

SWINGIN' WITH THE STALINISTS:

Collaboration and Authenticity in Postwar Soviet Jazz

by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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This thesis arose from the fusion of my passion for music and Soviet history. My main question for this paper involved how musicians viewed their professional relationship with state actors in terms of their conceptions of authentic Soviet jazz. To explore this topic, I looked at the Melodiya record collection at IJS and autobiographies by Soviet jazz musicians active during the period of study. My analysis of this material revealed that musicians had differing epistemologies regarding Soviet jazz, which influenced their perceptions of authentic Soviet jazz and the state's role in its creation. These conceptions often clashed with one another, which created deep rifts in the Soviet jazz scene. In my conclusion, I argued that musicians attempted to break this deadlock and establish a single hegemonic conception of authentic Soviet jazz by couching their arguments in official ideological discourse, which directed the negative scrutiny of the Soviet authorities towards certain conceptions of authentic Soviet jazz. The efficacy and ubiquity of musicians' use of official ideology in their arguments represented proof of their cultural fusion with the Soviet state regardless of their personal misgivings towards it.

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Discography

When I told my friend that I was writing my master's thesis on Soviet jazz, he furrowed his brow and smirked; "That must sound horrible," he said. Even though this was just a little joke, it revealed something about American conceptions of Soviet jazz music, namely that jazz and the Soviet Union were incompatible with one another, and therefore "Soviet" jazz must sound like cacophonous nonsense. In fact, my friend echoed the opinion of many historians who saw jazz and the Soviet Union as opposing forces in their scholarship. In their views, there was mostly jazz *in* the Soviet Union rather than *Soviet* jazz. Rejecting that position, I believe that Soviet jazz represented an organic product of a complex set of interactions between Komsomol officials and musicians. With this position, I place myself alongside historians like Gleb Tsipursky, whose book, *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption, and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union*, showcases the dynamic relationship between the youth and Soviet officialdom in the postwar period. I believe that my thesis contributes to Tsipursky's argument by looking more closely at the *ideas* compelling both sides to interact with one another in the creation of Soviet jazz.

This thesis argues that, despite differing epistemologies between Komsomol officials and musicians regarding authenticity in jazz, a shared belief in the productivity of collaboration promoted negotiation and compromise for both parties, which led to the creation of a uniquely *Soviet* jazz. From their side of the table, Komsomol officials, as state representatives of the youth wing of the Communist Party charged with molding future upright Soviet citizens, had an obligation to offer a vision of true jazz that promoted Soviet values at home and abroad among young people in preparation for the rise of communism. This entailed the fusion of Russian folk songs and classical music

with jazz to create a shining product of global (Soviet) multiculturalism distinct from its suspect (American) roots. Musicians who acted on this conception of Soviet jazz wrote fresh new songs and made names for themselves in the world of jazz music. However, musicians did not concede entirely to the Komsomol's view, instead using their position at the negotiating table to get something for themselves out of the deal.

The musicians' leverage stemmed from the fact that, unlike the Komsomol, they had multiple epistemologies regarding true Soviet jazz that both clashed and overlapped with one another, which enabled musicians to gain more concessions from the Komsomol; in other words, the Komsomol's clear views of proper Soviet jazz gave musicians a stable standard to which they could mold each of their works to look more favorable to the Komsomol, thereby increasing the chances of potential collaboration or at least decrease the chances of an unpleasant clash. Questions such as with whom one should play, what one should play, where one should play, and how one should play all influenced musicians in their decision-making process as they tried to get more out of their collaboration with the Komsomol. Because of these interactions, jazz became Soviet regardless of artists' sympathies toward the Soviet Union and communist ideology.

In the paper, I focused predominantly on the 1960s because this period represented the apex of collaboration between the Komsomol and jazz musicians, many of the latter even referring to this period as Soviet jazz's "Golden Age." The strength of the Soviet economy during this period and the general optimism of its citizenry meant that more people could enjoy the finer things in life such as cars, television, and radio. For jazz, the 1960s brought clubs, concerts, and albums to cities around the country that exposed people to Soviet jazz on a large scale. This consumption served an economic and

cultural purpose as a source of the Soviet peoples' enlightenment. Reimagined in the postwar period first by Nikita Khrushchev, the New Soviet Man would ultimately take the torch from the state as the premier builder of communism for the future. To do this, the Soviet citizenry needed to have all the necessary skills, which included a cultural education and an innovative spirit in addition to political education. Through the Komsomol's patronage in the 1960s, jazz became an important tool to educate young people about the glories of Soviet culture and have them become its future champions. Thus, economic prosperity and the Komsomol's push for cultural enlightenment provided jazz with a unique opportunity to assert itself as a legitimate and integral aspect of Soviet society.

To shed light on this topic, I utilized Melodiya's record collection at the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers-Newark and books written by Soviet jazz musicians active during the period. Records for the Moscow Youth Jazz Festivals from 1965 to 1968 provided the bulk of this data set because they represented the epitome of collaboration between musicians and state actors in the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> Although musicians wrote most of the blurbs on the record jackets, I interpreted them as political and cultural sources from the top-down perspective of the Komsomol officials, who oversaw the records' production and approved all materials contained within them; their authority as both leaders of the youth wing of the Communist Party and as early promoters of Soviet jazz's creation ensured that the records reflected their visions of Soviet jazz.

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<sup>1</sup> For brevity, I refer to these festivals later by their abbreviated titles on the record jackets as Jazz 65, 66, 67, and 68.

For jazz musicians' books, I read them as primarily social and cultural sources to gain a bottom-up perspective on how each musician conceived of real jazz and the music's proper role in society.

Reading the book sources required an acknowledgment of the unstable nature of memory because they all were written after the period discussed and all but one after the fall of the Soviet Union. To address this issue, I have juxtaposed the authors' accounts with one another and placed them within the historical periods in which the authors wrote their books. For instance, Alexei Batashev's 1987 *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, published in the early years of Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure, depicted jazz's relationship with the Komsomol in a more positive light than Alexei Kozlov's 1998 *Kozel na Sakse* [*Goat on the Sax*], which was written in the chaos after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, the issues examined in these sources did not detract from the authors' invaluable first-person perspective of the events and their thoughts about the music.

In fact, these "flaws" in the books worked to my advantage in that they allowed me to extract different conceptions of Soviet jazz out of each author. Rather than developing and then adhering consistently to one epistemology regarding authentic Soviet jazz, musicians' views shifted over time in response to their life experiences and recollections of past events. For several authors discussed in the thesis, this meant that they asserted seemingly contradictory views of Soviet jazz in different parts of their books. This allowed me to map more closely the tools used by musicians to construct their conceptions of truth in Soviet jazz. These tools, which manifested themselves as topics of controversy within Soviet jazz, drove forward the debate on authenticity while categorizing musicians based on shared opinions.



I organized this paper by theme, particularly by the issues that made up each group's epistemology regarding real jazz and the impact that such ideas had within each group and its interaction with the other group. The first section of the paper covers the historiography on Soviet jazz. The Komsomol's epistemology comes first, followed by the key issues in musicians' epistemologies; this structure mimics how musicians responded to the Komsomol's set epistemology at the time. However, both the Komsomol and the musicians are present in the discussion of each epistemology, reflecting the intertwined nature of their relationship. In the conclusion, I look at the fate of Soviet jazz after the Soviet Union's dissolution and what this event meant for the bond between Soviet jazz and the state overall. However, an interpretation of this momentous event must include an acknowledgement of American ideological perceptions of jazz and the role they believed the music played in the fall of the Soviet Union. In the opinion of some Americans, jazz served as a slow-acting poison in the Soviet organism.

Historiography of Soviet jazz versus jazz *in* the Soviet Union cannot escape the proximity of politics to culture in this topic, which influences how historians view the state's role in promoting jazz music and the relative level of agency possessed by musicians in their interactions with the state. In line with American political perceptions of jazz *in* the Soviet Union, some historians depicted the state as an all-powerful engine of oppression that sought to stamp out jazz as an emblem of freedom. Others, echoing the official Soviet view, saw Soviet jazz as a champion of open cultural expression which worked hand-in-hand with an enthusiastic public. The third group of historians stood somewhere in the middle, offering a more convoluted view of the jazz scene and the dynamic nature of the actors' agency. However, the extremists must come first.

Frederick Starr and Penny von Eschen presented the socialist state as a negative force in the development of jazz in the Soviet Union because the state's conception of the music as a racial contaminant urged it to diminish the music's influence. Starr provided perhaps the harsher criticism of the state in *Red & Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union*, in which he argued that the Soviet state acted as a parasitic boss who endowed himself with the sole right to engage in patronage of the arts, forcing musicians to choose a state contract or starvation, and the ability to set the terms of proper Soviet jazz music. Paralleling the efforts of other European countries in the postwar period, the Soviet government endeavored to make jazz exotic in such a way that it would lose the meaning and cultural context from which it first arose in the American South. Before Soviet officials could accept a musical genre based in Black American culture, they had to "transform its perpetrators from modern urban people into Voltaire's Chinese or Diderot's Hindus. Then they could be showered with condescending praise, and their art could be placed safely in a museum case, like a savage's ornamented ax whose beauty can be admired without reference to the fact that its practical function was to lop off heads."<sup>2</sup> Despite the Soviet Union's claim that its society did not suffer from the racial hostilities that plagued the United States, some Soviet officials showed apprehension towards any state patronage of "Black" jazz music. Penny Von Eschen's book *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* corroborated this claim by highlighting discussions for a planned American jazz tour in the Soviet Union in the early 1960s. While American officials had their own reasons for preferring Benny Goodman over more contemporary black jazz innovators like John Coltrane, Von Eschen stated that

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<sup>2</sup> S. Frederick Starr, *Red & Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917-1980*, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 74.

Soviet officials acted as the decisive force in choosing Goodman; his perceived proximity to the classical music of the European tradition pleased Soviet officials and put them at ease. In contrast to the fast-paced and unrestrained fervor of Black American musicians playing bebop or free jazz, seen as “more distinctive and thus more dangerous to present to Russians,” Goodman’s slower and more predictable performances seemed like the safer bet.<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that some Soviet musicians felt disappointed about the missed opportunity to see more recent artists’ works, they did not express antagonism towards the state because they counted on it for their paychecks and access to concert venues.

Although Alexei Yurchak agreed with the position of Starr and Von Eschen that the state did not create a positive atmosphere for the enrichment of jazz music in the Soviet Union, he offered a more nuanced depiction of the state’s relationship with jazz music that involved a convoluted mix of pro and anti-jazz policies in the postwar period. In this depiction, Soviet authorities struggled to decide on a specific party line on jazz music given its proletarian origins in southern Black America and symbolization of American pop culture. Rather than choosing one or the other, policies reflected both: praising jazz music for “its roots in the creative genius of slaves and working people and [condemning] it as bourgeois pseudo-art that [had no] connection to the realism of people’s culture.”<sup>4</sup> This approach invariably led to a constant state of uncertainty in the 1950s and 1960s for musicians who just wanted to practice their craft and entertain people.

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<sup>3</sup> Penny M. von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 104.

<sup>4</sup> Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 165.

Lastly, Gleb Tsipursky argued that the state had a firm commitment to promote innovation in Soviet jazz because it viewed the genre as a tool to unlock the true potential of communism. In *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption, and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union*, Tsipursky rejected past Western conceptions of a Soviet state disconnected from and indifferent to its own population's concerns and desires; instead, he offered the supposition that the Soviet state in this period regularly interacted with its people as part of Khrushchev's plan to prepare the youth for the construction of communism by 1980. To make Soviet society more inclusive and encourage young people to take up the mantle of building communism, Khrushchev relaxed restrictions on consumer goods and popular music such as jazz.<sup>5</sup> The Komsomol also sought out jazz musicians to play at its sponsored events to draw in more young people. With access to a new source of patronage, jazz groups could practice their craft more openly and develop their own repertoire separate from their American counterparts. The rise of a uniquely socialist version of jazz calmed the Soviet state's fears of American cultural imperialism and provided proof to young people that "having a homegrown, socialist version of jazz [could offer] socialist fun as part of an alternative modernity."<sup>6</sup> In this formulation, young people engaged with the state as equal partners in a mutual exchange. Other historians did not have such a rosy picture of relations on the ground.

Frederick Starr, Lisa Davenport, and Leo Feigin, assuming the incompatibility of jazz music and Soviet state goals, presented Soviet jazz musicians' efforts to pursue the creation of their own authentic works as valiant, yet ultimately futile, dissidence against

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<sup>5</sup> Gleb Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption, and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1945-1970*, Pitt Russian East European Series (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016), 99.

<sup>6</sup> Tsipursky 200.

an intransigent and powerful state bureaucracy. For Starr, the unrestrained bodily movement in dancing to jazz defied conservative moral values espoused by the Soviet state, which confirmed the genre as subversive and subject to state persecution.<sup>7</sup> As a result of this, anti-jazz Stalinists in the 1950s and 1960s inadvertently turned the genre into a “symbolic rallying point for all those disaffected by the state’s heavy-handed attempts to impose a drab conformity ‘from above’.”<sup>8</sup> Jazz musicians, therefore, became rebels in the fight for liberalization in cultural expression. However, no matter how strongly jazz musicians felt about their mission, they could not ignore the fact that the state represented the main supplier of contracts. Thus, their relationship with the state was “literally parasitic, arising from the musician’s need to eat.”<sup>9</sup> Although Starr also claimed that the state’s patronage of jazz musicians led to the creation of new and specifically *Soviet* jazz compositions, he dismissed them as inauthentic; instead, he believed Western hits embodied authentic jazz because they undermined the Soviet state as products of the “Free” World. Soviet jazz, as a state-sponsored product of the Soviet Union, was not authentic because it came from jazz music’s oppressor. Davenport approached the topic from a similar angle in *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* through the portrayal of Soviet jazz musicians, who yearned for American jazz hits like some forbidden fruit. To Soviet musicians, “American jazz represented both the freedom of expression and the spirit of rebellion against authority that [they] so fervently sought to emulate” in their own music.<sup>10</sup> Subgenres like free jazz showcased the

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<sup>7</sup> Starr 91.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 232.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 267.

<sup>10</sup> Lisa E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era*, American Made Music Series (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 107.

unbridled potential that artists could harness in a free and open democratic nation like the United States. This meant that Soviet fans who went to see American jazz musicians' performances engaged in an act of rebellion against the "political structures of Soviet Communism."<sup>11</sup> Davenport also claimed that the growth in popularity of jazz music in the Soviet Union, aided by the jazz tours sponsored by the U.S. State Department, brought on the "Soviet Union's loss of cultural and political credibility among the Soviet people" and the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.<sup>12</sup>

Feigin and the contributors of his book *Russian Jazz: New Identity* stressed even harder the complete lack of compatibility between the goals of jazz musicians and those of the Soviet state, claiming that the former had to walk a tightrope between the evasion of state oppression and associations with the United States. For contributor Efim Barban, figuring out how to stay under the radar of state scrutiny during the creation of authentic jazz represented a crucial task for people's survival under the Soviet state's oppressive rule. Using state patronage to increase the scope of their music's exposure, musicians provided people with an "outlet for the realization of individual life...and the manifestation of human privacy" in a state which shunned such expression through the imposition of an alienating collectivist ethos.<sup>13</sup> Soviet jazz musicians also actively experimented with mixing national elements within jazz compositions to celebrate their own national cultures, not the socialist brotherhood which foretold an inevitable melting of different peoples into one, under Russian dominance. Thus, jazz became "one form of

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<sup>11</sup> Davenport 70.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 116.

<sup>13</sup> Efim Barban, "Soviet Jazz: New Identity," in *Russian Jazz: New Identity*, comp. Leo Feigin (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1985), 12.

struggle against [the] cultural Russification” pursued by the Soviet Union, especially in the Baltic States.<sup>14</sup> However, these subversive efforts against Soviet power did not mean that jazz musicians and their audiences supported the United States, in contrast to the polarizing tendencies in Cold War politics which assumed that the rejection of one power naturally entailed the acceptance of the other. Feigin portrayed American critics of Soviet jazz as condescending in their treatment of Soviet jazz musicians. American critics often did not care to understand the cultural nuances within Soviet jazz music, instead preferring to fall back on “stereotyped routes” such as exotic depictions of peasant boatmen on the Volga or nomads in Central Asia.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, Soviet jazz musicians often faced the chauvinism of American critics who saw them as if they existed on some lower artistic plain. This condescension meant that the Soviet state remained the only realistic patron for its musicians. With a sigh, these artists entered into contracts with their devil.

In contrast to the formulation of Soviet musicians’ hostility to the state, Sergei Zhuk and Diane Koenker emphasized indifference and begrudging acceptance as musicians’ core attitudes toward communist ideology and state patronage, which represented an affront to the state’s conception of the active Soviet citizen. In *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dniepropetrovsk*, Zhuk argued that young people in the Soviet Union scoffed at the state’s attempts to make hip forms of entertainment that could inspire young people to participate in the lofty goal of building communism. The idea to develop more Soviet forms of jazz did not excite young people who already deemed socialist ideals boring. In contrast to the proposition to

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Leo Feigin, *Russian Jazz: New Identity* (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1985), 182.

put a socialist face on jazz music, young people preferred to listen to Western jazz and rock music, which represented freedom and fun to them. The immense popularity of Western culture thus “undermined all efforts by the local Komsomol activists to carry out important ideological campaigns devoted to the patriotic education among local youth.”<sup>16</sup> However, Zhuk did not claim that Soviet youths acted as passive consumers of Western culture. Instead, Soviet youths perceived the West through their own distinct cultural lens, transforming their understanding of the related works’ meaning. Koenker took a similar approach in *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* by stating that Soviet jazz musicians accepted state patronage out of sheer necessity and used it as a steady source of income so they could have more opportunities to play jazz music. To garner “political (and cultural) acceptability and to create extended opportunities, [jazz musicians] accepted the closer monitoring” of state organizations like the Komsomol.”<sup>17</sup>

Differing slightly from Zubok’s presentation of jazz musicians’ indifference as a form of immunity to stage ideology, Koenker argued that both pro-state and anti-state jazz musicians unwittingly absorbed aspects of that ideology in discussions of their own works. One notable instance of this inadvertent osmosis involved discussions of authenticity within the Soviet jazz community, whose establishment of rigid parameters for proper jazz music reflected the state’s own hegemonic understanding of high and low art.<sup>18</sup> Thus, musicians’ indifference to the state’s ideological aims for jazz music did not

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<sup>16</sup> Sergei I. Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk, 1960-1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 165.

<sup>17</sup> Diane Koenker and Anne E. Gorsuch, *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 188.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 158.



exempt them from the state's cultural influence. By accepting some measure of state patronage, jazz musicians could not extricate themselves from the immense cultural power exerted by state organs. For historians like Tsipursky, most jazz musicians did not have the desire to do so.

Tsipursky presented jazz musicians and their fans as active participants in state patronage whose development of a uniquely Soviet form of jazz music contributed to the construction of communism. For him, the jazz community saw no contradiction between the music and Soviet ideology. Rather than interpreting jazz musicians' disagreements with the state authorities as proof of their disenchantment with the Soviet Union, musicians and fans saw them as opportunities to help their country uphold its ideals more zealously; in other words, young people's willingness and ardor to "reform the Soviet system and to push the Soviet Union towards a more pluralistic modernity" emulated the kind of active citizenship idealized by the Soviet government under Khrushchev's leadership.<sup>19</sup> Although local authorities watched the rapid construction of jazz cafés in major Soviet cities in the 1960s with apprehension, these sites became important for the development of Soviet jazz by acting as a nexus for musicians to meet one another and exchange ideas. Soon after their opening and unprecedented success, jazz musicians sought out Komsomol support for gigs at local cafés. While Komsomol officials took this offer with the caveat that they needed to temper jazz before they could support it fully, this did not deter musicians, who continued to win over officials and make them see the potential benefits of jazz music for the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Tsipursky 181.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

In slight contrast to Tsipursky, Reinhold Wagnleiter and David MacFadyen presented musicians' willingness to collaborate with the state as a more complicated matter in which they seemed optimistic about state patronage while also showing an interest in softening the state's rigid ideological point of view. In *Here, There, and Everywhere: The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture*, Wagnleiter argued that Soviet jazz musicians took pride in both their collaborative work with the state and their success in expanding the limited artistic framework set by Soviet officialdom. Having concocted a "brand of jazz that was not technically mass culture, but was both able to fulfill nationalist goals and enjoy popular support," Soviet jazz musicians believed that they could lead Soviet society in a different direction without undermining the essence of the Soviet project itself.<sup>21</sup> David MacFadyen corroborated this position through an examination of Leonid Utesov's musical career in *Songs for Fat People: Affect, Emotion, and Celebrity in the Russian Popular Song*.<sup>22</sup> Utesov worked with the state because he believed in and supported the state cause, however, he also wanted to distance jazz from ideology to preserve some measure of artistic freedom for musicians like himself.<sup>23</sup> In the 1960s, Utesov became a spokesman for state-sanctioned jazz in the Soviet Union at the height of the music's popularity. For MacFadyen, Utesov's energy and enthusiasm for collaboration with the state showed that musicians believed in Soviet ideals and wanted to work towards their realization.

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<sup>21</sup> Reinhold Wagnleiter and Elaine Tyler May, *Here, There, and Everywhere: The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture* (Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2000), 187.

<sup>22</sup> Utesov was a famous Soviet jazz musician in the 1930s and 1940s known for his mix of jazz and variety music.

<sup>23</sup> David MacFadyen, *Songs for Fat People: Affect, Emotion, and Celebrity in the Russian Popular Song, 1900-1955* (Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 130.

I position myself alongside historians like MacFadyen, who depicted jazz's compatibility with Soviet values and the willingness of musicians and the state to work together; however, I distinguish myself from this group through a more in-depth analysis of the relationship of the state actors and musicians and how it affected each of them. Like in a real relationship, each partner changed in some way to adapt to the other person, regardless of their intention at the start to do so. After enough time together, they could not easily distinguish their own characteristics from those they adopted from their partner. While they both tried to hold onto certain values to retain their individuality, this imperfect fusion meant that the relationship's potential collapse could cause a lot of harm, especially to the partner more invested in the relationship. However, the excitement of the new romance pushed those concerns to the sidelines. For the bookish rule-abiding Komsomol, the mysterious jazz musician's bad-boy persona seemed too tempting to ignore.

## PART 1-THE STATE

### **That New Soviet Man Sure Can Play!**

The Komsomol believed that authentic jazz had an edifying role to mold the youth into the New Soviet Man in the postwar era because both jazz and the New Soviet Man promoted the values of expertise, initiative, and innovation. Like the New Soviet Man, jazz musicians strove to break barriers while also maintaining traditional notions of technical mastery. Jazz musicians wanted the expertise to master their craft, the initiative and drive to be able to do so, and the innovation necessary to make their music accessible and distinguish themselves as arbiters of world culture. By highlighting musicians' belief

in these three values, the Komsomol made the argument that musicians embodied the New Soviet Man who would introduce the world to the new age of the people's culture.

The cover art for the Jazz 67 album, considered by many Soviet musicians the highlight of the Moscow Youth Jazz Festivals, showcased this ideal with the scene of a musical conductor in the act of creation. Depicted as a simple black contour, the conductor waves his baton, giving rise to a sea of colorful shapes of different sizes. The colorful shapes, representative of jazz creativity, mix with one another as they open the stage's curtain. The opening curtain, made up of more uniform red blocks, is representative of the socialist state making way for the conductor's colorful blocks of jazz, which get imbedded in the curtain's fabric. In full view, the image portrayed on this album asserts that jazz had an important role to play in the New Soviet Man's drive towards communism. Jazz musicians and the state needed to work and grow together in pursuance of this common goal. The conductor heralded the rise of a glorious solo and the grandiose project of communism. Only a true expert like him could grapple with the immensity of this task.<sup>24</sup>

The Komsomol argued that jazz musicians' expertise in the mastery of their craft and willingness to share that knowledge captured the first essence of the New Soviet Man. Oleg Lundstrem's Variety Orchestra represented one group which readily took up this noble task. The orchestra at its inception consisted of motivated university students who wanted to become shining stars of jazz musicianship. The orchestra's emphasis on perfection inspired the orchestra's members and their audiences to follow its example. On the record jacket of their self-titled album, the text states that "fans of jazz music

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<sup>24</sup> *Dzhaz 67: Chetvertiy Moskovskii Festival Molodezhnikh Ansamblei*, second record, Melodiya 33 Д-020985-86, 1967, vinyl recording.

appreciated the new collective's professional mastery and unique artistic style. The demanding atmosphere and artistic drive made this collective a good school, which taught many of the now-famous jazz musicians and variety artists.”<sup>25</sup> Above all, these seasoned musicians wanted to hone new bandmembers' skills while also striving to improve themselves.

The Komsomol's celebration of expertise in jazz as the first essence of the New Soviet Man encouraged musicians to think about jazz in the same way, leading musicians to connect their expertise in jazz with their everyday jobs. In the 1960s, most Soviet jazz musicians did not play jazz full-time, but instead held jobs in technical sectors like engineering, architecture, and economics; recognizing the importance that the Komsomol associated with such professions, musicians purposefully emphasized the expertise required of both. This intellectual fusion of lauded professions with jazz brought “repute and clout to Soviet jazz” through the praise of the New Soviet Man's expertise.<sup>26</sup> Stressing this expertise also showed that musicians had the drive to carry out all duties required of the New Soviet Man.

Personal initiative represented the second essence of the New Soviet Man, which the Komsomol saw as essential to “real” jazz music; this jazz lauded musicians' untiring efforts to expand their genre's scope and make their music accessible to the world. On the back cover of the Jazz 65 record, the text applauded the energy of Alexei Kozlov's Quartet, stating that “since starting the ensemble in 1961, the musicians have played nonstop in jazz festivals in Tallinn, Tartu, Leningrad and Moscow as well as in café-clubs like the Molodozhnoe [KM]. In 1962, they represented the Soviet Union at the

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<sup>25</sup> Oleg Lundstrem, *Variety Orchestra*, Melodiya C 0-1333-4 166, vinyl recording.

<sup>26</sup> Mikhail Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz* (Moskva: Litres, 2017), 70.

international Jazz Jamboree festival in Warsaw.”<sup>27</sup> Their tours across the Soviet Union allowed them to show off their skills to a huge swath of different peoples.

By celebrating initiative in Soviet jazz, the Komsomol encouraged musicians to feel pride in their own strict work ethic too. Alexei Kozlov talked about this in-depth in *Kozel na Sakse*, in which he discussed how this value in the New Soviet Man influenced his own promotion of jazz. During the early 1970s, Kozlov wanted to make a jazz-rock fusion band despite the authorities’ skepticism towards rock music. To convince the authorities of this project’s necessity for furthering Soviet cultural progress, he emphasized the value of initiative in his project; he argued that his push for his “own form of jazz and rock music will not bring about the fall of Soviet culture but, on the contrary, its enrichment and strengthening. Roughly in such expressions [he] composed a small tract, bolstered by a few Marxist statements.”<sup>28</sup> In the book, Kozlov proceeded to dismiss the framework of his past argument as proof of his delusion, nevertheless, the statement still held true because he believed it at the time. In the early 1970s, he wanted to put in all the work necessary to make something great and unique.

Innovation acted as the third and final essence of the New Soviet Man in jazz because the creation of original works showed off the Soviet Union’s cultural strength and enriched its peoples, thereby aiding the larger communist cause. Soviet musicians went back to their cultural roots to create new forms of jazz that everyone could enjoy. On the record jacket for *Oleg Lundstrem’s Variety Orchestra*, the text makes it clear that his band is always searching “for the path leading to the creation of an original style of

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<sup>27</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, first record, Melodiya C 01157-8, 1965, vinyl recording.

<sup>28</sup> Aleksei Kozlov, *Kozel Na Sakse i Tak Vsyu Zhizn* (Moskva: Vagrius, 1998), 284.

Soviet jazz, which utilizes the achievements of the globally recognized jazz classics while at the same time drawing on the diverse musical wealth within the Soviet Union.”<sup>29</sup> Yet again, the text placed the stress on the musicians themselves, who voluntarily expanded the parameters of jazz creativity.

The Komsomol’s predilection for fresh new works gave musicians more incentive to pursue original projects because such projects could increase the accessibility of their music for listeners. Musicians realized that innovation, through mixing jazz with folk and classical elements, could help cross cultural and intellectual bridges, thereby increasing the accessibility of their music. In his book *Etot Moi Dzhaz* [*This is My Jazz*], Mikhail Kuel believed that jazz would “always remain young through its fervor, unceasing desire to search for the new and unexplored, impatience for routine, and sincere need to reach the people’s soul.”<sup>30</sup> Without this unquenchable thirst for something new, musicians like Kuel recognized that they could not reach the audience and, therefore, they did not deserve to call themselves real performers. As the Komsomol argued, musicians could not complain about a lack of source material for inspiration considering the cultural wealth present in the Soviet Union.

### **Wunderkind: What Makes Soviet Jazz So Special**

While the New Soviet Man was an abstract ideal, the Komsomol had more concrete expectations for real Soviet jazz, such as stressing the factors that made Soviet jazz an authentically *Soviet* cultural product; these factors included the kinds of people that played it, what they played, and how their contributions made jazz itself more at home in the Soviet Union rather than in the United States. The Komsomol argued that

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<sup>29</sup> Oleg Lundstrom, *Variety Orchestra*.

<sup>30</sup> Mikhail Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz* (Moscow: Litres, 2017), 103.

dedicated Soviet jazz musicians took pride in the uniqueness of their art. These musicians thought of themselves, not the Americans, as the future leaders in jazz innovation. After all, the Komsomol viewed Soviet society as one which fostered a more conducive environment than the United States for people's creative expression thanks to its acceptance of all peoples.

In the Komsomol's view, the fact that all kinds of people played jazz in the Soviet Union and made their cultural imprint on it made Soviet jazz truly unique and, therefore, separate from the United States; this strength through diversity, the Komsomol argued, rendered Soviet jazz the superior and more authentic form of jazz. As per Soviet ideology, the participation of all kinds of people—in terms of social group, ethnicity, race, et cetera—represented the promise of socialism and upward mobility for all. Thus, when it came to jazz music, Komsomol officials emphasized performers' diversity as a testament to that promise. On the record jacket for the Jazz 65 album, the text boasted that “participants...included professional musicians, students, engineers, research fellows as well as white and blue-collar workers. At the festival, ensemble participants played improvised versions of Soviet composers' popular melodies and their own compositions.”<sup>31</sup> Without the diversity of the performers and their interests, the Komsomol knew Soviet jazz could not realize its true potential.

The celebration of Soviet jazz's diversity encouraged musicians to see the cultural treasure trove of ethnic cultures around them, which led to the creation of innovative jazz pieces. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Aleksandr Medvedev stated that appeals to “folklore and modern symphonic music” represented a crucial part of Soviet jazz's

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<sup>31</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, second record, Melodiya C 01159-60, 1965, vinyl recording.



expansion of the stylistic boundaries of global jazz music and the boundaries of the listener's own cultural intellect.<sup>32</sup> Without their influence, he argued, Soviet jazz would have remained variety music and would not have made its own contributions to the world of jazz.<sup>33</sup> Luckily, however, musicians in the 1960s championed cultural experimentation, mixing different kinds of ingredients together to make the best jazz elixir. For G. Garanyan's Sextet at the Jazz 65 festival, this involved a reworking of Estonian musician U. Naiso's *In Folk*, which mixed elements of Estonian folk music with traditional jazz rhythms to create a unique fusion.<sup>34</sup> In this version, the traditional folk tune collides with a fast-paced rhythm and a dizzying swirl of several saxophones playing together like a free jazz group. For Kreshenko's Quintet at the Jazz 67 festival, this involved *Variation on a Song by the Arzerbaijani Mugam Chargakh*, reworked by Alexei Zubov.<sup>35</sup> The song starts with a distant call from the East and a maelstrom of dissonant notes before launching into a customary jazz repertoire with individual sections for jazz solos. Through this fusion, Zubov emphasized the music's uniqueness in its creative use of different ethnic cultures and its acknowledgment of the central role diversity played in Soviet jazz music.

The Komsomol also used Soviet jazz's uniqueness in terms of diversity to make the claim that real jazz belonged to the tolerant Soviet Union rather than the bigoted United States. Even though jazz grew up in the United States, the Komsomol argued that

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<sup>32</sup> Aleksandr Medvedev, "Vremya Zrelosti," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz: Problemy Sobitiya Mastera*, by Alexei Batashev (Moskva: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1987), 39.

<sup>33</sup> *Estradnaya* [variety] music referred to a style of Soviet music that mixed elements of pop music with light jazz and folk tunes.

<sup>34</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, second record.

<sup>35</sup> *Dzhaz 67: Chetvertiy Moskovskii Festival Molodezhnikh Ansamblei*, first record, Melodiya 33 Д-020985-86, 1967, vinyl recording. Mugam is a traditional form of music in Azerbaijani culture.

it did not belong there. American jazz artists, most of them Black, struggled in a society which hated them. Ostracized, they could not feel pride in *American* jazz. Instead, they celebrated their jazz *in* America, which took on political meaning as a “protest of society.”<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, the Soviet Union’s embrace of its diversity represented the essence of jazz’s existence. Medvedev believes that diversity represents “a part of our multinational culture. It carries jazz within itself, performs the same creative and enlightening functions not characteristic to jazz in the past. Jazz actively participates in the aesthetic education of the Soviet peoples; this places a special kind of responsibility on jazz musicians’ shoulders. They are called to express universal spiritual values through their creative efforts.”<sup>37</sup> Thus, jazz existed in harmony with the Soviet state, which drew out jazz’s truly creative and authentic expression through the celebration of diversity. With the Komsomol’s support, Soviet jazz could become the cultural beacon for the world.

### **Everything You Can Do, I Can Do Better: Promoting Soviet Jazz Abroad**

More important than the New Soviet Man and the distinctiveness of Soviet jazz, the exhibition to foreigners of what made Soviet jazz the best jazz in the world, which included the expertise, initiative, and innovation inherent to it, represented the Komsomol’s highest priority. Thus, Soviet jazz acted as a powerful instrument in the Soviet Union’s postwar goal to outproduce the United States in the realm of culture in addition to industry. The Komsomol wanted Soviet jazz musicians to impress the

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<sup>36</sup> Medvedev 41.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

Americans through the display of their imposing cultural force and showing them what empowered Soviet musicians to be able to perform such a feat.

Expertise represented the first step in gaining the attention of foreigners because it showed that Soviet musicians approached their music in a professional manner. Ideology aside, musicians needed to prove their skills to gain acceptance as serious performers. Komsomol officials recognized that, without fostering this rapport, they could not impress others. Thus, descriptions of Soviet jazz musicians stressed their high skill level before delving into the musicians' own works. On the jacket of the Jazz 65 album, the text emphasizes that musician L. Garin "possesses a diverse array of skills. His vibraphone gives the ensemble the clearness and softness characteristic to its sound. The combination of the smooth rhythm, laid out by bassist Adolf Satanovskii and drummer Aleksandr Goretkinii, and the interesting play style of Victor Prudovskii allow them to create a bright, highly artistic, and harmonious collective. Performing in variety concerts, the ensemble is a faithful promoter of Soviet jazz music" abroad.<sup>38</sup> Thus, their expertise proved their seriousness to become world-class performers and shining emblems of Soviet culture.

Soviet musicians recognized their global role too, which encouraged them to show pride in the mastery of their skills in the presence of foreigners. For Alexei Kozlov, this self-awareness became palpable in the 1970s when he received an invitation to a Christmas party at the American embassy. While there, he realized that he played just as well as, if not better than his American counterparts and that *they* were the ones

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<sup>38</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, first record. It is important to note that the back text of this album also contains translations in English and French, which attest to the Komsomol's intention for the album's distribution worldwide.

impressed with *his* skill. Kozlov recalled that “all of a sudden, I felt....an influx of patriotism from our raising the prestige of our homeland (Russia, not the USSR) in the foreigners’ eyes.”<sup>39</sup> Despite Kozlov’s distinction regarding his “homeland,” his awareness of the musician’s larger role in society held importance; he felt proud of and confident in his musical abilities as a Soviet jazz musician, which helped him to take charge of his musical direction.

Personal initiative represented the second step necessary for the promotion of authentic Soviet jazz abroad, which manifested itself as the drive to make the music accessible and interesting to the world. Accessibility meant that musicians had to keep the listener in mind in the process to create new music. The artist could not produce authentic jazz merely by writing a complex and lofty tune to the satisfaction of the jazz critic. The musician needed to appeal to the everyday to include *the people*. For Yuri Saulski on his record *Songs of Instrumental Music*, this involved his attraction towards the genre of *pesnya* [song].<sup>40</sup>

The jacket’s text notes that gradually the music’s:

“figurative content has developed from the fun dance beat into the lyrically pensive and relatable song. His famous hits include *Farewell* (with lyrics by E. Radov and A. Levitskii), the melodious *Happy Lullaby*, *Cheerful Drop*, and *Full Speed Ahead* (devoted to the launching of the first Soviet spaceship) with lyrics by V. Orlov. Through collaboration with V. Orlov, Saulski wrote the recognizable theme song for the tv show KVN. Saulski also joined up with poet M. Tanich to write a little tune for the program Arloto. Recently, Saulski finds himself looking

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<sup>39</sup> Kozlov 291.

<sup>40</sup> Pesnya includes any song with lyrical accompaniment.

at works close intonationally to Russian romance songs. They include *Yensei Heat* (lyrics by V. Geraskin and G. Fere), *There is No Road after the Parting* (lyrics by G. Pozhenyan), *Secrets* (lyrics by A. Poperechnii), and many others.<sup>41</sup>

Incorporating relatable themes such as love and joy into recognizable tunes allowed Saulski to reach broad audiences and show off his skill as a Soviet jazz musician.

The value of initiative in fighting to bring Soviet jazz to the world did not elude musicians, who actively fought to protect the music's accessibility against the efforts of some of their peers to stress jazz's elitism and exclusivity. Rather than jazz serving as a display of raw technical skill alone, these musicians wanted to make their music enjoyable to listeners from a variety of ethnic and national backgrounds; this involved imbuing the music with elements familiar to the human experience. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Efim Barban states that "people in other countries differ by language, not by feeling; that is why the musician has such an important global role today. He speaks a language comprehensible in every country and on every continent. Jazz plays a large role in this worldwide musical interaction because cultural and linguistic universality make up its very nature."<sup>42</sup> As a product of African and European culture, jazz was primed to become a key aspect of world culture. The Soviet Union could make that happen.

In the Komsomol's opinion, Soviet jazz musicians' innovative spirit pushed their form of jazz music forward and, therefore, made the Soviet Union the future leader of world culture. Perhaps one of the most innovative pieces to come out of Soviet jazz in the 1960s was *Divertissement for the Orchestra in Three Parts*, written by G. Garanyan and

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<sup>41</sup> Yuri Saulskii, *Pesni Instrumentalnaya Muzika*, Melodiya C 04733-4, 1974, vinyl recording.

<sup>42</sup> Efim Barban, "Pilgrim v Stranu Vostoka," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz: Problemy Sobitiya Mastera*, by Alexei Batashev (Moskva: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1987), 298.

played by V. Lyudvikovskii's Concert Variety Orchestra at the Jazz 67 festival.<sup>43</sup> In the song, the orchestra plays as if it were a small free jazz group, creating a wild and dissonant cacophony of instruments all playing at once. However, beneath the surface of this chaos lies the sheer amount of skill required of these musicians to play this kind of music unusual for a large group and yet remain a solid unit. By the end of the song, the musicians, through the display of their creative talents, have convinced the listener of the Soviet Union's seriousness to become the world's cultural leader. In the excitement of the moment, the musicians became convinced of their global importance too.

Musicians' belief in authentic Soviet jazz as a promoter of Soviet culture abroad through innovation encouraged them to write works that paid homage to Soviet achievements in science and technology; these works cemented the Soviet Union's claim for global leadership. For the Jazz 65 festival, musician V. Sakun played his song *Five Steps into Space*; dedicated to astronaut A. Leonov, the first man to walk in open space, the song uses the musician's technical skill to boast of Leonov's accomplishment to the world. Yet, the song suggests a deeper connection between itself and the subject of homage. On the record's jacket, the text describes the song in terms reminiscent of the astronaut's technological feat. Drummer V. Bulanov "creates the mathematically precise and distinct rhythm; he possesses incredible control over his drums, using the entire range of their sound."<sup>44</sup> Both the astronaut and the musician's success came from mastery of their skill sets, absolute control over their instruments, and ingenuity to surmount the insurmountable. Thus, these musicians cast the Soviet Union as a nation of trailblazers,

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<sup>43</sup> *Dzhaz 67: Chetvertiy Moskovskii Festival Molodezhnikh Ansamblei*, third record, Melodiya 33 Д-020985-86, 1967, vinyl recording.

<sup>44</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, first record.

exploring the final frontier in space and sound. However, it is important to note that musicians did not write songs like *Five Steps into Space* out of untiring enthusiasm for Soviet ideals.

Musicians also wrote songs with themes recalling Soviet achievements because they knew that such songs would please Komsomol officials and, therefore, foster a more hospitable environment for Soviet jazz. These calculations occurred frequently in Soviet jazz regardless of each musician's personal relationship with the Komsomol. Musicians, like the Komsomol officials, modified their epistemologies regarding "real" Soviet jazz in the process of negotiation to ensure a fruitful collaboration. Without this willingness to change, musicians had to recognize that the completely state-free sphere, if it even existed, could not sustain them. However, using their epistemologies, musicians weighed their options and made the proper decision from there. It was up to the individual to choose his own path.

## PART 2-THE MUSICIANS

### **It Takes Two to Tango: Working with the State**

Musicians' views about collaboration with the Komsomol had close ties to their flexibility or steadfastness regarding Soviet jazz's aesthetics. The decision to become a state ensemble, collaborate with the Komsomol, consort with it, or avoid it entirely depended on how musicians felt about its role in creating authentic Soviet jazz. Did the Komsomol have something to offer musicians that could enrich the music's aesthetic? If it did, was its participation in the creative process a boon or a hindrance to the music? These kinds of questions allowed musicians to navigate the business-end of the Soviet jazz world while remaining true to their own epistemologies.

Those who chose to work in Komsomol ensembles believed that only official employment could make jazz truly independent in the creative process and thus unlock the music's full potential. For these musicians, the defined salary associated with official ensembles allowed them to focus more on the music rather than worrying about finding gigs and satisfying various club owners, unlike bands in the West. Musician David Goloshekin, talking about his work in the state-run Jazz Music Philharmonic, said he had no obligation to satisfy the owners— "I do not get any money from those who came to drink beer or eat from the buffet. I am happy that the city's administration supports me, rendering me independent in certain regards. I am a musician and must be the master of my own house. I can play what I want and with whom I want. I can lay out the musical strategy and formulate a program outside of the influence of fashion, the market, et cetera."<sup>45</sup> In Goloshekin's view, working under the state represented the key to his personal success.

Some musicians went even further in their support for state ensembles with the argument that, for Soviet jazz to realize its full potential, it required complete centralization under the state. For this formulation, musicians and the Komsomol needed to set the standards for proper Soviet jazz music, where it should be played, and how listeners should appreciate it. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, Medvedev states that "Soviet jazz needs a strict program for cadres of highly educated musicians, its own aesthetics and critics, and a permanent food source. Only when the forces of all these artistic, educational, and concert organizations are brought together and centralized will jazz in

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<sup>45</sup> Vladimir Feyertag, *Dialog so svingom: David Goloshekin o Dzhaz i Sebe* (Sankt Peterburg: Kult-Inform-Press, 2003), 273.



our culture be what it can and must become.”<sup>46</sup> Without this standardization and centralization, musicians like Medvedev doubted that Soviet jazz could make a lasting impact on world culture. However, while many musicians believed that the Komsomol had a role to play in the development of Soviet jazz, they did not share the opinion that centralized state control alone could provide the necessary burst of inspiration.

### Walking Hand-in-Hand: Collaboration

The collaborative approach to the Komsomol represented the most attractive option for a lot of musicians because they believed that the benefits of working with the Komsomol far outweighed the drawbacks in terms of authenticity.<sup>47</sup> Rather than some saintly figure who came down to bring them salvation, the Komsomol acted as an accessible business partner looking to make a fair deal. Musicians believed in the Komsomol’s approach to Soviet ideology, considered negotiations with it useful, and felt optimistic that the final deal would prove satisfactory to both parties. However, musicians had to show interest in the Komsomol’s overall “business model” before any discussion of a potential deal could start.

The first step of musicians’ approach to collaboration with the Komsomol involved emphasizing their belief in Soviet values to convince it that jazz was worthy of patronage. This frequently took the form of musicians making connections in music and literature between jazz and the Red Army during the Second World War. Considering the massive influence of the war in postwar Soviet society, these decisions represented strategic moves by musicians because connecting the two could allow Soviet jazz to gain

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<sup>46</sup> Medvedev 39.

<sup>47</sup> I use the term collaboration to mean a mutualistic relationship in which both parties benefit from their interaction.

some of the legitimacy associated with the war itself. Throughout *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, several musicians placed jazz in the war narrative as an essential morale-boosting force. In the most extreme case, Nikolai Minkh told a story about how one jazz band took up arms during a surprise attack and made a heroic last stand with the soldiers.<sup>48</sup> Musicians in the 1960s and 1970s also made connections between jazz and the Second World War through covers of famous wartime songs. At the Jazz 65 festival, Victor Misalov's Trio did a jazz arrangement of *In the Woods by the Front* by M. Blanter, who originally gained fame as the author of numerous hit mass songs in the 1930s and 1940s like *Katyusha*.<sup>49</sup> The jazz version of *In the Woods by the Front* presents a light interpretation of the material, avoiding wild solos in favor of preserving the song's original feel.<sup>50</sup> In its self-titled album, the Leningrad Dixieland band also covers M. Blanter with the song *My Love*, which tells a story about a soldier's wife who consoles herself after his departure by carrying one of his letters with her everywhere she goes. The jazz version, while modified to give the song a jazz twist, does not change the original significantly.<sup>51</sup> Thanks to these efforts, the Komsomol approached the negotiating table, setting into motion the next stage of jazz musicians' collaborative effort.

The second step in musicians' collaboration with the Komsomol involved the act of negotiation itself, which required musicians to recognize the language barrier between the two parties. Early discussions with the Komsomol in the 1960s about proposed jazz clubs and festivals in Moscow quickly made it clear to musicians that they did not speak

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<sup>48</sup> Nikolai Minkh, "Zametiki Muzikantiy," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz: Problemy Sobitiya Mastera*, by Alexei Batashev (Moskva: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1987), 399.

<sup>49</sup> The mass song was a form of accessible Soviet music promoted in the 1930s and 1940s as a part of Socialist Realism.

<sup>50</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, first record.

<sup>51</sup> Leningradskii Dixieland, *Leningradskii Dixieland*, Melodiya CM 02787-88, 1970, vinyl recording.

the same language. Each side had its own beliefs, values, and goals that colored its point of view about jazz. While musicians cared predominantly about playing the music for its own sake, the Komsomol looked at more technical concerns such as the organization and administration of the proposed project. For instance, officials talking with jazz intellectual Vladimir Feyertag about a proposal for a new jazz club called D-58 did not ask questions about the type of music that would be played there; instead, they grilled Feyertag on the ambiguity of the club's proposed organization. They asked him: "Is there an orchestra? Is it a professional or non-professional orchestra? To which organization does it belong? Who is responsible for the orchestra's repertoire?"<sup>52</sup> Upon hearing this, Feyertag realized that he would not get the club approved if he did not allay these officials' concerns.

Musicians needed to find a way to translate their views on jazz into a form understandable by the Komsomol, which involved composing documents to satisfy bureaucratic protocol. By the time the proposal for the creation of the D-58 jazz club reached officials' desks, Feyertag had learned how to speak their language. He understood that the officials, despite often having sympathies for cultural projects, had obligations to satisfy before they could sign off on anything. Thus, to make the proposal look more "official," Feyertag provided a statement of purpose for the jazz club and a member list of its administrative board. Feyertag stated that "I tried my best to make my case reflecting the time period, keeping in mind that I had to do everything possible to help the club. The masterpiece I created ended as such: 'the club believes that its operation can and must nurture in our youth the development of good taste, a critical

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<sup>52</sup> Vladimir Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga: Vremya i Sudbiy* (Sankt Peterburg: Kult-Inform-Press, 1999), 77.

approach to the phenomenon of jazz life abroad, and the aptitude to distinguish pure jazz music from knockoff pop garbage’.”<sup>53</sup> Upon the submission of these documents, the Komsomol quickly approved of the club’s proposal. The success of this negotiation process thus provided further evidence of the Komsomol’s central role in the collaborative creation of authentic Soviet jazz.

The third and final step in musicians’ collaboration with the Komsomol involved both parties’ satisfaction with the results of past collaboration and an interest in working together in the future. In the case of the Jazz 68 festival, musicians had some qualms about the festival’s organization but overall viewed the event favorably and showed willingness to work with the Komsomol again. Contrary to the usual assumptions about the totalitarian state, in this case both sides had to compromise and give up something. On the Komsomol’s side, while officials had wanted musicians’ repertoires to contain only songs by Soviet performers or the musicians themselves, they managed to get the repertoires to contain mostly the desired song types. On the musicians’ side, while they had demanded complete artistic freedom to choose what they would play and what would end up on the record for the festival, they eventually yielded to the Komsomol’s request for Soviet content and the right of the festival’s Komsomol judges to decide the record’s makeup. Mikhail Kuel, commenting on the Jazz 68 festival, complained about the judges’ “ideological sterilization” of the record while also acknowledging that the Komsomol’s demand for Soviet content improved Soviet jazz overall.<sup>54</sup> He stated that “the harmony of the folk tunes and the melodic ordering of the Soviet composers’ works, often pushing

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<sup>53</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga*, 80-1.

<sup>54</sup> Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz*, 288.

beyond the framework of the usual jazz standards, significantly expanded the traditional boundaries of jazz stylistics.”<sup>55</sup> Despite the minor annoyance of the Komsomol’s seemingly arbitrary demands, its request for the incorporation of Soviet and Russian classics into Soviet jazz led musicians to new creative heights and encouraged collaboration in the future. However, not all musicians had such pleasant experiences working with the Komsomol. Instead of clapping their hands excitedly at another joint venture, this group of musicians made an exasperated sigh, lowered their heads, and slowly dragged their feet forward.

#### Making a Deal with the Devil: Consorters in Soviet Jazz

Unlike collaborators, consorters believed that the Komsomol represented a necessary yet hostile force that musicians had to keep an eye on during negotiations.<sup>56</sup> Whether they liked it or not, musicians knew the massive power wielded by the Komsomol. Instead of resisting its influence, musicians yielded, meeting the absolute minimum requirement for cooperation to receive the desired benefits. This process took part in three steps. First, musicians wanted to make authentic Soviet jazz and recognized that the Komsomol served as a necessary evil. Second, musicians entered negotiations while looking for every potential loophole to avoid the Komsomol’s influence. Lastly, musicians felt content with the final product and passed on any subversive negotiation techniques to others. This cycle allowed musicians to outmaneuver Komsomol officials more easily and keep their music authentic.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> I use this term to describe a person who, prompted by circumstance, must work with a group he considers a threat.

Recognizing the Komsomol as a necessary partner despite its negative characteristics proved essential as the first step in the consorter's approach to protect the authenticity of Soviet jazz. For Alexei Kozlov, this involved the recognition that no help awaited him if he decided to work on his own. He also knew that he would face tremendous difficulties if he ignored Komsomol requests for oversight. Therefore, he had to work with it. In *Kozel na Sakse*, Kozlov described his plan to use the Komsomol "as a cover in [my] fight for jazz" as the best and only option.<sup>57</sup> The stamp of official approval required only minimal changes to Soviet jazz's exterior and provided concealment from prying eyes. Nevertheless, once musicians adopted the guise of adhering to Soviet values in jazz, the Komsomol invited them to the negotiating table.

The process of negotiation, the second step of the consorting musicians' interaction with the Komsomol, prompted musicians to feign devotion to Soviet values to locate and exploit weak points in Komsomol policy. In one instance in the early 1970s, officials asked Kozlov to come in for questioning regarding recent activity. While this did not seem like a typical negotiation in terms of two willing partners, Kozlov understood that this was not a sentencing hearing either. He knew that they wanted him to admit to some charges so their superiors would see them following through on the case. However, having caught on, Kozlov decided to use this opportunity to "play them at their own game" and get something out of this masquerade for himself.<sup>58</sup> He admitted to all charges and apologized, thereby turning the "interrogation" into his own personal loudspeaker to grab the attention of the Komsomol leadership. With this step done, Kozlov then made an argument for the approval of a jazz-rock fusion band as a culturally

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<sup>57</sup> Kozlov 156.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 284.

rich source of entertainment, of which Soviet citizens have never seen. The cleverness of Kozlov's success prompted other musicians to take note.

Taking notes on successful evasion tactics against the Komsomol and sharing them, the third step in the consorters' interaction with the Komsomol, allowed musicians to carve out larger spaces for themselves within the embrace of official patronage. In the eyes of consorters, the Komsomol acted like the plastic case around an ant farm, both confining and protecting the ants living inside it. However, over time, the workers could dig deeper tunnels into the farm and connect their routes with those made by others. Mikhail Kuel described this in his book *Stupeni Voskhozhdeniya* [*Ascending Steps*], in which he reflected on the relief that such subversive tactics gave musicians like himself. He stated:

When your whole life consisted of bans and restrictions, any escape from this circle was a moment of joy, a feeling of the possibilities to create something truly your own, and a sensation of total freedom (however brief and fleeting it may have been). For some people, these feelings were even more intense. After all, one of them had thirty five years to figure out the terms of the regimented enterprise which cruelly walled in life with bans on infamous 'contacts' ...and trips abroad. However, despite all this, he still happened to experience small joys frequently and even pure bliss occasionally. And, [to top it all off], he had the opportunity to play his favorite type of music with me, which did not in any way fit into the framework of state ideology. This was FREEDOM!<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Mikhail Kuel, *Stupeni Voskhozhdeniya* (Moscow: СЭФЕР, 2009), 273-4.

Like many other musicians, Kuel may not always have had such a warm relationship with the Komsomol, however, he knew the power structure demanded it. Only those whose negative perception of the Komsomol reached loathing proportions dared to swat its hand away.

### Adding to the Ten-Foot Pole: Musicians' Independence from the Komsomol

Musicians who considered the Komsomol's influence poison to the health of jazz in the Soviet Union believed that any form of state interference in jazz snuffed out creativity, sought to turn jazz into a hollow shell of its former self, and ultimately aimed to erase jazz from musical culture in the Soviet Union completely.<sup>60</sup> In the view of these musicians, jazz survived in the Soviet Union only thanks to their valiant efforts to defy Komsomol oversight. Despite the Komsomol's purposeful lack of publicity for jazz concerts and clubs, designed to deprive the musicians of revenue, these musicians believed that they kept jazz alive through their own ingenuity and initiative. In the case of the youth jazz clubs funded by the Komsomol, musicians like Mikhail Kuel constantly had to grapple with complaints from local residents about noise, the club's kitchen staff about low food and drink sales, and fire inspectors about the club's failure to enforce capacity limits. To the musicians, these complaints merely represented the vain "attempts of ideologues and Komsomol party oversight" to close the clubs.<sup>61</sup> Since many musicians considered jazz clubs the heart of jazz creativity, an attack on them thereby threatened the existence of jazz in the Soviet Union.

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<sup>60</sup> I switch to using "jazz in the Soviet Union" here because this viewpoint does not accept any partnership with the state, thereby rebuking the central concept of Soviet jazz.

<sup>61</sup> Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz* 102.



The solution for musicians of this viewpoint involved supporting groups outside of the Komsomol's direct gaze, which musicians considered the last true laboratories of jazz experimentation and creativity. While most musicians trying to make money with their jazz could not avoid direct interaction with the Komsomol, small-time musicians in universities played mainly for fun outside of class and, therefore, did not need the Komsomol's funds. Free from the tight constraints of the coin purse, Kuel believed that these youth ensembles "could play (and play they did!) the music in the way that the genre should be played."<sup>62</sup> They believed that their music rightfully deserved the praise and fame awarded to the so-called top tier Soviet jazz musicians. Therefore, the youth ensembles considered themselves, not the professional state musicians, the real jazzmen.

### **Salad Bowl or Melting Pot: The Meaning of Content in Soviet Jazz**

The composition of jazz represented a point of internecine strife within the ranks of Soviet jazz musicians, who believed that what one played determined his seriousness about the creation of authentic jazz music. Musicians fell into the category of purist or mixer. Each of these groups, using language reminiscent of select aspects of Komsomol ideology, made the case that their treatment created authentic Soviet jazz while the other approach produced a bastardization of it. These arguments helped musicians to solidify ties with those of similar minds, which made it easier for each musician to promote his own vision of Soviet jazz. For the purists, this meant respect for the most skilled players.

Proponents of pure jazz stressed technical mastery to raise their music above the level of pseudo-pop jazz mixes, which echoed the Komsomol's preference for "high" culture to combat bland Western commercialism. The purists condemned pop jazz

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 326.

because it displayed a willingness to sacrifice quality to sell more records and tickets. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Sergei Slonimskii stated that such wanton corruption jeopardized authenticity in Soviet jazz. Rather than producing works of art with dynamic shifts that could amaze audiences, the pop-jazz bands “write primitive standard stuff so it is easier to play and more familiar to its ‘clientele’ . The metro rhythm is always 4/4 with clear accented notes, the dynamic is forte or fortissimo, and the motif is the same couple of notes no longer than one tact. [To make matters worse], the bass guitar and drums do not [even] gel with one another.”<sup>63</sup> The sloppiness associated with pseudo-jazz, according to musician David Goloshekin, came from its patchwork nature, which drew it in different directions at the same time. Pure jazz did not have this problem because it adhered to a clear “school” or subgenre of jazz such as swing, bebop, cool/hard bop, et cetera, which allowed musicians to hone in on the characteristics peculiar to that subgenre and experiment with them in more depth. As a result, choosing a specific school fostered the innovation required to create new authentic Soviet jazz “without hindrance forever.”<sup>64</sup>

Members of the pseudo-jazz group argued that schools produced the opposite result because they closed the music off to experimentation, which the proponents of the pseudo-jazz group considered crucial for creativity and the creation of authentic Soviet jazz; this justification echoed the Komsomol’s support for musical egalitarianism and the use of world culture’s riches. In defending this point, musicians cited the essence of Soviet jazz as a multicultural product. When jazz first received wide popularity in the

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<sup>63</sup> Sergei Slonimskii, “Podlinnyi Dzhaz Protivostoit Shtampovannim Muzikalnim Podelkam,” in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 75.

<sup>64</sup> Vladimir Feyertag, “Genezis Populyarnosti,” in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 284.

Soviet Union in the 1930s, it did so through fusion with the mass song. Instead of sullyng the purity of jazz, the fusion benefitted both partners. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Nikolai Minkh argued that jazz “helped the [mass] song acquire broad popularity while the [mass] song, in turn, enriched the intonational and melodic structure of jazz...this was Soviet jazz in the full meaning of the word and the path of its historical development” thus far.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, any attempt to keep jazz pure denied the true nature of Soviet jazz and stymied its growth. Taking this point further in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Aram Hachaturyan decries “manifestations of sectarianism and splintering from the larger world of music. Music is by nature democratic in that it addresses a broad listener base. When jazz is closed off due to purely technical and formal matters, it becomes hollow entertainment and a musical rattle which, as a rule, only amuses vain people of low education.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, without openness to the influence of other genres, jazz would remain the commercial hull of its suspect American origins and would not realize its true Soviet nature as a source of enlightenment to the world.

In defense of their definition of authentic Soviet jazz, both purists and mixers used the Komsomol and Soviet ideology to validate their argument and end the debate. Considering the immense power exerted by state organs such as the Komsomol on Soviet society, the use of state language proved an effective ally. If musicians spun their jazz narrative to fit the official Komsomol position, then they could fend off polemics from other musicians; the artful fusion of Soviet ideals with musicians’ views regarding jazz “purity” made it riskier for someone to make a rebuttal due to the potential accusation that he was criticizing the state itself. Nevertheless, the Komsomol’s lack of clear

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<sup>65</sup> Minkh 397.

<sup>66</sup> Aram Hachaturyan, “Dzhaz-Neprelozhnaya Dannost Nashevo Bitiya,” in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 56.

preference for either side of the argument meant that the polemics continued without a formal resolution. Disagreements about the minutiae of a musical genre the Komsomol did not know well, therefore, meant that officials brushed aside these technical arguments in favor of more eye-catching issues like the debate regarding the need for the past jazz masters, many of whom were American, in Soviet jazz.

### **Iconoclasm or Idolization: The Issue of Homage in Soviet Jazz**

The concern about the reiteration of past American jazz musicians remained ever-present in the minds of musicians, who grappled with an apprehensive Komsomol and their own views of authentic jazz music. Musicians' torn views on paying homage to past masters influenced their views on authentic Soviet jazz because homage reached the core of their identities as musicians. For some artists, playing their own music distinguished themselves in their craft and showed that they had something to add to the genre. Others felt that playing classic jazz pieces or weaving parts of those pieces into new works demonstrated respect to the musicians who inspired them to play jazz in the first place. Both views also considered the Komsomol's position, which influenced how they translated those views into concrete action.

Supporters of authentic jazz as pieces of original craftsmanship echoed Soviet foreign policy in the postwar period by celebrating the strength and creativity of Soviet culture, rather than "bowing" to the West through homages. Real Soviet jazz musicians used their own expertise, initiative, and innovative spirit to create something entirely their own that could dazzle audiences around the world, which Alexei Kozlov referred to as the ability to *zvuchat'* [make noise]. In his mind, "if a performer does not have the *zvuk* [sound], then all his remaining qualities—his ability to play quickly and sight read from

compositions ranging all levels of difficulty—are worth diddly squat because he does not make an impression, he does not *zvuchit*. Therefore, it is essential that each develop his own sustainable, professional, and beautiful sound.”<sup>67</sup> Only those who could *zvuchat* could ever hope to create their own *firmenniy* [signature] sound, which represented the epitome of authentic Soviet jazz. However, the singular stress on creating one’s own works did not appeal to other musicians who felt that such an approach left out the jazz masters who inspired them to become musicians in the first place.

Those who believed that authentic jazz paid homage to past masters used their cultural knowledge of jazz to conceal their efforts from the Komsomol, which disliked the direct mention of American influence in Soviet jazz because it defied official policy. Since musicians immersed themselves in their art, they had an immense wealth of knowledge about the jazz legends, different subgenres, and styles of playing. Komsomol officials, on the other hand, did not have much familiarity with jazz, especially its Western variety. As a result, musicians could insert a quick riff of a jazz classic or an imitation of a famous performer without drawing the Komsomol’s attention. For instance, at the Jazz 67 festival, Leningrad Dixieland played the song *Russian Dance*, which included a hidden surprise for its fans.<sup>68</sup> In the middle of the Dixieland beat, one of the performers began to sing indistinctly in a gravelly voice. Upon recognizing the homage to Louis Armstrong, someone from the audience gave a shout of approval to let the musicians know that he understood the reference.<sup>69</sup> However, concealment did not

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<sup>67</sup> Kozlov 136.

<sup>68</sup> The name Leningrad Dixieland passed state scrutiny because it paid homage to a subgenre of jazz rather than individual Americans.

<sup>69</sup> *Dzhaz 67: Chetvertiy Moskovskii Festival Molodezhnikh Ansamblei*, first record, Melodiya 33 Д-020983, 1967, vinyl recording.

always take on such subtle forms. In the second album by Veinshtein's Orchestra, titled *Grand Again*, the band merely gave Count Basie's song *Lil' Darlin'* the new name *Foggy Morning* to avoid complications with the Komsomol.<sup>70</sup> Whether the Komsomol noticed any of these ruses, however, was immaterial because the musicians made their homages less conspicuous and thus did not blatantly confirm the West's claim that its culture permeated Soviet society.

### **Serfs and Volga Boatmen: Western Perceptions of Soviet Jazz Music**

American jazz musicians, due to their internalization of their government's ideological campaign to showcase the inferiority of Soviet culture, painted their Soviet counterparts as ignorant amateurs who had neither the skill nor the knowledge to make anything besides stale copies of the American greats. On the record jacket for Benny Goodman's famous trip to Moscow in 1962, the text highlights the Soviet peoples' complete lack of familiarity with jazz, claiming that "to most people in that country, 'jazz' means the entire gamut of Western popular music, including hotel jazz bands, concert-in-the-park music, and what you would hear and see at a variety stage show. Only recently has it included, for some, what most of us in America think of as jazz."<sup>71</sup> Rather than the New Soviet Man mastering everything that he took up, the Soviet musician represented the village idiot fumbling with something completely foreign to him. However, the Americans made it a point not to quash the Soviet musicians' hopes completely. On the jacket for the 1962 record *Midnight in Moscow* by Teddy Buckner and His Traditional Jazz Band, the text admits that, despite their many deficiencies,

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<sup>70</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga*, 147.

<sup>71</sup> Benny Goodman, *Benny Goodman in Moscow*, RCA Victor LSO 6008, vinyl recording.

Soviet jazz musicians “invariably try their limited but enthusiastic hand at many American jazz standards.”<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, a pat on the head provided little comfort to its recipients, who could not ignore the condescension of jazz masters whom they respected deeply. Soviet musicians harbored this assumption of their backwardness in jazz for a long time, which caused them to devalue their own projects unwittingly. In Aleksandr Medvedev’s opinion, it did not matter that many Soviet musicians believed that they needed to put in a lot of work to surpass the West. The real issue concerned the internalization of backwardness in Soviet jazz musicians’ minds, which bred “a feeling of dependence on the exalted jazz ‘maestros’ [that] barred them from appreciating their own potential.”<sup>73</sup> Therefore, Soviet jazz musicians had to dismiss this assumption as nonsense.

Using Komsomol language, Soviet jazz musicians learned to identify the notion of backwardness as an American ideological construct, which raised their morale to create authentic Soviet jazz. Alexei Kozlov realized this while on vacation in a rural resort in northern Russia where he ran into tourists from the West. Painting a colorful contrast to the smartly dressed tourists and himself in peasant-like garb, Kozlov asked them about jazz. His prior conceptions of Westerners disappeared after he realized that he knew more than they did: “I understood [at that moment] that foreigners are, by no means, smarter and more cultured than us. I then gradually began to grasp what our official propaganda called bowing to the West.”<sup>74</sup> Free from this self-made mental prison,

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<sup>72</sup> Teddy Buckner and his Traditional Jazz Band, *Midnight in Moscow*, CNP Crescendo, Dixieland Jubilee Series, 1962.

<sup>73</sup> Medvedev 37.

<sup>74</sup> Kozlov 150.

Kozlov felt confident to put the jazz masters behind him, and he pursued his own dreams more aggressively. At that moment, he told himself: “I will make my own [great] jazz-rock ensemble as soon as I return to Moscow.”<sup>75</sup> However, with this project, he would only have to prove his skills to himself because he had the self-confidence and the Komsomol’s patronage required to create authentic and innovative Soviet jazz. After all, he was a proud and educated Soviet jazz musician, not some innocent serf in a Tolstovan novel whom the Americans could mesmerize with the strange “new” sound of jazz.

Musicians’ demand for others to show respect towards their art also faced a threat from the West’s exoticization of their music, which acted as a delegitimizing force to the Soviet arts. In the postwar period, the West still had a perception of the Soviet Union as a barren wasteland of mysterious peoples. As a result, Russian cultural products often did not receive serious attention, but instead served as fun pieces in curiosity cabinets. This was visible on the jacket of the 1956 record *Midnight in Moscow* by Eddie Condon and the Dixieland All-Stars, the text of which talked about how the musicians got into a “Russian” mood before the start of the recording session with a Russian greeting and the placement of a *papakha* on Condon’s head by fellow musician Bobby Hackett. On the album cover, the hat sat crooked on Condon’s head as he smiled goofily, symbolizing the band’s flippant treatment of the Russian material. This lackadaisical approach to the music also highlighted the musicians’ belief in their strength and easy domination over the presumably empty music. On the record jacket, the text described how, once they started to lay down the Russian melody *Meadowlands*, one could notice that the

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 260.



“Cossacks have clearly been replaced by the Chicagoans.”<sup>76</sup> For the Americans, Russian culture represented a nesting doll, pretty to look at but hollow and easy to dismantle.

To combat this derisory view, Soviet jazz musicians recognized the exoticism present in Americans’ criticism, which deprived the criticism of value; this act brought Soviet musicians and the Komsomol onto the same page because it refuted the idea of the Soviet Union as a backwards land of strange, beast-like peoples. For Alexei Kozlov, this involved dismissing foreigners’ views of his country as a “snowy wasteland populated by half-starved frightened wildlings with bears, caviar, and vodka,” which sullied their perceptions of Soviet jazz music.<sup>77</sup> However, rather than accusing the Americans of maliciously rendering Soviet jazz exotic, he forgave them and dismissed their “blunder” as a sign of their lack of knowledge on Soviet culture. Kozlov felt that he could use Soviet jazz as a form of enlightenment, thereby improving “foreigners’ perceptions of my country [and showing] them that we are not a [bunch] of wildlings.”<sup>78</sup> This knowledge could also prove to the Americans that, rather than passively consuming American jazz by tacking it unaltered onto “exotic” folk cultures, Soviet jazz musicians had the skill and worldliness to create their own unique projects. Debunking the Americans’ political argument that jazz “infected” the Soviet Union thus represented a crucial ideological battle for the survival of Soviet jazz music.

To refute the Americans’ claim that jazz acted as a cultural weapon against the Soviet Union in the Cold War, Soviet musicians restressed their positive relationship with the Komsomol and the uniqueness of Soviet jazz. In the view of the U.S. State

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<sup>76</sup> Eddie Condon and the Dixieland All-Stars, *Midnight in Moscow*, EPIC 16024, Vinyl Recording, 1956.

<sup>77</sup> Kozlov 110.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 111.

Department, jazz musicians like Benny Goodman and Earl Hines served as foot-soldiers on the cultural front of the Cold War, bringing democracy and freedom through their tours. Soviet jazz musicians like Alexei Kozlov believed this perception caused a “colossal amount of harm” to their craft because it exacerbated the apprehensions some Komsomol officials harbored regarding jazz.<sup>79</sup> To fend off the Americans’ efforts to politicize the genre against the Soviet Union, Soviet jazz musicians reaffirmed the Komsomol’s crucial role in the creation of what they considered authentic Soviet jazz. For Kozlov, this came to the fore in a 1975 piece by an American music critic commenting on Kozlov’s jazz-rock band Arsenal, which depicted him as a defiant member of the intelligentsia fighting for freedom in the jazz underground. Rebuking this description as the utter fantasy of the critic, Kozlov stated that “I did not feel any kind of desire to be holed up in the jazz underground and remain an eternal partisan, on the contrary, I fought with all the means available to me for my breakout from anonymity...and the officialization of my genre.”<sup>80</sup> Only through a healthy working relationship with the Komsomol and open access to venues could Soviet jazz musicians realize their true potentials.

The Americans’ derision, fetishization, and attempted politicization of Soviet jazz musicians further encouraged musicians to identify with the Soviet state as their key ally in the creation of authentic Soviet jazz. Although few Soviet jazz musicians considered the United States the protector of jazz in the Soviet Union, the Americans’ behavior damaged Soviet jazz musicians’ sympathies for the United States and made them apprehensive about the political goals behind the U.S. State Department’s outreaches. On

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<sup>79</sup> Kozlov 207.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 237.

the other hand, Soviet jazz musicians welcomed Komsomol patronage because they considered it a supporter in the creation of authentic Soviet jazz. Regardless of musicians' general sympathies toward the Komsomol, they could not complain about the lack of clarity in its aims; the Komsomol wanted Soviet jazz musicians to create a unique and progressive form of jazz music that could show off the Soviet Union. Many Soviet jazz musicians championed this cause, using Komsomol funds to open jazz clubs and other spaces to cultivate the creation of authentic Soviet jazz.

### **Great Acoustics: Habitus in Soviet Jazz**

In the Soviet Union during Stalin's tenure as General Secretary, Soviet jazz did not have a consistent location in which to grow and develop; instead, it relied on the touring state bands that incorporated jazz into their repertoires. This changed dramatically in the early 1960s under Khrushchev's leadership with the rise of youth cafés and clubs that catered specifically to jazz in their musical offerings. Jazz musicians finally had static spaces in which they could congregate, share information, and test out their songs.<sup>81</sup> This facilitated the development of a uniquely Soviet form of jazz, which musicians saw as proof of the café's key role in the postwar drive to make the Soviet Union the cultural leader of the world.<sup>82</sup> Muscovites claimed that the Molodozhnoe (KM) and the Blue Bird café embodied what made Soviet jazz great, however, they focused on different ideological points in their appeals to the Komsomol to designate their favorite café the sole source of authentic Soviet jazz.

Alexei Kozlov's circle of musicians believed that KM represented the true bastion of Soviet jazz creativity because its tight regulation of space, both in its layout and

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<sup>81</sup> Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz*, 39

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 141-2 and Kozlov 153.

customers' limited accessibility to it, ensured that only a select group of true fans could enter; this claim for state recognition appealed to the Komsomol because KM promoted the proper appreciation of "high" art through the heavy-handed regulation of space. KM was located in a ritzy area on Gorkii Street, easily visible from the sidewalk with large windows that seemed to beckon passersby.<sup>83</sup> However, the fancy restaurant-like interior revealed that this was a misconception; large, evenly spaced gaps between tables showed that KM's management would not tolerate any deviation from the planned structure.<sup>84</sup> Once all the chairs were filled, that was it; anybody who still wanted a table had to get in a line that stretched around the building.<sup>85</sup> The lucky few inside had the opportunity to listen to great jazz music; however, trouble awaited them if they did not appreciate it in the right way. Dancing to the music or making requests of the musicians represented an affront to "high" art, which promptly ended with the arrival of the café's bouncer, who, Kozlov stated, "would calmly explain to [the rule-breakers] that they needed to take a seat and listen. This is how we taught the café's visitors how to behave properly—through muscle."<sup>86</sup> To accent the musicians' loftiness and inaccessibility, KM had a table located in a corner window designated for musicians, which hindered any unwanted contact from café patrons.<sup>87</sup>

The combined exclusivity of music and space attracted a corresponding set of elite regulars, which made the Komsomol favor KM even more because it provided the opportunity to show off other aspects of "high" Soviet culture in addition to jazz. Soon

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<sup>83</sup> Kuel, *Stupeni Voshozhdeniya*, 127.

<sup>84</sup> Kozlov 168.

<sup>85</sup> Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz*, 58.

<sup>86</sup> Kozlov 169.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 160.

after its opening in the early 1960s, KM became the favorite spot for people of the arts; they included “painters, architects, and other representatives of the near-jazz bohemia,” who came to socialize with one another and listen to the “best” jazz in Moscow.<sup>88</sup> Their presence drew the Komsomol’s attention, which wanted a safe yet impressive emblem of Soviet culture to show to foreigners.<sup>89</sup> As a result, jazz musicians and visiting foreign officials usually stopped by KM to hear Soviet jazz and witness the rich cultural sphere that surrounded it.<sup>90</sup>

Famous personalities and “high” culture did not appeal to some musicians like Mikhail Kuel, who considered KM’s elitist and exclusive nature anathema to Soviet values and a stifling force for creativity in Soviet jazz. Kuel’s social circle believed that the humble décor and loose regulation of space at the Blue Bird Café, unlike KM, made it easy for people to stop by the club and contribute to the creative process; this accessibility, they argued, allowed the Blue Bird to champion proletarian art as a tool to raise the cultural knowledge of all peoples. From Medvedev Street in Moscow, the Blue Bird café was not easily noticeable, with only little window slits to betray the sub-ground room’s existence.<sup>91</sup> This façade did not symbolize exclusivity, but rather the modest budget of the café’s designers. Walking down a few steps, one entered a small corridor with a coat check that led into the starkly decorated café hall, which seated about forty or fifty people.<sup>92</sup> Unlike KM, the Blue Bird did not adhere to the capacity limits set by the fire department, instead letting its patrons make full use of its space as they pleased. Kuel

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<sup>88</sup> Kuel, *Stupeni Voskhodeniya*, 127.

<sup>89</sup> Kuel, *Etot Moi Dzhaz*, 84.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 58.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, 60.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*.

described that, by the end of the night when all the tables were full, one could see “the walls near the stage and buffet counter [supporting] a multitude of musicians who had just played their set or were waiting for their turn” to go on.<sup>93</sup> In front of the stage, a sea of people danced and clapped to the music, revving up the musicians with their kinesthetic approval. The close connection between the musician and the audience, as well as that of the audience and the café, served as the secret ingredient in the Blue Bird’s creation of authentic Soviet jazz. Inclusion, not exclusion, gave Soviet jazz its character.

The openness of the Blue Bird in its layout and loose regulation of space attracted a diverse array of customers, which its proponents used as proof that the café was an emblem of Soviet egalitarianism and socialist brotherhood; in their view, this meant that the Blue Bird held the mantle as the true bastion of Soviet jazz. Since anybody could drop by the Blue Bird and play something, it gave low-profile musicians the unique opportunity to showcase their talents in front of a live audience. For Kuel, it did not matter if they had professional musical training “because they all loved jazz heart and soul” and expressed themselves expertly in their music.<sup>94</sup> These “amateurs,” having day jobs as “engineers, physicists, mathematicians, architects, and photographers,” kept Soviet jazz fresh by introducing new elements to the music not taught in the professional music schools.<sup>95</sup> They, like their “professional” counterparts, had a role to play in the creation of Soviet jazz.

### **Side Gig or Career: “Dedication” in Soviet Jazz**

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 319.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

Whether a musician pursued jazz part-time (amateur) or full-time (professional) held important consequences for how he defined himself as a musician and how he viewed his music's contribution to authentic Soviet jazz.<sup>96</sup> Both amateur and professional musicians believed that their approach presented the most favorable environment for the creation of authentic Soviet jazz through the promotion of artistic independence. Each group also believed that its approach showcased its musicians' personal drive to expand the boundaries of jazz creativity and perform their duties as upright Soviet citizens. No matter what the other group said, one group always had the key ingredients for the creation of authentic Soviet jazz. The polarized nature of these conceptions inevitably meant that whatever traits one group considered positive for the creation of authentic Soviet jazz, the other group considered negative. Thus, the issue of one's professional status became contentious amongst Soviet jazz musicians, especially for the amateur musicians; their part-time status drew accusations from the professionals of frivolity in their performances, which they had to deflect to gain the support of their listeners.

The amateur musicians argued that performing jazz as a side gig represented the authentic approach to jazz because their main jobs granted them artistic independence through financial security; the time-consuming nature of these jobs also showcased musicians' dedication to jazz because they had to sacrifice their free time to improve their skills. Amateur musicians' conception of themselves gelled with the Komsomol's own postwar conception of the New Soviet Man as a polymath engaging in the construction of communism through culture, science, and technology. Rather than depending on the

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<sup>96</sup> I use the musicians' definition of amateur and professional, which related towards their respective non-official and official status with the state rather than their skill level.

funds and guidance of a patron, amateur musicians had the financial stability to “play only what they wanted to play and when the desire arose to play it.”<sup>97</sup> This allowed them to make decisions that they felt preserved the integrity and authenticity of their artistic projects. The fact that amateur musicians played jazz in addition to meeting the demands of a physically and mentally exhausting career also showed the true depth of their passion for jazz. Mikhail Kuel, talking about the amateur musicians who frequently played sets at the Blue Bird café, stated that he really admired the extent of their love for jazz; you “really needed to love jazz to devote your free time to it and not want anything in return.”<sup>98</sup> The amateur musician became a jazz expert solely because he felt passionate about it and wanted to share his craft with others, thereby encouraging them to take it up too.

Full-time professional musicians saw this differently, however, seeing the amateurs’ split attention between work and jazz as a hindrance to the realization of their full potential and a sign of their lack of seriousness towards jazz. Professional musicians believed that playing jazz full-time stimulated the creation of authentic Soviet jazz because it demanded the musicians’ heart-and-soul dedication to their craft. For Alexei Kozlov, only those who “bravely tore themselves away from their main job...became true professionals in jazz” because they showed that they had the boldness required to make it big in the music world.<sup>99</sup> Vladimir Feyertag elucidated this point in *Dzhaz so Svingom* [*Jazz with Swing*], in which he talked about all the hurdles required of a musician seeking professional status and the creation of authentic jazz:

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<sup>97</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga*, i.

<sup>98</sup> Kuel, *Stupeni Voshozhdeniya*, 122.

<sup>99</sup> Kozlov 308.



If someone decided to devote themselves solely to music, then they had to compromise and ‘sell themselves’ to the lackluster variety circuit or, even worse, a restaurant. In the early 1960s, few people believed that you could feed yourself through jazz alone. Only the most persistent, stubborn, (and sometimes resourceful) people managed to gain recognition and make a solid contribution to the formation of homegrown jazz.<sup>100</sup>

Thus, to become a professional jazz musician, one needed the drive to master an instrument and the ingenuity to reach that status without sacrificing one’s own musical integrity. However, once there, a musician could enjoy the prestige and economic security warranted professional status and pursue the creation of authentic Soviet jazz uninhibited.

The advantages associated with professional status and the Komsomol’s preference for it meant that many musicians enthusiastically pursued the required credentials for such status. One could not underestimate the difference in treatment between professional and non-professional musicians. For the former, the possession of formal degrees from conservatories immediately increased their level of pay, which encouraged others to pursue “all potential routes for getting a hold of that savory ‘crust’ themselves.”<sup>101</sup> With an official degree and stamped working papers, professional musicians also had access to a plethora of concert venues. The Komsomol’s provision of supplies and funding for these concerts meant that musicians could “go on tour to different cities and not [have] to worry about anything.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, professional musicians

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<sup>100</sup> Feyertag, *Dialog so svingom*, 47.

<sup>101</sup> Kuel, *Stupeni Voshozhdeniya*, 46.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 166.

could focus on impressing audiences with the innovative sound and technical prowess of their performances. In the end, making a lasting impression mattered most.

### **Brains over Brawn: Masculinity in Soviet Jazz**

Image occupied an important place in musicians' visions of authentic Soviet jazz because it influenced how they saw themselves as men in postwar Soviet society. After the Second World War, the *frontoviki*, or veterans of the war, dominated the conversation surrounding masculinity. Conceptions of everything manly came from the *frontoviki*, whose courage and raw strength defended the Motherland when others had failed. This masculine narrative presented a problem for some postwar youths, however, because they had not participated in the war. Left out of the main storyline and having no way to incorporate themselves into it without enlisting, these youths carved out their own alternative masculinity, which had its own rules of behavior while still taking advantage of the benefits associated with the hegemonic masculinity of the *frontoviki*.<sup>103</sup> Developed initially by youth subcultures like the *stilyagi*, this alternative masculinity stressed taste and skill over strength as signifiers of masculinity. Adopted by Soviet jazz musicians in the 1960s, this alternative masculinity manifested itself in musicians' emphasis on the dominance of space and distinguishing themselves from others in the creation of authentic Soviet jazz. Through these means, Soviet jazz musicians took advantage of the ideological postwar shift towards culture over industry and raw manpower to displace the *frontoviki* as the champions of Soviet masculinity. However, first the musicians had to make some room for themselves.

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<sup>103</sup> R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 114.

Recognizing and then harnessing the power of jazz represented the first part of the Soviet musician's journey to become a masculine performer and gain the ability to dominate his performative space through his technical mastery. Talking about his youth, Alexei Kozlov mentioned his early discovery of the power in jazz as one tied closely to the onset of puberty and his sexual attraction to female peers. Noticing that they suddenly "have some power over us," Kozlov determined that he had to familiarize himself with this new power structure before he could find a way to conquer it.<sup>104</sup> For him, playtime was over and the serious work needed to commence. Now, rather than walking into the communal yard with "a soccer ball or a hockey stick...I showed up with a gramophone and [some] records. Dances in the yard represented [our] first attempt to learn how to interact with girls" under this new structure.<sup>105</sup> The dismissal of strength-based activities like soccer and hockey as childish in favor of more "adult" finesse-based activities like dancing marked Kozlov's first steps toward his understanding of Soviet jazz as an alternative masculinity and its potential for dominance over women and other men. Once he had his foot in the door, the next stage in the development of his alternative masculinity involved grappling with the newly gained power. For this, Kozlov talked about the first *firmenniy* [brand-name] saxophone he ever saw, referring to it as that *krasavets* [beauty] with "the shine of its virgin clean surface" in the display case.<sup>106</sup> After purchasing the instrument, he took it home and proceeded to test it out, fumbling his way through his experimentation like acclimating to a new lover. However, once he mastered the instrument and got the right sound out of it, he fully enjoyed the fruits of his labor.

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<sup>104</sup> Kozlov 68.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 136.

For Kozlov, technical mastery empowered him to dominate that previously inaccessible virgin beauty, just like the women in the audience whom he captivated with his music.

Masculine musicians used their honed technical skills to fill spaces with themselves and thereby reduce the field of interaction to the appreciation of their music's authenticity; in other words, the expertise of the musicians' solos enabled them to seize the sole attention of their listeners, rendering them unable to think or talk about anything besides the solos. In the case of the record *Django: Jazz Compositions*, musician Alexei Kuznetsov draws from his entire arsenal to break out of his own corporeal framework; on stage, Kuznetsov "sounds like an orchestra, thanks to the diversity, brightness, and richness of his audial and rhythmic palette."<sup>107</sup> Theoretically, this meant that the more effort a musician put into his craft, the farther he could exert his presence into the audience. Alexander Varlamov, in the opinion of musician Alexei Nikolaev, represented the epitome of this spatial power. His perfectionism in his mastery and control of his music ensured that, even though his touring success had peaked in the 1930s and 1940s, he continued to gain fans decades later. Thus, Nikolaev believed that "one did not have to *see* [my italics] Varlamov to be satisfied. [As a result], he always [got] the high rating which he [strove] for" in his music.<sup>108</sup> In jazz musicians' eyes, this is what an *otvazhnyi* [man's] man like Varlamov had to do to make it big. Without such dedication and boldness, a musician could not hope to raise himself above the crowd and make a lasting impression.

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<sup>107</sup> Alexei Kuznetsov and Nikolai Gromin, *Django: Dzhazoviye Kompozitsii*. Melodiya C 60-11247-48, 1978, vinyl Recording.

<sup>108</sup> Aleksei Nikolaev, "Alexander Varlamov," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 349.

In addition to the dominance of space, another important aspect of Soviet jazz musicians' alternative masculinity involved their emphasis on personal and artistic independence, which they considered essential for recognition as creators of authentic Soviet jazz; this also fell in line with the Komsomol's distaste for so-called copycats who tried to pass themselves off as real Soviet jazz musicians. Musicians celebrated artistic independence in themselves and others because they understood the boldness required to take such action, especially considering the many hurdles associated with it. In *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, musician Aleksandr Medvedev talked about his deep respect for Aleksandr Tsfasman, who served as one of the pioneers of variety-jazz in the 1930s, to which modern Soviet jazz owed its existence. Medvedev felt proud to say that, "as a jazz musician, [Tsfasman] did not imitate anybody. He managed to develop his own distinct and inimitable style on the piano, which contained a certain kind of virility in its tone, colorfulness in its audible palette, [and] filigree technique."<sup>109</sup> Tsfasman proved his manhood through his energy, self-assertiveness, and refusal to compromise on artistic quality, unlike the copycats.<sup>110</sup> Although the state showed approval for this assessment of the proper Soviet jazz musician, they showed wariness towards those who took such masculine independence to the extreme.

Some musicians considered personal and artistic independence so important to their definition of masculinity and authenticity in jazz that they demanded complete independence from the Komsomol, even going so far as to denigrate state careers with gender-charged adjectives such as "soft" and "subservient." For Alexei Kozlov, the sheer amount of *muzhestvo* [courage] required of a musician to question the party's wisdom in

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<sup>109</sup> Aleksandr Medvedev, "Aleksandr Tsfasman," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 339.

<sup>110</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga*, 145.

the artistic decision-making process meant that those who took this path represented the real jazzmen.<sup>111</sup> Once free, however, musicians like Kozlov argued that the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages; more flexibility in the type of music that they played, where they were willing to play it, and the specifics of contract stipulations made these musicians easier to book for potential tours. In *Stupeni Vosshozhdeniya*, Mikhail Kuel bragged about his group's rugged independence and toughness as superior to the stuffy professional state-sponsored groups, who he believed had lost their manhood due to such "dependence." Unlike the professionals, who "needed time to get ready (put on makeup and get dressed)," Kuel's non-state band was always ready to go.<sup>112</sup> After all, musicians like Kuel believed that real jazzmen knew audiences cared about hearing high-quality music and feeling a personal connection with the performers, not if the musicians wore flashy suits. After all, nothing could beat the forceful impact of an expertly executed solo on the listener's conscience.

### **Encore! Encore!: Improvisation and Audience Response in Soviet Jazz**

The spontaneous nature of improvisation represents perhaps the quintessential characteristic of jazz music. The immense skill and control required of a musician to pull off such a seemingly disorganized bunch of bars distinguished those musicians truly dedicated to their craft.<sup>113</sup> Since the audience members do not know what to expect during the act of improvisation, they must pay close attention during the performance to appreciate everything going on within it.<sup>114</sup> If they approve of what they hear, they clap at

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<sup>111</sup> The word *muzhestvo* is interesting because its root *muzh* means man, thereby making its translation a combination of the English word courage and manliness. Kozlov 250.

<sup>112</sup> Kuel, *Stupeni Vosshozhdeniya*, 279.

<sup>113</sup> Y. Holopov, "I. Bril: Prakticheskii Kurs Dzhazovoi Improvisatsii dlya Forte Piano," in *Sovietskii Dzhaz*, 515-6.

<sup>114</sup> *Dzhaz: Molodozhniye Dzhazoviye Ansambli Moskvii*, second record.

the end of the solo, thereby forging a connection between the audience and the performer.<sup>115</sup>

In the moment of improvisation, the simultaneous playing of the musician and the audience's reactions acted as a feedback loop that promoted the creation of authentic Soviet jazz through spontaneity, which the Komsomol warily accepted as necessary to raise the cultural level of Soviet citizens. Even though recordings of such moments may, in theory, diminish the importance of that temporal moment, the captured reactions of the audience and the musician present valuable resources in the examination of improvisation; because recordings show live audio of events as they unfolded, the sounds of clapping and whistling thus become fossilized records of the audience's perceptions of the improvised solos. On the record of the Tallinn Jazz Festival in 1967, *Summertime* by R. Babayev's Quartet provided a great example of the creation of close connections between performer and audience via the act of improvisation.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the song, the saxophone and piano traded off solos, playing so wildly that they almost reached a cacophonous state. During one solo, the audience burst into applause with whistling, encouraging the saxophonist to up the ante. Enlivened by the audience's approval, one musician began to scat along with the bass solo, mimicking each pluck of the strings with his vocals. This resulted in shouts of approval from the audience with more thunderous applause. When the song reached its conclusion, all the instruments collapsed in a chaos of sound before abruptly falling silent. The audience, appreciating the uniqueness of the moment that they just witnessed, gave the performers a final round of applause. Amid this deafening sound, all the actors involved in the making of Soviet jazz, from the

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<sup>115</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz so Svingom*, 285.

<sup>116</sup> Many Soviet jazz musicians consider the festival in Tallinn the high point of Soviet jazz in the 1960s.

performer and the audience to the Komsomol officials who promoted the music, formed a solid line, sustaining each other as long as the energy of the moment could allow it to continue. Soviet jazz musicians, soaring the highest on this raw energy, thus fell the farthest when it ran out and the connection broke. Unfortunately, Soviet jazz musicians could not simply brush this one off and walk away unscathed.

### PART THREE-THIS IS THE END

#### **No Man is an Island: Collapse of the State and its Meaning for Soviet Jazz**

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in the sweeping restructuring of government and society. Economic hardship befell many people while former careerists in the Communist Party became insanely rich. Jazz also fell precipitously in popularity in this period, with musicians having to combat both listeners' drained enthusiasm for jazz and the depressed economic situation which discouraged concertgoing. The ostensible irony of this turn of events, where jazz musicians suffered despite their technical adherence to socialist ideals while representatives of the first socialist state dumped those ideals in a heartbeat for capitalism, manifested itself as bitterness and skepticism in musicians' recollections of the past. In their autobiographies, they wondered aloud if officials ever really cared about the values they impressed upon the citizenry. Did the state have genuine positive aims for Soviet jazz or did it simply use jazz as a form of Huxleyan Soma to numb the people and make them forget about the darker state of affairs around them? While this paper has refuted such a binary view of the relationship between the state and jazz musicians in the postwar period, the lingering bitter taste left in the musicians' mouths had substance to it, however, in a form that musicians did not expect.



I argue that, like conjoined twins, Soviet jazz represented a product of two distinct yet mutually dependent organisms, which explained why popularity in Soviet jazz collapsed rapidly following the Soviet state's demise.<sup>117</sup> Even though the state and jazz musicians had a complicated relationship, their desire to keep Soviet jazz alive helped to bring them closer together. It came to the point that jazz musicians needed the state for their own survival. In good times, this meant that jazz musicians believed that the state's funds and encouragement could help make Soviet jazz truly its own and, therefore, they actively sought its help. In bad times, jazz musicians felt frustrated with the state's qualms and restrictions regarding their creative projects, considering such measures detrimental to their visions of authenticity in Soviet jazz. However, even in negative examples like this one, Soviet jazz still depended on both parties for survival. Restrictions, in a way, turned Soviet jazz into a "forbidden fruit," which drew more people to jazz concerts.<sup>118</sup> Therefore, when the enforcer of those measures disappeared, Soviet jazz lost some of its allure too, which hastened its demise. While this interdependence proved grim for Soviet jazz, it signified a last glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel for the state.

I believe that Soviet jazz's quick death following the state's collapse, caused by their interdependence, represented the brief success of Soviet cultural policy pursued since Stalin's death in 1953. The whole point of this policy, embodied in the New Soviet Man, involved the fusion of state and man as a necessary component in the march towards communism. Rather than dictating policy alone, the state encouraged citizens to take up the implementation of socialist ideals themselves. Soviet jazz represented one

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<sup>117</sup> This argument does not concern jazz itself, which thrives in present-day Russia.

<sup>118</sup> Feyertag, *Dzhaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga*, 297.

manifestation of that effort, in which the state urged musicians to view their creative projects through a larger sociocultural lens as part of their duties as Soviet citizens while the state (the Komsomol) familiarized itself with musicians' own artistic visions. As a result, musicians' and the state's conceptions of authenticity in Soviet jazz melted into one another. They became so closely intertwined that, in the end, the one's collapse entailed that of the other. However, to the state's chagrin, the New Soviet Man, embodied in the Soviet jazz musician, died shortly after it.

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