

*a
history
of jazz: the
new york
scene.*

edited by samuel b. charters / RBF RF-3

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JAZZ A HISTORY OF THE NEW YORK SCENE
Dixieland, ragtime, swing, bop, progressive
jazz may have originated elsewhere, but it
was in New York that they reached their
fullest expression. ■ Over 150 illustrations.
SAMUEL B. CHARTERS & LEONARD KUNSTADT



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BOOK "JAZZ, A HISTORY OF THE
NEW YORK SCENE" BY SAMUEL B.
CHARTERS & LEONARD KONSTADT.

A HISTORY OF JAZZ:
THE NEW YORK SCENE.

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Europe's Society Orchestra, 1914
SENSATION RAG
The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, 1917
CRAZY BLUES
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History Of Jazz

THE NEW YORK SCENE

Edited By Samuel B. Charters

Although jazz as a musical style has been developed by musicians from every part of the United States and many American cities have developed local jazz styles of considerable importance, one city - New York - has virtually dominated the jazz world for over forty years. This is not so much the result of a brilliant jazz style or of a group of strong musical personalities as it is of New York's position of dominance in the American entertainment industry. Jazz has many of the characteristics of creative art music, but since the first World War it has been merged with the development of every phase of commercial popular music in the United States. New York, with its recording and publishing companies its night clubs and theatres, is the center of this commercial music industry. In New York musicians are hired and fired, bands are organized, recording sessions are arranged, and a musician's reputation is often seriously affected by the reaction of New York's critics and writers. From time to time there have been flurries of activity in other cities, as in Chicago in the '20's Kansas City in the '30's or Los Angeles in the '50's, but New York influence has been prolonged and pervasive.

In a number of ways, perhaps this influence has not been entirely a beneficial one. There has been a tendency to exploit the successful musician or band in the same way that a non-jazz personality is developed when there has been some success with a recording or a personal appearance. The competition with the other entertainment in the city has led to theatricalism and pretention. In the emphasis on personality and presentation musical values have often been put into a secondary position and jazz has gone from one extreme to another, from the rowdy slapstick of bands like the Original Dixieland Jazz Band through the relentless theatricalism of a swing band like Cab Calloway's to the studied pretention of newer groups like the Modern Jazz Quartet. As a result of this exploitation, however, jazz has become an important aspect of the popular music of the United States, and there has been an opportunity for many musicians to achieve some economic success and to develop their creative talents. Any art seems to thrive in an atmosphere of crowded competition and sudden success.

It is difficult to find any logical patterns in the

development of jazz in New York. So many musicians have come into the city from other parts of the country that styles often have undergone considerable change within a relatively short period. Also New York's importance as the center of the American entertainment world has meant that there is little in New York's jazz music that could be called a definite New York style. Although most of the large swing bands achieved their first important success in New York it is difficult to describe their music as characteristic of the city. Their music was being performed for a national audience, and New York was little more than a noisy clearing house for music and musicians of every style. At one or two points there does seem to be a distinctiveness to the music, and they have given New York jazz its claim to serious attention. The first point was the development of the Harlem show of the mid-'20's, with the emergence of leaders like Duke Ellington, Charlie Johnson and Fletcher Henderson and the soloists and arrangers with their bands. The second was the development of bop in the early '40's, with musicians like Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Thelonius Monk.

This selection of New York recordings, chosen as musical illustrations for the book "A History of Jazz - The New York Scene", is an attempt to show some of the characteristics of jazz in New York and to capture some of the important moments of development in the city's jazz styles. The earliest recording, by James Reese Europe's Syncopated Orchestra of 1914, is one the earliest recordings of a band playing with a marked jazz feeling and a strong jazz beat. In the most recent, the 1945 sextet recording by Dizzy Gillespie's group, can be heard the newly emerging style of bop, still with many swing characteristics, but unmistakably fresh and vigorous. In the other examples can be traced many of the other developments of the jazz style. As examples of the divergent musicians working in and out of New York there is the recording by a mixed group of Chicago and New York men playing an unmistakable Chicago style in the "Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble". A traveling group, coming in to work the clubs and theatres, is represented by The Missourians, with their traditionalists like Clarence Williams to restless innovators like Coleman Hawkins, and there have been remarkable sessions like the one that produced "Thou Swell". In this selection are some of the most important, and exhilarating, moments of jazz in New York.

SIDE TWO

Band 1: THOU SWELL -

Louisiana Sugar Babes, 1929.

James P. Johnson, pno; Fats Waller, organ; Jabbo Smith, tpt; Garvin Bushell, reeds.

Band 2: HARLEM RIVER QUIVER -

Duke Ellington and his Orchestra, 1928.

Louis Metcalf, Bubber Miley, tpts; Tricky Joe Nanton, tbn; Otto Hardwick, Rudy Jackson, Harry Carney, reeds; Duke Ellington, pno; Freddie Guy, bjo; Wellman Braud, bss; Sonny Greer, dms. Arrangement by Duke Ellington.

Band 3: OZARK MOUNTAIN BLUES -

The Missourians, 1929.

R. Q. Dickerson, Lamar Wright, tpts; DePriest Wheeler, tbn; George Scott, William Blue, clts, and saxes; Andrew Brown, tenor; Earres Prince, pno; Charley Stamps, bjo; Jimmy Smith, bss; Leroy Maxey, dms.

Band 4: KEEP THAT HI-DE-HI IN YOUR SOUL -

Cab Calloway and his Orchestra, 1934.

Doc Cheatham, Ed Swayzee, Lamar Wright, tpts; De Priest Wheeler, Harry White, tbn; Andrew Brown, Thornton Blue, Arville Harris, Walter Thomas, reeds; Benny Payne, pno; Morris White, gtr; Al Morgan, bss; LeRoy Maxey, dms; Cab Calloway, vocal.

Band 5: JAZZNOCHRACY -

Jimmy Lunceford and his Orchestra, 1934.

Eddie Tompkins, Sy Oliver, Tommy Stevenson, tpts; Henry Wells, Russell Bowles, tbn; Willie Smith, Earl Curruthers, Joe Thomas, reeds; Edwin Wilcox, piano; Al Norris, gtr; Moses Allen, bss; James Crawford, dms. Arrangement by Will Hudson.

Band 6: FLYIN' HAWK -

Coleman Hawkins Quartet, 1944. (with Thelonius Monk, piano)

Coleman Hawkins, tenor, Thelonius Monk, pno; Bass Robinson, bss; Denzil Best, dmsn.

Band 7: GROOVIN' HIGH -

Dizzy Gillespie and his Sextet, 1945.

Dizzy Gillespie, tpt; Charlie Parker, alto; Clyde Hart, pno; Remo Palmieri, gtr; Slam Stewart, bass; Cozy Cole, dms.

SIDE ONE

Band 1: TOO MUCH MUSTARD -

Europe's Society Orchestra, 1914.

Orchestra including mandolins, clarinet, piano, drums, cornet, etc., with James Reese Europe, piano and ldr., Cricket Smith, cornet; Buddy Gilmore, drums.

Band 2: SENSATION RAG -

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, 1917.

Nick LaRocca, cornet; Larry Shields, clarinet; Eddie Edwards, trombone; Henry Ragas, piano; Tony Sbarbaro, drums.

Band 3: CRAZY BLUES -

Mamie Smith, accompanied by Perry Bradford's Jazz Hounds, 1920.

Jazz group, including Addington Major, cornet, Sticky Elliot, Clarinet, Herb Fleming, trombone, directed by Perry Bradford.

Band 4: SUGAR FOOT STOMP -

Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra, 1925.

Louis Armstrong, Elmer Chambers, Howard Scott, trpts; Charlie Green, tbn; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, Coleman Hawkins, reeds; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, bjo; Ralph Escudero, Bss; Kaiser Marshall, dm. Arrangement by Don Redman.

Band 5: LOG CABIN BLUES -

Clarence Williams' Washboard Five, 1928.

Ed Allen, trpt; Cecil Scott, clr; Clarence Williams, pno; Floyd Casey or Jasper Taylor, washboard; Cy St. Clair, bss. Arrangement by Clarence Williams.

Band 6: BOY IN THE BOAT -

Charlie Johnson's Paradise Orchestra, 1928.

Sidney DeParis, Leonard Davis, tpts; Jimmy Harrison, tbn; Ben Whittet, cir; Edgar Samson, alto; Ben Waters, tenor; Charlie Johnson, piano; Bobby Johnson, bjo; Cy St. Clair, bss; George Stafford, dms.

Band 7: SHIM-ME-SHA-WABBLE -

Miff Mole's Little Molers, 1929.

Red Nichols, cnt; Miff Mole, tbn; Frank Teschmaker, clt; Eddie Condon, bjo; Joe Sullivan pno; Gene Krupa, dms.

A NOTE

Every effort has been made to reproduce the older recordings in this selection with the highest fidelity possible, but the nature of early recording and pressing processes has made this sometimes difficult. Even in the case of newer recordings, especially those done during the war period of 1944 and 1945, the shellac used for pressing was not of the best quality and there is considerable surface noise on many of the releases. The emphasis with these re-issues has been on the sound of music itself, leaving the higher frequencies in transferring, although this has meant on two or three examples some surface noise. For further selections of music from New York two volumes of the Folkways jazz series, Volumes 7 and 8, are suggested listening, with an extensive group of recordings by early Harlem large bands, solos and group recordings by Fats Waller and James P. Johnson, and many of the important white groups active in the city in the late '20's and early '30's.

Although there have been a few orchestral groups that left a deep imprint on the development of jazz much of the creative excitement in the music has come from work of the finest soloists, and it is these men who have always commanded the largest salaries and left the deepest impression on the younger musicians. Perhaps with a group like Duke Ellington's or Fletcher Henderson's it could be said that it was the group that was of overall importance, but synonymous with each of these orchestras is an array of gifted soloists who were fitted into the arrangements. With Henderson there immediately come to mind Louis Armstrong, Rex Stewart, Tommy Ladnier, Bobby Stark, Coleman Hawkins, Buster Bailey, and many others. With Ellington were Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, Bubber Miley, Cootie Williams, Joe Nanton, and in the later bands men like Jimmy Blanton and Ben Webster. Even bands which are today not as well known, like Charlie Johnson's excellent Paradise Orchestra, built their arrangements around soloists. With Johnson were men like Jabbo Smith, Sidney DeParis, and Jimmy Harrison. These men were hired away from bands and orchestras from every part of the country to be part of the musical life of the recordings in this selection illustrate these combinations of orchestral arrangement and solo freedom. In the fine Fletcher Henderson "Sugar Foot Stomp" it is Louis Armstrong's solo set into the arrangement, in Charlie Johnson's moving "Boy In The Boat" it is first Jimmy Harrison and then Sidney DeParis which give the recording its memorable quality. On Ellington's "Harlem River Quiver" there is the opening strutting chorus by Joe Nanton, and on the Missourians "Ozark Mountain Blues" R. Q. Dickerson drives the group with his ferocious growled trumpet. This kind of rich musical texture has always been a characteristic of the best New York groups.

This high concentration of soloists in the New York area, brought to the city by the high paying jobs in the larger orchestras, has meant that there have always been available a great number of talented musicians for the more casual pick up sessions, which

have played such an important part in the introduction of new ideas into the musical stream of jazz. The recording of "Thou Swell" by the astonishing quartet that was given the name of the "Louisiana Sugar Babes", by the record company, although none of them were from Louisiana, is an example of the quality of the musicianship often to be found in the New York jazz world. James P. Johnson played piano, Fats Waller, the studio electric organ, Garvin Bushell, clarinet and saxophone, and Jabbo Smith, in town to work with the Charlie Johnson band, trumpet. The break and solo on "Thou Swell" are among the finest things that Jabbo Smith ever recorded, and the entire performance has a unique, if somewhat wayward, charm. The "Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble" of Miff Mole's Little Molers is an example of the same situation at work in the white jazz school of New York. Red Nichols and Miff Mole, the cornet and trombone players, were working around the city in a series of theatre pit orchestras or dance bands, the clarinetist, Frank Teschemaker, was in town to replace a member of Ben Pollack's band who was in the hospital with appendicitis, and the rhythm section, three young Chicagoans named Eddie Condon, Joe Sullivan, and Gene Krupa, had come in to town accompanying a singer named Bea Palmer.

Occasionally these casual studio sessions organized around a well-known soloist have had interesting sidelights not considered at the time of the recording. Coleman Hawkins was at the height of his popularity during the early 1940's, and in the months that followed the lifting of the union recording ban in 1944 he recorded with a number of the younger musicians who were active in the new bop style that was developing in Harlem. This quartet recording from 1944 includes the young pianist Thelonius Monk in his first commercial recording date.

Even the work of the pioneer figures in New York jazz illustrate the diversity of musical talent that found its way to the city. James Reese Europe was from Mobile, Alabama, although he was raised in Washington, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band was from New Orleans, Mamie Smith was from Cincinnati and many of the members of her recording bands were from Memphis and St. Louis. The Clarence Williams group that recorded the fine "Log Cabin Blues" was led by a New Orleanian, Williams, and featured the fine cornet of Ed Allen, a St. Louis musician who was working with Leroy Tibb's Orchestra in Harlem's Connie's Inn. New York's own musicians, including men like Fats Waller and Thelonius Monk, have made just as exciting music as the men from out of town, but they've always been outnumbered. Jazz gains its great commercial impetus as entertainment, and the bands have gone to get the best musicians available, no matter where they came from. The New York role in the history of jazz, as this group of selections tries to show, has been that of the developer and the gatherer of some of the most diverse and the most challenging jazz talents that the music has yet produced.

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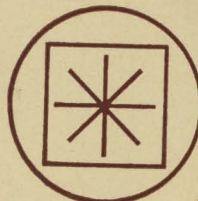
**A HISTORY OF JAZZ
THE NEW YORK SCENE**

edited by Samuel B. Charters
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SIDE 1 RF-3A
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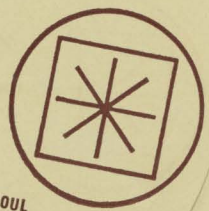
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