leo's Casino on various occasions. The original Leo's location was at 49<sup>th</sup> and Central Ave, but was burned down in 1962. The following year, Leo and his business partner Jules Berger opened again in a larger facility located at 7000 Euclid Ave.

**ROXBURGHE CLUB**  
CLEVELAND  
Ohio  
Featuring SEA FOODS •• BAR-B-QUE •• STEAKS ••

**GAY CROSSE**  
Appearing With His Famous Band  
**NIGHTLY**

**GAY CROSSE AND HIS BAND**  
The Finest Entertainment Will be the Polley  
Under the Manager, B. W. Walker

- Moderate Prices
- Adjoining Parking Lot
- We Invite You In Our Spotless Kitchen

**MEMBERS AND THEIR FRIENDS**  
**12710 Kinsman Road WA. 9827**

Permission to use by

Cleveland SGS

TRIPLE DOWNBEAT POLL WINNER



**JOHN COLTRANE**

TUES. JULY 24  
THRU JULY 29

*Tues. - Wed. - Open House*

**Thurs. thru Sun. Two Drink Minimum  
College Set Matinee Sun. 5 to 8 P.M.**

NO ENTERTAINMENT ON MONDAY NIGHTS  
Coming Aug. 7th - Dizzy Gillespie

**LEO'S CASINO**

DRIVE TO OUR DOOR:  
AN ATTENDANT WILL  
PARK YOUR CAR FREE

E. 49 STREET & CENTRAL  
CLEVELAND, O. EN. 1-8784

Permission to use by Cleveland SGS

In the 1960s, Coltrane performed five times in Cleveland. He played twice at the Jazz Temple the summer of 1963, and the following fall. This venue was located at 11404 Euclid Ave at Mayfield Road. Many other jazz greats performed in the city as well solidifying the jazz scene that was unknown to many. The times were changing and the music reflected the voice of each artist.

## *Chapter Three: Racial Tensions*

The underlining racial tensions had been in Cleveland since the beginning. But the tension was even more present when blacks started moving into predominately white neighborhoods after the Great Migration. Some whites would even use methods of intimidation and violence to scare to the newcomers away. It wasn't surprising that mobs of whites would terrorize the black families that decided to live in the more suburban neighborhoods. This behavior wasn't just directed toward ordinary black families. Various prominent doctors were bothered as well—some left and some withstood the violent antics. This definitely left a bitter taste in the mouths of other black families as they tried to decide if it was even worth living in a nice area.

### *The Pla-Mor Roller Rink*

The Pla-Mor Roller Rink had been a place for recreation for all ages since the 1940s. Located in the Cedar-Central area, it was the only black owned skating rink in Cleveland. Elmer "Al" Collins became the owner in 1942. This venue was a gem in the community hosting various events the kept the adolescent youth out of trouble and doing something constructive. The roller rink became even more popular because of the discrimination that blacks encountered at other facilities when the community became predominately black. A group from Nebraska attempted to go skating at another rink in the city and was turned away. The spokesperson of that business openly admitted that the rink would deny blacks unless they were there for private parties. In 1965, the rink was renamed the University Party Center and even had Count Basie and his orchestra perform the following year. Unfortunately, it was one of the many places burned down in the Hough Riots.

### *Hough Riots*

Cleveland's Hough area experienced an influx of black residents during the Second Great Migration as well. By the 1960s the population was mostly black. The deteriorating neighborhoods and other things sparked the Hough riots that began on July 18-23, 1966. This is the story as told by Marc E. Lackritz in his history thesis, *"The Hough Riots of 1966."* The Seventy-Niners club was located on E. 79<sup>th</sup> and Hough Ave. The Fiegenbaum brothers (Abe and Dave), who were the owners didn't have a particularly good relationship with the residents in the area.

At about 5 p.m., Dave ordered a prostitute out of his bar who was trying to solicit funds. The patrons there at the time heard the racial slurs after this incident. There were more slurs when another black patron bought cheap wine and asked for some water. After a note was spotted on the door saying "No water for Niggers" the community erupted. The police were called and the vandalism began. Fires began everywhere and it was hard for the police to keep an accurate account of all the damage. These events lead to the death and injuries of many innocent people. The damage was deeper than just "dollars and cents," it was intangible (Lackritz, 1968).

Another casualty of the riots was Benoris Toney; a married father of five sons who was shot in the face while driving. The shooter Warren "Butchie" LaRiche was resident of Murray Hill, also known as "Little Italy." This was a close knit neighborhood that was not welcoming to blacks. The Italian residents angrily protested against the busing of black students in their neighborhood to attend Murray Hill Elementary. The under enrollment of the other schools forced the city decided to address the imbalance that was taking place (Michney, 2006).

### *Glenville Shootout*

The notion of “Black Power” began to gain prominence during the mid 1960s, which was very unsettling to the white residents. Several black militant organizations emerged. Campaigns like The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), and Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) became very necessary during these tumultuous times. Many were tired of seeing activists killed and the police doing nothing about it. Afro Set was a Cleveland based black nationalist organization that the FBI considered extreme and dangerous.

Leading up to the shootout, some black youth were attacked by some of the white youth while walking through the Sowinski area. This was a predominately white neighborhood that border lined Superior Ave. After this incident a crowd gathered with their complaints. The very next day a young black man was shot by two white men sitting in a car, an eyewitness said it to be the owner of the neighborhood grocery store. The white-owned business was soon burned to the ground as a way of retaliation.

In the summer of 1967, Cleveland didn’t have any major disturbances. But cities like Newark, Atlanta, and Cincinnati experienced disorders. One of the reasons for the quiet summer could have been because of Carl B. Stokes campaign. He eventually became Cleveland’s first black mayor in the fall of 1967. While in office Stokes was under serious scrutiny, and those who voted for him had very high and seemingly unrealistic expectations of him. He sought the help of the Black Nationalist groups in Cleveland to stabilize the city when Dr. King was assassinated. Mayor Stokes initiated his *Cleveland: Now!* campaign during his tenure. The idea behind this was to revitalize the inner city neighborhoods, create youth activities and employment, community centers, and housing (Masotti & Corsi, 1969).

Fred “Ahmed” Evans was one of the leading nationalist and black separatism in Cleveland. He had a paranoid personality due to the injuries he sustained while in the armed forces in Korea. He owned the Afro Culture Shop and Bookstore on Superior Ave. The

store was often harassed by law enforcement and even closed down three times due to "sanitary violations." It is also stated they had been told he would have to close up shop pretty soon. These things could have definitely been triggers to his erratic behavior. He had an increasing following in the Glenville area. The apartment that Evans resided in belonged to the sixteen year old Black Panther Osu Bey, whose real name was Leslie Jackson. Evans was granted 10,300 dollars from the *Cleveland: Now!* Campaign to develop African crafts (Masotti & Corsi, 1969).

The Glenville shootout occurred the following year on July 23, 1968. Shots rang out on Cleveland's eastside. For the next five days violence ran rampant through the city. The story is somewhat unclear, but the police were informed of an abandoned car that had been parked on the street for several days. The Cleveland Police Department had received information about a scheduled attack to go in conjunction with the raid that had occurred at Akron's Black Nationalist Headquarters. The list included the names of several prominent men in Cleveland including Mayor Stokes to be assassination targets.

When the tow truck came William McMillian and Roy Benslay were met with shots coming from the bushes. Shots were fired and from 8:30-9:30 p.m. that night a total twenty-two people were either killed or injured. The two men sent to tow the car believed it to be a setup to bring the police in. The snipers along with Evans were ready for war killing whoever they may. Evans reply was "you police have bothered us for too long," when he was asked why he started the shootout (Masotti & Corsi, 1969).

After the fires and looting subsided, Mayor Stokes reached out to the National Guard for help and safety. The damage wasn't as bad as the Hough riots, this time it was in a more concentrated area. On May 12, 1969, Evans was found guilty and charged with first degree murder. He was sentenced to death by the electric chair on September 22, 1969. These are just some of the few documented cases of racial injustices that happened in Cleveland. It's sad to say, but it isn't different from what we face now in the United States.

"In this country American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate." (The Guardian, 1992)

Racism affected the school systems, and the United Freedom Movement was another organization that attempted to end segregated schools in Cleveland in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1954, court ruling of the Brown v. the Board of Education case in Topeka, Kansas ruled that it was unconstitutional to have segregated public schools. In 1965, there was a racial disturbance at one of Cleveland's east side high schools. It was one of the many issues that were going on at this time. On April 6, 1970, approximately 400 whites crowded outside of the school and began throwing rocks. There were about 200 black students that were escorted to the third floor cafeteria for safety. This incident was reported by Heidi Fearing in the *Cleveland Historical*. Luckily no one was hurt, the crowd left and the black students were able to board the bus safely. Incidents like this happened often over a fifteen year period.

Years before, the Depression and influx of black families caused the students to be sent to one or two schools where the conditions were very poor, overcrowded, and lacked the proper tools to teach successfully. After WWII many white families fled to the suburbs. Initiatives were taken to lower the dropout rate by incorporating life skill classes. In 1960, there were fourteen thousand students that were put on half-days. The lack of teachers and classrooms caused spaces to be rented out to relieve the overcrowding situation according to the *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*.

"In 1963, ninety-three percent of Cleveland's elementary school students attended segregated schools. Seventy-eight percent of middle school and eighty-three percent of high school students also attended all-white or all-African-American schools. Beginning in the mid 1960s, the Cleveland school board implemented busing to end segregation." (Patterson, 2002)

Cleveland attempted to counteract racism in the public schools by implementing a busing system. Unfortunately there were other ways to keep the students apart. All the black students ate lunch at the same time, were put in the same classes, and most likely weren't able to participate in extracurricular activities.

The Reed v. Rhodes case played a crucial part in ending forced segregation. In 1973, Robert Anthony Reed III and others sued the Cleveland Board of Education stating that the Cleveland Public Schools systems intentionally maintained segregation. This violated the students' 14<sup>th</sup> amendment rights, and was ruled unconstitutional on August 31, 1976, by Judge Frank J. Battisi of the United States District Court of the Northern District of Ohio. Integration programs were implemented, but the school systems remained under watch through the '80s and '90s.

There was civil unrest in various cities in the 1960s with the bombing in Birmingham, the assassination of Medgar Evers, Dr. King, and Malcolm X. The violent and non-violent demonstrations in the South highlighted the work that needed to be done. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement the music evolved allowing jazz musicians to state their opinions in music whether it was directly or indirectly. The urban cities were in such poor condition that prominent jazz clubs were seeing their last days.

During this time jazz artists like Nina Simone and Max Roach were outspoken and direct when confronting white supremacy. The album *We Insist! Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite*, with vocalist Abbey Lincoln was released in 1960. The suite includes "Driva' Man," (slave masters taking advantage of the women), "Freedom Day (Emancipation)", "Triptych: Prayer", "Protest", "Peace" (slavery in America and bondage in Africa), "All Africa" (civil rights in Africa and celebration of African Nationalism), and "Tears of Johannesburg" (in response to the Sharpeville Massacre).

The suite's order mimics Ellington's *Black, Brown, and Beige*, because it goes from the struggles of slavery to the civil rights issues. While performing in Chicago, Abbey Lincoln and Oscar Brown met at the Black Orchid. Brown and Max Roach began working on a piece together, but because of their different views on politics the project was aborted. Brown didn't realize that Max was recording for the *Freedom Now Suite*, until he got a postcard from Nat Hentoff. He soon found out that the works had been rearranged to fit the political views of Roach. This type of music was performed at benefit concerts in various states in the wake of the racial divide (Monson, 2001).



Songs about race weren't just popular in the '60s, artists like Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, and Duke Ellington performed these types of songs years before. Armstrong was an advocate, but some still felt he played into the stereotypes of an "uncle tom." Armstrong didn't have an easy life and at a young age he was sent to the Colored Waifs home where he cultivated his musical talents. His parents were young and their poor conditions weren't favorable when he was born. He felt the sting of racism early in his life. But as an entertainer he was able to bring people of multiple races together to enjoy this great music.

Armstrong performed a song by Andy Razaf and Fats Waller, entitled "Black and Blue." In the Broadway show *Hot Chocolates* (1929). It was originally Ethel Waters who performed this piece. The essence of the song dealt with her being plighted because of her complexion. The young men liked the girls with a lighter skin tone. When Armstrong recorded in 1955, he reworked the words and transformed it into an anthem against racial discrimination. He sung these heart wrenching lyrics hoping that society would see past his skin and appreciate him for who he was.

"I'm white inside, but that don't help my case  
Cause I can't hide what is on my face  
I'm so forlorn. Life's just a thorn  
My heart is torn. Why was I born?  
What did I do to be so black and blue?

I'm hurt inside, but that don't help my case  
Cause I can't hide what is on my face..."

Duke Ellington on the other hand was very cultured and combated racial issues in his own way. He was born in Washington D. C. the premier place at the time for the black middle class family. Ellington did encounter his share of discrimination even though he was a household name. Many people felt because he had such a huge following that he could have made a bigger impact speaking out against racism. When asked questions

about who his music was for he would say “my people,” but when asked to expound further it seemed as if he had to talk in a way not to ruffle feathers.

The *Black, Brown, and Beige* album that featured Mahalia Jackson was released in 1958, on Columbia Records. Ellington was musically able to go through the decades of black history to create the different movements. He had a larger white following and was able to play at the Carnegie Hall. If he would have been more vocal he would’ve more than likely lost a lot of money and fans.

Billie Holiday was another musician that sang about racism. She had many demons in her personal life she struggled with. The life of drugs, alcohol, and bad relationships took its toll on her physically. It is stated that while performing in the south with one of bands she was asked to put on darker makeup. Her fair skin made people think she was white. There was another instance where it is claimed that she put a red dot on her forehead to look Indian and got a hotel room without any problems (Kliment, 1990).

Abel Meeropol or Lewis Allan (his pseudo name after his two stillborn children) was the author of this poem. He eventually reworked the poem and put music to it for Billie. “Strange Fruit” was prompted after seeing a photo taken by Lawrence Bietler of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith being lynched in Marion, Indiana. Initially the title was “Bitter Fruit” before the name was changed. A musical analysis of this piece will be discussed in a later chapter. A lot of different artists have covered this piece, but none of them could sing it like Billie.

Sonny Rollins wrote a piece entitled *Freedom Suite* that didn’t quite receive the recognition it should have gotten. The entire first side was the title track, and on the B side was “Someday I’ll Find You,” “Will You still Be Mine?”, “Till There Was You”, and “Shadow Waltz.” These songs were written mostly by white writers and mostly show tunes. This was odd because of the opening quote on the album. The comments that Orrin Keepnews put in the liner notes took away from Rollins’ original idea and he later stated “this is not a piece about Emmett Till, or Little Rock, or Harlem or the peculiar election

laws of Georgia or Louisiana, no more than it is about the artistic freedom of jazz.”  
(Keepnews 1958)

“America is deeply rooted in Negro culture; its colloquialisms, its humor, its music...” (Rollins, 1958)

## *Chapter Four: Interview with Joe DeJarnette Jr.*

Joe DeJarnette Jr is a name that carries great recognition in the Cleveland music and arts scene. As a musician and educator his many endeavors has transformed the lives of many young Clevelanders. He was born on November 10, 1937, in a small town outside of Birmingham, Alabama. He is the eldest of ten children. He recalls as a child having a pretty decent life down south. He enjoyed the carefree life as a child whether it was crossing the tiny bridge located on their land that had beautiful crystal clear water beneath, or picking pecans from the pecan tree. Playing various sports occupied his time until he discovered his love for the trumpet. While still a young boy, he and his family moved to Cleveland where he developed his skills on his instrument.

DeJarnette started playing the trumpet in his late teenage years. After moving to Cleveland he attended East Technical High School, but graduated from John Hay High School where he began to take his education more seriously. He recalls while being at East Tech he was able to practice jazz with some of the teachers there. He soon became known around the city as “little Miles,” and was often encouraged by those in the community to stick with music. Although too young to get in DeJarnette recalls hearing Dizzy Gillespie playing at the Cotton Club in the 1950s. His friends Bobby Few and Cervas Jeffries would encourage him to listen to music down at the Modern Jazz Room.

After high school DeJarnette enlisted into the United States Army 19<sup>th</sup> and 173<sup>rd</sup> Military Orchestra and Band where he served for two years. He was released and received an honorable discharge in 1963. While in the service he received the rating of AAA. His musical education includes attending Cleveland’s Institute of Music where he studied Dalcroze Eurhythmics and theory with Harry Herfort. At the Hruby Conservatory he received instruction from Alios Hruby on trumpet and formal classical training. For more jazz training he studied with Phil Ruzzo at Lakeland’s Modern School of Music. Returning to Cleveland DeJarnette was able to take the jazz scene by force. His early influences of the

Modern Jazz Quartet allowed him to embrace his sense of professionalism along with his business attire that let others know he was serious about his music.

Artists like Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, Booker Little, Donald Bryd, Lee Morgan, Benny Bailey, Dizzy Gillespie, and Kenny Dorham played a part in him shaping his musical sound. Blue Mitchell stood out to him as well because he had a way of making the trumpet sound like a vocalist. But there was one that stood out among all the rest and that was Clifford Brown. DeJarnette told me “he had the sound, emotional dexterity and technique” and this quickly made him a favorite. Johnny Coles a trumpeter from Philadelphia helped broaden Joe’s range on the horn.

DeJarnette recalls playing with a Cleveland singer named June Valentine. She was known as a vocalist with a unique style who could “get inside the music.” Meaning she was very expressive in her approach and allowed the music to resonate from her soul. DeJarnette goes on to say she was known as a “musicians’ musician, a team player, and a dynamic vocalist.” Other mostly unknown players around Cleveland were Weezer Parker who played the tenor sax and was in Count Basie’s band at one point. You could hear La’Bird Ellis (pno), and Ace Carter (pno) at the Corner Tavern located at E. 78<sup>th</sup> and Euclid Ave.

Alto saxophonist, arranger, and composer Willie Smith as DeJarnette recalls was a good friend of his. He was a well known name on the Cleveland jazz scene that could easily be called a disciple of Tadd Dameron. He was known to jam with Benny Bailey and attended Central High. After transferring schools graduated from East Tech and formed the Counts of Rhythms. Although he did his share of traveling he made his way back to Cleveland where he led the Little Big Band that was featured at Tri-C JazzFest. Smith was also active in helping young musicians get started.

His contribution to music has not gone unnoticed his arrangements and compositions spanned from Joe Lovano, the Lionel Hampton Orchestra with a piece entitled “Cool Train,” to Motown artist like Marvin Gaye, The Supremes, and others. His most notable contribution was his work with Joe Lovano on 52<sup>nd</sup> *Street Themes* that featured an origi-

nal piece and several arrangements of Tadd Dameron compositions. The album won a Grammy and Album of the Year in the critics' poll in the *Downbeat* magazine.

Joe has not only made a name musically, but as an educator he has helped many inspiring musicians. He served as an assistant music coordinator at the Board of Education Supplementary Education Center as well as in Ft. Dix, New Jersey at one point in time. This center was to feel the void of services that weren't any longer available in the public schools. DeJarnette was also the music director for the City of Cleveland Department of Recreation's Cultural Arts Program. This department offered cultural experiences for youth of various ages in performing and creative arts. He also served as the director of the Cleveland Area Arts Council, which was a nonprofit organization. It advocated for the arts and also provided instructional programs that aided teachers in effective techniques in teaching about the arts.

Along with teaching he provided music education programs for twenty-six music teachers and has helped more than one thousand students. He has either developed or participated in programs like the Hough Community Spring Festival, the Cleveland Summer Arts Festival, and many other venues. He was the originator of the Jazz Mobile in the late 1970s and performed concerts around the city. This was at a time when jazz was slowly disappearing around Cleveland. The band was put together for the bicentennial of Ohio, and performed at the grand opening of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

DeJarnette soon formed a quintet that played an influential part in the creation of the world renowned Tri-C JazzFest. His quintet was very visible throughout Cleveland playing at churches and universities. For his diligent work he was named in the list of *Who's Who Among Black America*, and in *The Jazz Keepers*. He was recognized by the City of Cleveland in its Resolution of Recognition. After retiring he formed the Diversity and Jazz Orchestra. His passion for teaching and reaching people through music has kept him going all these years.

As a performer he had the honor of playing with jazz legends like Duke Ellington, Cannonball Adderley, Art Blakey, The Jazz Messengers, Bobby Hutcherson, and many more.

He recalls having many conversations with Gay Crosse. There was a BBQ joint owned by Crosse in the city not too far from DeJarnette's residence. Joe hasn't recorded many albums, but his work can be found an album entitled *Who Can I Turn To?* He can also be found mostly on the web playing with his band. One of the things that he takes very seriously from an early age is being on time for the job and ready to work. He loves finding players with whom he can communicate with through the music.

These days Joe DeJarnette can be found keeping to himself in the city of Lakewood. He still aspires to teach whenever he can. More importantly Joe loves to play his instrument, because it truly is a part of him. In the near future he and his quintet would like to resume lectures and performing music at universities again.

## *Chapter Five: Prominent Jazz musicians Affiliated with Cleveland*

Another notable Cleveland musician is trumpeter Freddie Webster who was another student from Central High School that really made a name for himself. He had a huge sound that many musicians especially Dizzy and Miles raved about. He is known to have worked with the Earl Hines big band, and jammed with Dizzy and others, as Mosbrook notes. This Clevelander was also in the happenings in the beginning of bebop at Minton's. It is also recorded that he was the in Lucky Millinder Orchestra as well as the Jimmie Lunceford Orchestra. He managed to accomplish a lot in his short life of thirty years.

Whatever the case may be the situation is sad, because who knows how much of a bigger impact he could have had on the jazz world. He is a mostly forgotten about player these days. There is some controversy surrounding Webster's death some say it was a heart attack while Miles Davis says it was bad heroin intended for Sonny Stitt in the autobiography *Miles* by Quincy Troupe.

"There was a concert that night that a lot of cats played in at Lincoln Square, which was a ballroom that was located where Lincoln Center is now. Man, that was a great concert of All Stars. Art Blakey Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Ben Webster, Dexter Gordon, Sonny Stitt, Charlie Parker, Red Rodney, Fats Navarro, Freddie Webster, and myself. I think it cost something like \$1.50 to get in and hear all those great musicians. Some people danced and some just listened.

I remember that concert because it was one of the last times Freddie Webster played in New York. When Freddie Webster died, in 1947, it made me sick. Everybody else, too, especially Diz and Bird. Webs-that's what they called him- died in Chicago of an overdose of heroin that was meant for Sonny Stitt. Sonny had been beating everybody out of their money to support his habit. So he did it in Chicago when he and Freddie were playing there. Whoever he beat arranged to give him some bad shit, probably battery acid or strychnine. I don't know what it was. Anyway,



Sonny gave it to Freddie, who shot it and died. I was sick over that for a long time. We were almost brothers, me and Freddie. I think about him, even today." (Troupe, 1989)

Born June 8, 1916, he left behind a very promising and vibrant legacy. After graduating from high school he joined the Marion Sears Orchestra and formed his own fourteen-piece band. Webster left Cleveland to travel with the Earl Hines big band in New York. He and Dizzy Gillespie began playing together and explored different sounds with other musicians that would later become bebop. In Miles' early years he recalls admiring Webster's sound and the two developed a close friendship. In the 1940s, he was really making a name for himself. During his career he played with Count Basie, Bud Powell, and others.

Tadley Ewing Peake Dameron was born on February 21, 1917, in Cleveland, Ohio. His parents were Ruth Harris Peake and Isaiah Peake, but shortly after Tadd's birth his mom remarried to Adolphus Dameron. He seems to have been born in a musical family. In a 1952 interview with Harry Frost, Dameron says that both his parents played the piano. That included his aunt and his cousins who were also musically inclined. He was another Cleveland native that attended Central High, and his early influences were Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington. While still in high school he began playing in Freddie Webster's fourteen-piece band (Mosbrook 2003).

By the age of twenty-one he was arranging pieces for the Jeter-Pilars Band. He eventually went on to New York with the Vito Musse band in 1940, where his arrangements were mostly swing. He is arguably one of the most influential bop pianists; his style was very melodic and unique. He became the arranger of Jimmie Lunceford's band and soon began developing his own style. After building a close relationship with Dizzy Gillespie, he began to arrange for the band. In 1948, Gillespie's big band premiered the orchestral piece "Soulphony in Three Hearts" at Carnegie Hall. He was able to successfully orchestrate beautifully while writing in the bebop vein. The same year Dameron led his own

group in New York that included the highly skilled Fats Navarro and later the brilliant Clifford Brown.

In 1956, Dameron and John Coltrane recorded *Mating Call*, an album that featured six of Dameron's originals. As talented as he was he struggled with staying away from drugs and was eventually sent to Lexington, Kentucky for treatment. It was there he lead an orchestra that included some of the other notable musicians that were going through rehab. A few years later his health declined and he passed away on March 8, 1965, in New York. His legacy as a writer and bop pianists still inspire young musicians to this day.

Albert Ayler was born on July 13, 1936, in Cleveland, Ohio. His father Edward encouraged his playing at a young age and taught him how to play the alto sax. He grew up playing in the church with his dad which helped develop his style. Ayler went on to John Hay High School where he continued to cultivate his musical talents and he studied at the Academy of Music with Benny Miller. In 1951, the first group he joined was the Lloyd Pearson and his Counts of Rhythm. After not being able to financially afford college he enlisted in the Army in 1958. The following year he was stationed in Orleans, France with the 76<sup>th</sup> Adjutant General's Army Band. The foundations of his style were laid in spirituals, brass bands, and rhythm and blues. He also had a vast understanding of the bebop style (Litweiler, 1984).

After he was discharged he looked for work in Los Angeles and Cleveland. But because of his "free jazz" style it proved to be more difficult to be accepted by the traditionalists. By early 1962, he settled in Sweden where he became a member of the Herbert Katz Quintet. This is where he met Cecil Taylor and played with his group. Ayler recorded his first album *My Name is Albert Ayler* in January of 1963. He returned back to Cleveland and then to New York. During this time he met Don Cherry and Ornette Coleman. While in New York, Ayler released his next album entitled *Witches and Devils* in March of 1964.

The years following Albert Ayler recorded and even sang on several more albums. Like his mentor John Coltrane; he seemed to gravitate to the more spiritual things when recording. The only time the two got to play together was at the Lincoln Center at the *Titans of the Tenor* concert in February of 1966. A few months later he returned home to Cleveland to play at the La Cave club. He seemed to never have gained the following he felt he desired, maybe because his music was just too far out. He was a leader of free jazz and the avant garde style in his own right.

Ayler dealt with depression and often blamed himself for his brothers' mental condition. Leading up to his death his wife at the time said he often threatened to kill himself. The pressure of looking after his brother, or the guilt of his mother blaming him made it hard to cope with life. On November 5, 1970, he disappeared and was found dead the 25<sup>th</sup> of that month. A lot of rumors circulated around his death, but it was presumed as an apparent suicide having jumped off the Statue of Liberty ferry as it neared Liberty Island (Schwartz, 1992).

Joe Lovano was been one of the major Cleveland faces in the jazz scene. He is the son of barber and jazz saxophonist Tony "Big T" Lovano. Tony played with saxophone greats like Stan Getz and Flip Phillips. Joe attended Euclid High School and his dad brought him to a lot of different gigs to learn music. After graduating high school, he enrolled in the Berklee School of Music in Boston. His years at Berklee allowed him to further expand his knowledge of music and explore different concepts to use. He eventually moved to New York and joined the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra in the 80's and played elsewhere when he wasn't on tour.

In 1985, the Joe Lovano Quartet recorded its first album *Tones, Shapes, and Colors*. A few years later in 1991 he was signed to Blue Note Records where he released a series of discs including *Rush Hour*, it featured large ensemble arrangements written by Gunther Schuller that Lovano soloed within. A few years later he served as artist-in-

residence at the world-renowned Tri-C JazzFest. He has a plethora of recordings as a leader and side man.

Art Tatum is arguably one of the best musicians to ever grace the piano. He was born October 13, 1909, in Toledo, Ohio. Although he technically was born in Toledo he spent a lot of time in Cleveland. He was born with limited vision, but with perfect pitch. He was able to pick out hymns or from the radio at a young age. He studied at the Columbus School for the Blind and learned Braille and studied music. His style developed into a beautiful stride piano sound that could not be mistaken for anyone else. He used intricate harmonies or melodic choices that really caused each piece he played to stand out. Sometimes it would sound like it was more than one person playing. He had the unique ability to span the piano very quickly without losing any forms of musicality in his melodic lines. Some would argue that his interpretations were too much piano, but its different based on your preference (Lester, 1995.)

While in New York, he played in cutting contests where he could destroy any competition around. When he made his way back to Cleveland he could be found playing at Val's in the Alley located at Cedar and near E.86<sup>th</sup> St. This place became his domain and anyone who tried to step to "his" piano would be horrible embarrassed. He eventually recorded his solo pieces like "Tea for Two", "Tiger Rag", "St. Louis Blues", and "Sophisticated Lady." No matter where his career took him he always managed to come back to Val's. Tatum left behind a legacy that was unmatched that younger musicians to this day try to grasp (Doerschuck, 2001).

Jim Hall was born in New York, but his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio when he was a child. Hall was born into a musical family and started learning the guitar at young age. His influences were tenor saxophonist like Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young. Later he studied at the Cleveland Institute of Music where he majored in music theory. It wasn't until he began playing in the Chico Hamilton quintet that he gained prominence. After

his stay with Hamilton he played with various artist including Jimmie Guiffre, and Ella Fitzgerald. But as a leader he recorded his first album in 1957, entitled *Jim Hall Jazz Guitar*. Years later as a sideman he was featured on Sonny Rollins *The Bridge* album. He also had the pleasure of working with the legendary Ben Webster, and Bill Evans (Wartous, 1990).

Hall's style of playing was very creative and laid back. It seemed he liked to allow the silence to resonate so that each passing note could be appreciated. He accomplished so many things throughout his career with the help of various collaborations. By the 1990s, Hall was recording with Telarc International of Cleveland. A Cleveland based independent record label that was known for the quality of its recordings. Hall released several albums under this label, and in the late 1990s, he even joined Lovano in Europe to lead a quartet. He performed well into his senior years and died peacefully in his sleep on December 10, 2013.

## *Chapter Six: Jazz Now*

The world of jazz began to lose its dominance to Rock and Roll and other forms of music. By the 1970s a lot of those jazz clubs that kept Cleveland thriving musically were slowly disappearing to mere memories. Jazz in Cleveland is still vibrant and encouraging the younger generation to become involved in this art form. Jazz still has a pulse in Cleveland through various artistic veins. There was a resurgence of a jazz revival and the city has made huge efforts to preserve the legacy.

Oberlin College has been a premier college in Ohio for many years. This private liberal arts college is known for not only admitting female students but for admitting black students regularly since the 1830s. However, by the 1880s, the college started to segregate their black students. The first black graduate from this college was George B. Vashon, who went on to be one of the founding professors at Howard University. The placement of the school allowed it to be the key place for slaves on the Underground Railroad. Oberlin is also home to the oldest continuously functioning conservatory that has produced many great musicians.

The discovery of student Anna Ernst, shows there was actually a jazz concert at Oberlin as early as 1944, nine years before the iconic Brubeck concert. A jazz combo led by pianist Frank Williams played at the student organized concert at Finney Chapel. The Oberlin News-Tribune headlined, "Holy Smokes! Jazz Concert in Chapel!" The personnel included trumpeter Wilbert Thompson, guitarist Eugene Robinson, saxophonist Al Price, drummer Donald Scott, and a singer named Leroy Dixon. The group played tunes from Duke, Cole Porter, and Bunny Berigan (Mosbrook 2013).

The live album *Jazz at Oberlin* was recorded at a time when jazz was starting to be considered a serious academic study at universities. The Dave Brubeck Quartet recorded in the Finney Chapel in March of 1953, and was released on Fantasy Records. This concert caught the attention of Dr. Wendell Logan who eventually developed the Jazz Studies Department. Jazz was normally something taught informally leading up to its first recipient of the formal degree. Some classes were put in place but not always offering credits. The University of North Texas was the very first college to offer a degree in Jazz Studies in 1946. It wasn't until 1973, when the conservatory started incorporating jazz into its curriculum. Beginning in 1989, it offered its first Jazz Studies degree.

Oberlin has one of the most prestigious music programs in the country. Great opportunities are offered to students as well as a top-notch education. The staff alone is great in their own right. The current head of the Jazz Studies department is Peter Dominguez he is also an instructor of the double bass. Its best students are nominated by the department to be included in the Oberlin Jazz Septet. This group of musicians travels across the states to various high schools, programs, and master classes.

Cleveland State University is the home to the Cleveland Memory Project. This online database not only showcases stories of Cleveland but surrounding areas too. It was launched in 2002; it includes pictures, videos, oral histories, and etc. Located in their Black Studies department is the Jazz Heritage Orchestra. It is a professional non-profit professional seventeen-piece band filled with not only great musicians, but educators as well.

The conception of the orchestra happened when the chair of the Black Studies department decided to have a meeting about establishing a professional orchestra. The mission was to preserve this artistic form of music and to spread the knowledge of this music. Among the younger generation especially the African-American youth jazz had diminished so much. Not only does the orchestra travel for performances, they are also

equipped to spread their knowledge in various school settings. The first performance was on September 18, 1998, and it has been thriving ever since.

A. Grace Lee Mims is what most would consider a community arts leader. Mims was an avid listener of the WCLV radio station which featured classical music. She was disturbed by the lack of African-American musical contributions. After meeting with the president of the station she became the host of The Black Arts on 104.9 FM spanning over thirty-five years. Before becoming a radio personality, she sang in the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus under Robert Shaw. She is also the wife of the late Howard Mims, and trustee at the Cleveland Institute of Music. This former librarian built a very extensive African-American library at Glenville High School on Cleveland's east side.

She and her late husband are known for their many contributions towards the arts and African-American history being preserved in Cleveland. It was because of her husband that Cleveland State University now has a Black Studies program. She has served as a voice faculty at the Cleveland Music Settlement since 1980. Mims has also been the recipient of honorary degrees and various awards for her service throughout the years.

The Cleveland Jazz Orchestra is currently under the direction of Paul Ferguson, and has been around for the past thirty-one years. It is one of the many voices of jazz in the northeast Ohio. This group of exceptional artists and educators promotes jazz through education, performance, and outreach. Along with this the Cleveland Metropolitan School District has formed a program called the All-City Arts Program which is a district wide after-school and weekend program. It provides artistic instruction from certified instructors. The Cleveland school systems have suffered greatly during the years, and music is usually the first thing to go. This program is ideal especially for the inner-city youth it allows them to channel their energies into something that is positive and constructive.



The Tri-C JazzFest is an internationally acclaimed festival that features legendary artists and vocalists in Cleveland. With the help of the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society, Dr. Thomas Horning and Reginald Buckner put the thought into action. In 1980, the first jazz fest was presented. The artists that were booked that year were Buddy Rich, McCoy Tyner, and Earl Hines for a two-day event. Hines was a key part when it came to adding an educational component to the fest by working and meeting with the students.

After struggling the following years, the fest was extended to ten days in 1984, which featured a concert from Sonny Rollins. The high profile concerts brought in money that made it possible for musicians to work with these great artists. Since then artists like Clark Terry, Billy Taylor, and Kenny Burrell have been artist-in-residence. At the current moment the fest is now a three-day summer festival. It includes affordable tickets to concerts, master classes for aspiring young musicians, and free events to the public.

The WCPN is a local station that is dedicated to providing public programming as well as jazz music. It was formally named WBOE as an educational station for the Cleveland schools that sometimes featured things produced by students. By the 1970s, WBOE was taken off the air due to financial issues. In 1983, the license was given to the Cleveland Public Library and the name was changed. Another radio station WGAR donated its entire jazz collection to WCPN to help them get started. Along with the jazz programming this station also offers ethnic shows that cater to the different groups that are represented.

Although there aren't many jazz clubs left in Cleveland there are some that are still promoting it. In most cases all the buildings that housed this rich history have been demolished. Take5Live Rhythm and Jazz Tapas Lounge is a new swanky lounge that is located in Cleveland's downtown at 740 West Superior Ave. Its name could be a play on

Paul Desmond's iconic "Take Five" piece that was performed by the Dave Brubeck Quartet in 1959. National and local artists are featured regularly while serving its patrons a wide variety of excellent cuisine.

Hubb's Groove is probably single-handedly the most well-known fusion band in Cleveland. The founding band members are Rodney Hubbard, Cliff Coleson, Eddie Baccus Jr, and Robert Hubbard Jr. The band has been around since 1995, under several names before finally settling on its current name. Hubb's Groove has been able to play various styles of music that has allowed them to play for many different artists like Terrance Blanchard, Kirk Whalum, Lafayette Carthon Jr, and Musiq Soulchild. Robert Hubbard the drummer of the band is one of the premier musicians in Cleveland. His accomplishments include being recognized in the top high school trio in the nation at the Tri-C JazzFest, only coming second to Roy Hargrove. Hubbard had the distinct honor of being named the top drummer in the State of Ohio. He has been a key piece in the city as he offers his services through producing and teaching now at The Hubbard School of Music and Fine Arts.

Lafayette Carthon Jr is a very well known and highly respected pianist and organist in Cleveland. He is the product of the Cleveland School of the Arts and Oberlin Conservatory. He has either played or arranged music for Grammy awarding winning artists like Celine Dion, Michael Jackson, and Donnie McClurkin. His musical techniques has skyrocketed him above the rest. He is very fluent in gospel, jazz, and classical music. He is the founder of the Carthon Conservatory, where he offers music and theory classes to ages five and up. His conservatory has produced many great musicians throughout Cleveland. He has also orchestrated a city wide shed session where musicians from all over get a chance to work out techniques and strengthen their chops. At the House of Blues he performs monthly with his group called Faith. Pastor Carthon is the graduate of

Moody Bible College, and is the senior pastor of Faith Church of Glenville. He is a very sweet and humble soul that is willing to help whenever he can.

Cuyahoga Community College and Berklee College of Music have created a special agreement to allow students who have successfully completed the requirements to transfer. The student has to show that he or she has completed the Associates of Arts or Associates of Science degree. The student must also pass the audition and interview process of Berklee. This contract has been on-going and will continue until the spring of 2017, where both parties can decide to continue or end the contract. This has been a great thing for students in the city. Not only are they able to receive an affordable education, but they are in the presence of many great musicians and opportunities. The partnership with Tri-C extends to over thirty other universities that have helped many scholars get their Bachelor's degrees.

Brothers Lounge has been around since 1959, and has been a place that showcases local and national talent. In 2004, the owners purchased a building and renovated so that the lounge could reestablish itself as the historical landmark in Cleveland. It is a place where you can enjoy a great meal and hear some jazz on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday's of the month. Nighttown is another place that has played a huge part in keeping jazz alive. Since its opening day on February 5, 1965, in the heart of University Circle, Nighttown has offered a superb experience to its guest. This space was originally owned by John Barr, and was formally named the Silhouette Lounge. As the surrounding spaces were bought it was settled that its new name would be Nighttown. Brendan Ring became the owner in 2001, and expanded the space even more. Acts from Freddy Cole, Esperanza Spaulding, and John Legend have all played at this legendary spot. Over fifty years later Nighttown is probably one of the largest restaurants in the Greater Cleveland area based on seating. It is also the home of the Cleveland Journalism Hall of Fame.

The Northeast Ohio Jazz Society played an extraordinary part in trying to preserve jazz. Willard Jenkins was the founder of this idea. He met with others who were interested in seeing this great idea come to fruition. The society was incorporated on March 22, 1978, and Jenkins was deemed president. The buzz of having a jazz society was beneficial and allowed artists like Art Blakey, Sun Ra, and the Cedar Walton Orchestra to play in the city. The grants from the National Endowment of the Arts and others helped make these things possible. The NOJS also became the recipient of one of the largest private grants in the history of jazz. The amount was about thirty or forty thousand dollars over the next few years. The NOJS played a crucial part in keeping jazz alive after the last major club that had live jazz performances closed. The group ended up growing tremendously and provided a newsletter called the *Jazz Central*. In conjunction with the NOJS, summer jazz concerts were presented in Cain Park Theatre, and collaborations with the first Tri-C JazzFest. Although it ceased operations in 2003, the community still benefits from the hard work and legacy of its members.

The Cleveland Bop Stop was originally opened at E. 40<sup>th</sup> and St. Clair by vibraphonist Ron Busch in 1991. After closing in 2000, Busch and Anita Nonneman decided on a new area. On March 7, 2003, the club reopened at its new location 2920 Detroit Avenue. He was able to design the intimate listening space with the perfect acoustics. He made sure that the best equipment and instruments were installed. The Bop Stop has been the central location for jazz musicians all around and was donated to The Music Settlement in 2013. The Settlement offers day school, music therapy, camps, music instruction, and services for special needs. Society Lounge, House of Swing, and Jazz 28 are also other places that have supported this art form in Cleveland.

In conclusion this study of Cleveland and its music has allowed me to appreciate my city even more. Although not as prominent, jazz is still a part of our early history. It will be in our future if we continue to take the necessary steps to insure that this music is be-

ing learned by young musicians. More musicians in the city of Cleveland have found it very profitable to learn various instruments and play different genres of music. What is happening now these days is a lot of fusion of gospel, jazz, and R&B. The musicians that you find in your church now especially in African-American churches are often very knowledgeable of those beautiful sounds associated with jazz. This allows the congregation to have a different kind of worship experience. This isn't surprising since these genres are in a way closely tied together.

This study has also allowed me to see that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done as far as getting a more complete history of musicians in Cleveland and their different stories. There are a lot of unsung heroes in the city that are around and have become a distant memory. Down the road, I would like to do a more in depth research project that highlights the hidden gems.

Brothers Lounge in 1963



Permission to photos by Brothers Lounge

Brothers Lounge present day



## *Strange Fruit Analysis*

The version I've decided to analyze and transcribe is the version Billie Holiday recorded for Commodore records in 1939. She was able to record for Commodore even though she was contracted with Columbia. I found it most difficult to notate what she is singing, because she sung behind the beat very often. This version is recorded in B minor, which is known as a dark key. I will compare this version to the February 1959, live recording for Kinescope. The notable difference before any serious analysis is the form for the 1959 recording is very loose and is in A minor.

For the 1939 recording she performed at Café Society an integrated club in Greenwich Village. She started about 70 seconds into the song after the piano interlude. The interlude puts one in a somber mood, the name "Strange Fruit" is initially deceiving, because it doesn't seem like she is going to sing about lynching. She was very expressive with the words she was singing. The February 1959 version seemed to be very expressive even more than the Commodore recording. She started off very solemn her face had a very sad expression it looked as if she had experienced what she was singing about. The piano is bluesier than the 1939 recording; those blue notes help us feel the emotion she was portraying. She liked to emphasize certain words like "bulging eyes", "burning flesh", and "pluck."

The piano began to build at the point when she is referring to the wind. The piano then drops out as she was talking about the sun rotting the flesh of those bodies hanging from the tree. It was difficult to not see the gruesome images in your head. The dynamic contrast makes the song more effective. She slowly moved from one note to another, instead of staying on the same note that is implied by the original music. Again she liked to drag out certain words for emphasis. For example beginning with the word "southern" she immediately introduced the context of the title of the piece. She emphasized "southern" again just in case you missed it the first time followed by "hanging from the poplar trees." The word poplar in this song introduced a rhythm we haven't heard



before. Poplar trees grow rapidly, but are short-lived this could play on the lives of the black men and women that were being lynched.

After this statement there a short piano interlude to allow what she has sung to sink in. When she began with “pastoral scenes of the gallant south” one would naturally think the beautiful and colorful land of the south. But she played on the words and we again identify that the colorful land had a dark image too. The smells of magnolias are paired with the smell of burning flesh. She then glissandos on the word “drop” in a way that it sounds like something is falling like how fruit would from a tree. On the last note of the song she ended on the fifth, leaving us feeling unresolved just like the issues happening in the Jim Crow south.

Beginning with mm.1 she started on the and of beat two, instead of right on the one. The beginning measure stayed on one note. That isn’t uncommon, because her range isn’t very large. Aside from that the beginning of the original piece is the same, but the rhythm is different. Measure two included embellishments between the E and C#, instead of just going from D to C# like in the original music. In the 1959 recording she chose to jump down a fifth right in the very beginning, drawing the audience in because she isn’t starting the tune like it been heard before.

The third measure has a jump, of a fifth the first we see in the song. The original music and the 1939 recording both contain a triplet, but in the original music stayed on the same note making it less expressive. She can be seen grimacing as she sang “blood at the root,” causing one to think she can personally recall seeing this happen. She colored the fourth measure with another triplet creating movement in the piece. She colored D while the F#7 can be heard underneath, there is also a half cadence at the end of the measure. In measure five she only sang two notes, but used the rhythm of the eighth and sixteenth notes to make it more interesting.

In the 1959 recording her voice sounded worn as she was singing she barely vocalized “southern breeze” with an emotionless face. Jumping to measure six in the original music there are two eighth notes, but she decided to sing a rhythm very different from the

previous and ended on a 9<sup>th</sup> which is a color tone for the F#7. In the seventh measure slightly growls “strange fruit,” expressing her disgust towards the entire in the 1959 recording.

The eighth measure ended with a perfect authentic cadence. The rhythm in the eighth measure is slightly different from what we’ve heard before. There is a piano interlude that can be heard in both recordings, but 1959 Kinescope recording is bluesier than the fluid interlude on the 1939 recording. The expression on her face imitated the sad sounds coming from the piano, she stood there barely blinking and staring off into space. The original music says she hummed during this part, but isn’t heard in the 1939 or 1959 recordings. There is a huge variation between the three versions in measures nine and ten. Firstly, the 1939 version has two full rests in both measures. Secondly, the original music has embellishments that first lead to the A# and eventually in the next measure ends on the F#.

The new phrase started with a combination of eighth and sixteenth notes that introduced the rhythm again after the interlude. When we approach the eleventh measure she added the fourth jump again from C# to F# to make the lyrics evoke more expression. It’s interesting the she used the jump as she sang “gallant south,” and on south she jumped down to the F#. In the 1959 recording she put special emphasis on “south” as well; her voice is very fragile and is barely able to sing the pitch. As we approached measure thirteen she managed to sing from the F# below the middle C to the F# above, she made use of the scale although her range isn’t that vast.

Entering into the fourteenth measure she scales back down to the C# as if to use the notes to metaphorically gaze at the face of the one being lynched. In the 1959 recording she sang this disturbing phrase a cappella, and we were able to hear a slight shuffle from the audience. The original music failed to evoke such emotion by practically staying on the same note the entire measure. She again slightly growled on “bulging eyes,” and as she sang “twisted mouth” she jerked her body ever so gently. It is the expres-

sions on her face that captured the audience, momentarily a look of a solemn innocence swept across her face.

Measure sixteen is very rhythmic in both the 1939 and 1959 recording as well as the original music. What stood out is the dramatic leap she took in the 1939 recording she dropped a fourth on “and fresh.” Her expression remained as sang “scent of magnolias,” and as the lyrics say “burning flesh” it is as if she smelled it there on stage. Entering measure nineteen she only varied from the C# once, but she added a rhythmic flare to make it more interesting and expressive this can be heard in the 1939 recording. The original music simply moved from one note to the next never capturing the essence of the words she is singing. In the 1959 recording the piano slid back in on “pluck” to emphasis the harsh and gruesome act. The piano began to build behind her as if to imitate the wind she is singing about, but laid out afterward.

In the 1939 recording the climax of the song happened in measure twenty-three where she does a ritardando as she began to sing “drop.” In the 1959 recording she is very emotional, and as it ended the instruments end dramatically and quickly. This is a very dramatic part of the song she channeled her emotions in the words she was singing. In the 1939 recording the notes move from the G#-G-F#, the falling in her voice allowed us to picture the battered bodies falling from the trees as if they were ripe fruit and that is the strange and bitter crop.



- 1937 Coronado  
Recording

1:06

# Strange Fruit

B- F#7 B- F#7

Sou - thern trees bear a str - ange fruit bleed on the leaves and bleed at the root -

leaf - 7-10 5 7-10 5 7-10 5 7-10 5 B- F#7

here be - lies swing - ing - in the south - ern breeze strange fruit hang - ing from the

B- 5-7

Pop - lar trees -

B- B- F#7 5-7 7-10 5-7 7-10 5-7 B-

go - for south the bul - ging eyes and the twin - lei mouth - scent of mag - nol - ias sweet and fresh

B- 3 5-7 7-10 5-7 7-10 5-7 B-

and the sud - den swell of burn - ing flesh here is the fruit in the leaves to pluck for

5-7 7-10 5-7 7-10 5-7 7-10 5-7 B- A 5-7 7-10 5-7

the rain to go - ther for the wind to suck for the sun hot, for the tree to dr -

A 5-7 7-10 5-7 7-10 5-7 B-

-op here is a str - ange and bit - ter - or - op

## Bibliography

- Doerschuk, Robert. *The Giants of Jazz Piano*. San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2001.
- Fearing, Hiedi. "Collinwood High School Riots." *Cleveland Historical* March 2016. Web.
- Henry, Lucas Aaron. "Freedom Now!: Four Hard Bop and Avant-Garde Jazz Musicians' Musical Commentary on the Civil Rights, 1958-1964." *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 962. <http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/962>
- Kliment, Bud. *Billie Holiday*. Los Angeles: Melrose Square Publishing, 1990.
- Kusmer, Kenneth L. *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870-1930*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- Lackritz, Marc E. *The Hough Riots of 1966*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Lester, James. *Too Marvelous for Words: The Life and Genius of Art Tatum*. New York City: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Litweiler, John. *The Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958*. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1984.
- Miday, Ryan. "Remembering one of Cleveland's Hottest Jazz Clubs: Café Tia Juana." *Call and Post* December 2015. Web.
- Mitchney, Todd. "Race, Violence, and Urban Territoriality: Cleveland's Little Italy and the 1966 Hough Uprising." *Journal of Urban History* 32:3 (2006): 404-428. Web.
- Masotti, Louis H.; Corsi, Jerome R. "Shoot-Out in Cleveland: Black Militants and the Police. A Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence". Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.
- Monson, Ingrid. "Revisited! The Freedom Now Suite." *Jazz Times* September 2001. Web.
- Mosbrook, Joe. *Cleveland Jazz History*. Cleveland: Northeast Ohio Jazz Society, 2003.
- Mosbrook, Joe. "Jazzed in Cleveland." *W.M.V. News*, 1998. Web.
- Peterson, Lief Bo. "Charlie Parker Chronology." February, 2016. Web.
- Olszewski, Mike. "Cleveland, Ohio Broadcast Radio Archives Project". August, 2014.
- Rosenburg, Donald. "2011 Martha Joseph Prize for Distinguished Service to the Arts". Cleveland Arts Prize June, 2001.

Sheridan, Chris. *Brilliant Corners: A Bio-discography of Thelonious Monk*. Westport: Greenwood Press. 2001.

Schwartz, Jeff. "*Albert Ayler: His Life and Music*". Unpublished, 1993.

Waite, Cally L. "*The Segregation of Black Students at Oberlin College after Reconstruction.*" *History of Education Quarterly* 41:3 (2007): 344-364. Web.

Warner, Hoyt Landon. *Progressivism in Ohio 1897-1917*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1964.

Wartous, Pete. "*Jazz Festival: How Music Has Followed Jim Hall Through Life*". *New York Times* June, 1990. Web.

Wintz, Cary D. *Black Culture and the Harlem Renaissance*. Houston: Texas A & M University Press. 1992.

## Web Links

<http://ech.case.edu/index.html>

[http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/hough/HoughRiots.pdf.](http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/hough/HoughRiots.pdf)

<http://www.inmotionaame.org/print.cfm;jsessionid=f8301558531444119280307?migration=8&bhcp=1>

<http://ech.case.edu/cgi/article.pl?id=IAM>

[http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Ku\\_Klux\\_Klan?rec=913](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Ku_Klux_Klan?rec=913)

[http://www.teachingcleveland.org/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=itemlist&task=category&id=123:african-american-history-in-cleveland](http://www.teachingcleveland.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=itemlist&task=category&id=123:african-american-history-in-cleveland)

<http://blackdemographics.com/states/ohio/>

<http://www.city-data.com/states/Ohio-History.html>

<http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/segregation/p/Causes-Of-The-Great-Migration-Searching-For-The-Promised-Land.htm>

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5332/>

<https://youtu.be/IKFg-tjBgMI>

<cobras.clevelandsgs.com>



## Discography

Armstrong, Louis. *Complete 1950-1951 All Stars Decca Recordings*. Definitive. 2004. Compact Disc.

Ellington, Duke. *Black, Brown, and Beige*. Sony Records. 1943.

Johnson, James P. *The Chronological Classics 1921-1928*. Classics Records. 1994.

Roach, Max. *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite*. Candid CAN 9002, 1960. LP.

Rollins, Sonny. *The Freedom Suite*. Riverside 258, 1958. Compact Disc.