JAZZ

The First 100 Years

Enhanced Third Edition

Henry Martin | Keith Waters

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Listening Guide Tracks

JAZZ

The First 100 Years

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EDITION

JAZZ

The First 100 Years

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Jazz: The First 100 Years, Enhanced Third Edition
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Text Designer: Roy Neuhaus
Cover Designer: Rokusek design
Cover Image: Peter Willi /SuperStock; © 2014 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

WCN: 02-200-202

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014947989

ISBN-13: 978-1-305-09186-3
ISBN-10: 1-305-09186-8

Cengage Learning
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Boston, MA 02210
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Printed in the United States of America
Print Number: 01 Print Year: 2014

For Barbara and Gene

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Preface

IN THE FIRST AND SECOND EDITIONS of *Jazz: The First 100 Years*, our goal was to provide college students with a text that presented a fresh overview of jazz history and focused greater attention on jazz since 1970. We tried to stimulate fresh thinking about the jazz canon by including recordings that complement rather than duplicate the selections in the *Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*. In addition to the book's primary concern—the development of jazz and its most important artists—our first, second, and third editions related the music to relevant aspects of social and intellectual history, including the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and black activism in the 1960s. Finally, we included the most up-to-date information possible, taking advantage of the fine scholarly work on jazz that has appeared during the past several years.

In this third edition with enhanced media resources, our goal has been to facilitate interactive learning. It is important to stress, however, that our original conception of the text, its overall organization, and its philosophy have remained the same through all three editions, and that this enhanced media edition largely preserves the text of our third edition (with updates where necessary). Our chronological presentation of jazz history preserves the customary divisions of the music into stylistic periods because we feel that this is the clearest method of introducing the material. Nonetheless, throughout the text we continue to acknowledge and emphasize that many (if not most) artists have produced significant work beyond the era in which they first came to public attention.

As with any history, we sometimes must stray outside the time frame of a given era to complete the narrative of a certain artist. For the most part, however, an individual is generally treated in the era in which he or she exerted the most influence. The two main exceptions to this practice are Miles Davis and Duke Ellington. Although Ellington was prominent and influential throughout his career, he played an especially important role in early jazz and the swing era (Chapters 4 and 5), as well as in 1960s mainstream jazz (Chapter 10). Davis exerted considerable influence on the disparate styles of 1950s cool jazz, 1960s mainstream jazz, and 1970s jazz-rock, so his story is related in Chapters 8, 10, and 11, to clarify these distinct contributions.

Using the Text

The text is divided into the Introduction on Jazz Basics and twelve chapters; for a one-semester class, an instructor should cover approximately one chapter per week. The text can also support a two-semester class. Instructors may wish to finish with Chapter 7 in the first semester; in this case the first semester presents jazz from 1900 to 1950, and the second semester covers jazz from 1950 to the present. Within each chapter the material is organized through main headings and subordinate headings, which should help the instructor to maximize the use of class time and (in smaller classes) coordinate discussion according to the most important topics. Because the book combines a historical narrative with broader summaries of stylistic features, the instructor is free to use and shape the given material.

Features

- This book features a historical focus on the evolution of significant trends, key figures, and the changing role of instrumental and improvisational style. It also includes relevant ideas in twentieth-century U.S. social and intellectual history, including the Harlem Renaissance and the countercultural movements of the sixties. Many issues related to contemporary U.S. political and social history appear in the photographs and their extended captions. One-third of the book chronicles jazz since 1960, giving a balanced and nuanced view of significant trends and performers of the 1960s through the 2000s.
- Current scholarly and critical work is reflected throughout as the text takes into account some of the groundbreaking jazz research of the previous three decades. The presentation attempts to illuminate and amplify current historical and musical controversies rather than assert unqualified truths.
- Jazz guitarists and jazz vocalists, their techniques, and their contributions to the history of jazz (not always considered in other texts) are covered throughout.
- A new, **magazine-like design** helps bring jazz to life, including "pull quotes" that capture the spirit of the times and of the artists.
- **Glossary terms** are now boldfaced in the text and their definitions gathered, for ease of reference, on the page.
- **Listening Guides** with a new The Main Point preview and clear within-text references, as well as detailed timings keyed to events in the music and the work's overall form, are included for each of the sixty-two musical selections.

Sarah Vaughan, "Lullaby of Birdland"

- **New marginal icons** cue pieces that are available for additional listening and download on the text's preselected Spotify and YouTube playlists, located on the text website (see Supplements below).
- **Boxes** with the themes "Technique and Technology," "Issues of Race," and "Insider's Guide to…" provide enrichment material on such diverse topics as jazz transcriptions and the sociocultural background of jazz.
- **Timelines** at the beginning of each chapter put the chapter's musical and historical developments in chronological context.
- **Exam Review Questions** and **Key Terms** at the end of each chapter help students prepare for tests on the chapter's material.
- At the end of chapters introducing a new style, the text includes **tables comparing jazz styles**, which appear in interactive form on the text website.
- Additional resources include a new Introduction to Jazz Basics; instructive end Notes; a Glossary of key terms; Selected Readings for further research; Selected Jazz DVDs and Videos, listing extensive sources for viewing and further study; and a comprehensive Index.

What's New in the Third Enhanced Edition

- MindTap, available on the book's website, offers interactive learning aids that will enable students to explore the book's main ideas creatively. See below for more on this feature.
- An expanded Introduction, Jazz Basics, discusses such general topics on musical fundamentals as rhythm, melody, harmony, the instruments of jazz, and standard musical terminology—using George Benson's "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise" as an illustrative example. The Introduction also includes listening examples throughout that are keyed to the Audio Primer Tracks, indicated by the Audio Primer logo.
- We decreased the total number of music examples in order to make the text more accessible to both music majors and nonmusic majors.
- We have expanded the coverage of women in jazz, including "all-girl" big bands and Maria Schneider as well as singers Sarah Vaughan, Peggy Lee, Chris Connor, Anita O'Day, and Ella Fitzgerald.
- We have also expanded the coverage of Latin jazz, now including new selections "The Girl from Ipanema," with Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto; and "Guataca City (To David Amram)," with Paquito d'Rivera.
- Chapter 1 includes additional information about Robert Johnson.
- Chapter 3 focuses on the major figures of early jazz—Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong, and Bix Beiderbecke—with expanded new material on Bechet.
- Chapter 4 follows the establishment of early jazz with the emergence in New York of Tin Pan Alley, the Harlem Renaissance, the stride pianists, Fletcher Henderson, and Duke Ellington. There is also expanded material on James P. Johnson.
- Chapter 5 features additional coverage of the social upheavals of the Depression and of race relations during the 1930s. Coverage of Duke Ellington's and Count Basie's work during the 1950s is now consolidated in Chapter 10.

- Chapter 6 includes new material on Louis Armstrong during the swing era and expanded coverage of Charlie Christian.
- Chapter 7 begins with a new introduction to the war years and the 1940s in general, then expands its treatment of Charlie Parker.
- Chapter 8 opens with an introduction to the culture of the 1950s, then proceeds to expanded coverage of the Modern Jazz Quartet and of Stan Getz and bossa nova. Vocalists of the 1950s and 1960s have now been consolidated in Chapter 10 on mainstream jazz of the 1950s–60s.
- Chapter 10 now surveys some of the significant mainstream jazz vocalists (especially Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan) and examines the legacy of big bands, with particular focus on the bands of Count Basie and Duke Ellington.
- Chapter 11 features much expanded coverage of 1970s fusion.
- In Chapter 12 we continue to treat the increasing number of women and non-Americans making major names in jazz and include selections by Maria Schneider as well as Paquito D'Rivera. We also update the material and include a selection by Vijay Iyer that demonstrates the continuing connections jazz is making with music of other cultures.

Supplements

- The **Audio Primer tracks,** prepared by the authors, are included on the course website (see below). These tracks demonstrate basic musical concepts (such as scales, syncopation, blues, rhythm changes, inside/outside playing, and so forth) as well as the instruments of jazz (the four principal saxophones, trumpet and trombone with different mutes, electric and acoustic guitars, the different sounds of the drum set, and so on). In-text references are indicated by the Audio Primer logo. Where appropriate, the definitions of Key Terms in the text refer to the Audio Primer so that students can hear musical examples of what is being defined. For Audio Primer contents, see the inside back cover of this textbook.
- **Active Listening Guides**. This edition includes, as a part of the course website, online, interactive Active Listening Guides. These Active Listening Guides feature full-color interactive and streaming listening guides for every selection discussed within the text, along with listening quizzes, background information, and printable PDF Listening Guides.
- **MindTap Course Website**. MindTap combines readings, multimedia, activities, and assessments into a singular learning path, guiding students through their course with ease and engagement. Included within this MindTap course are interactive Chapter and Listening quizzes, streaming music, active Listening Guides, and Spotify and YouTube playlists.
- A download card, which replaces the three CD set, includes all the piece of music discussed within the book and are keyed to the Listening Guides in the text. For a full list of downloads see the inside front cover of this textbook.

Changes to the Download Tracks

The recordings selected for the download card represent a general overview of jazz in the twentieth century. The text includes a Listening Guide for each track, containing commentary that highlights aspects of form, instrumentation, and improvisation. In making our selections, we followed these criteria: the recordings should be representative of the artists' work generally; the recordings should be well known, unless there is reason to include something more obscure; and the choice and the arrangement of the selections should work aesthetically.

This third enhanced edition includes numerous new selections (some excerpted):

- "Love in Vain"—Robert Johnson
- "Cake Walking Babies (from Home)"—Clarence Williams's Blue Five (with Armstrong and Bechet)
- "Carolina Shout"—James P. Johnson
- "Every Tub"—Count Basie and His Orchestra
- "Down South Camp Meeting"—Benny Goodman and His Orchestra
- "Ko-Ko"—Duke Ellington and His Orchestra
- "Swing That Music"—Louis Armstrong
- "Topsy (Swing to Bop)"—Charlie Christian at Minton's
- "Ko Ko"—Charlie Parker
- "Tempus Fugit"—Bud Powell
- "Versailles"—Modern Jazz Quartet
- "Blue Rondo à la Turk"—Dave Brubeck Quartet
- "The Girl from Ipanema"—Stan Getz
- "Take the A Train"—Ella Fitzgerald
- "Lullaby of Birdland"—Sarah Vaughan
- "Corner Pocket"—Count Basie

- "Sunset and the Mockingbird"—Duke Ellington
- "E.S.P."—Miles Davis
- "The Windup"—Keith Jarrett
- "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy"—Cannonball Adderley
- "James and Wes"—Wes Montgomery
- "Phenomenon: Compulsion"—John McLaughlin
- "Birdland"—Weather Report
- "Hang Gliding"—Maria Schneider
- "Guataca City (To David Amram)"—Paquito d'Rivera
- "Solitude"—Herbie Hancock
- "Falsehood"—Vijay Iyer

Acknowledgments

The first edition of *Jazz: The First 100 Years* began as an expanded second edition of Martin's *Enjoying Jazz* (Schirmer Books, 1986) but quickly developed into a comprehensive jazz history text. We acknowledge the wise guidance of the staff at Schirmer Books in overseeing the early development of the first edition of *Jazz: The First 100 Years*. We also thank Javier Gonzalez, who checked discographical and biographical information for the first edition.

For the second edition we benefited from the advice of Latin jazz expert Christopher Washburne in our discussion of Latin jazz and in the selection of "Manteca." We thank Charles Turner, who went beyond the call of duty in locating "Daniel" and "Dere's No Hidin' Place Down Dere." Both Sherrie Tucker and Janna Saslaw provided expert advice on women in jazz, and we thank them for their thoughtful critiques of our additional material and the suggestion of "Vi Vigor." Thanks also to Rosalind Cron for her photo of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. We thank Craig Wright for the selection "Kasuan Kura" from his text *Listening to Music* (6th ed., Cengage).

For the third edition, we benefited from the advice of Ricky Riccardi on Louis Armstrong; Joshua Berrett for comments on Duke Ellington's "East St. Louis Toodle-Oo"; Alexander Stewart for a correction to the form of "Weather Bird"; Bob Waters for suggestions on Sarah Vaughan; Graeme Boone for advice on Steve Coleman's "Salt Peanuts"; David DeMotta for comments on Latin jazz; Robert Morris and David Claman for insights on the relationship between jazz and Indian music; and Bob Palmieri, Paul Brady, Evan Perri, and David McGillicuddy for advice on Pat Metheny and the extended guitar techniques of John McLaughlin.

The environment and support provided by the Special Interest Group in Jazz (SMT-Jz) of the Society for Music Theory have helped make this book a reality. Many thanks to the members of SMT-Jz who encouraged us to pursue this project initially and offered suggestions throughout the development of all three editions.

We thank Clark Baxter, former publisher for music at Cengage Learning, who originally encouraged us to write the third edition. We owe Clark and his colleagues a tremendous debt for their tireless work in uncovering the photographs, sheet music covers, and other pictorial material used in the text.

We thank Sharon Adams Poore, Product Manager at Cengage, for encouraging us to proceed with the third enhanced media edition. Discussions with her resulted in several ideas that helped make the book's resources more appealing. We thank Kathy Sands-Boehmer, senior content developer, who reviewed the text in detail to make sure it was balanced and suggested several improvements. She was a pleasure to work with in every way. We would also like to thank Jillian Borden, marketing manager; Erika Hayden, associate content developer; Liz Newell, media developer; Corinna Dibble, senior content project manager; and Linda May, senior art director.

For the Audio Primer, many thanks to the excellent Denver-based musicians who agreed to perform on it. They include Rich Chiaraluce, Mark Harris, Bill Kopper, Ron Miles, Todd Reid, and Ken Walker. We would also like to thank our assistant engineers, Ty Blosser, Jerry Wright, and John Romero. A special thanks to Joe Hall, who was the principal engineer as well as the trombonist. Thanks also to Paul Rinzler for creating the Active Listening Tools, to Paul Brady for editing the Active Listening Guides, and to Maya Whelan, who helped develop the MindTap materials.

We thank Tom Laskey of Sony Music Custom Marketing Group, who obtained the rights for the download music tracks. Tom's patience and resourcefulness in locating the best possible audio sources for each selection were admirable.

We would also like to thank the readers engaged by Cengage Learning to critique the manuscript for the third edition. We gained excellent insights and suggestions from Larry Dwyer, University of Notre Dame; Keith Pawlak, University of Arizona; Emmett G. Price, Northeastern University; Doug Reid, Shoreline Community College; Teri Roiger, State University of New York, New Paltz; and David Wakeley, Spokane Falls Community College.

We profited enormously from the suggestions of readers of the first and second editions, and thank them profusely: John Fremgen, University of Texas, Austin; Wayne E. Goins, Kansas State University; John R. Harding, University of North Carolina, Charlotte; Mark Mazzatenta, University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Brian Moon, University of Arizona; John Murphy, University of North Texas; Cara Pollard, Texas Tech University; Tom Wolfe, University of Alabama; and Bret Zvacek, Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam.

We must especially single out Carl Woideck of the University of Oregon and Lewis Porter of Rutgers

University–Newark for special consideration. Each of them read the text with exceptional thoroughness. They offered alternative ideas, vigilantly pointed out errors, and sometimes questioned interpretations. Carl's suggestions for the download music tracks were invaluable. Both Lew's and Carl's advice and suggestions inform many sections and are too copious to acknowledge adequately here.

We would like to thank David Cayer and Lewis Porter for timely advice on our initial selection of jazz videos. Rob Duboff worked to refine the list into final form and wrote many of the video descriptions.

Our historical and analytical insights are profoundly indebted to the explosion of recent first-rate scholarly and critical studies on jazz. Many have proven invaluable, including (but not limited to) Lewis Porter's excellent studies of Lester Young and John Coltrane, Mark Tucker's work on Duke Ellington, Scott DeVeaux's writings on bebop, Stuart Nicholson's book on jazz-rock fusion, Sherrie Tucker's work on the all-women bands of the swing era, and Enrico Merlin's material on Miles Davis's electric period. We would like to thank Tom Riis for his input on late-nineteenth-century American music in general and Robert Sadin for insight into the experience of conducting "Express Crossing." Our thanks go to Vijah Iyer for comments on his recording "Falsehood." Bill Kirchner offered excellent advice in the early stages of the process, as did Greg Dyes, formerly of the University of Colorado, and Michael Fitzgerald. Brian Fores's unpublished master's thesis on John Zorn contributed material not available elsewhere. John Galm, Travis Jackson, Eric Charry, and Steve Pond provided insights into the retention of African music in the United States and helped us clarify the summary of African music in Chapter 1.

The graduate students in the master's degree program in jazz history and research at Rutgers University–Newark read earlier drafts of many sections and provided valuable feedback; we thank them for their time and comments. We also thank Steve Lindeman and Sam Miller for several corrections. We particularly acknowledge the staff of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University–Newark: Dan Morgenstern, Ed Berger, and Vince Pelote were extremely generous with their time and advice. Dan and Ed have since retired, and we wish them the best.

Finally, we would especially like to acknowledge the personal and endless support of Barbara Fiorella and Gene Hayworth. Each managed to deal with the authors' individual whims, predilections, peccadilloes, and other personal idiosyncrasies with humor, understanding, and continuing encouragement. The term *significant other* is clumsy, but for each of us there truly is no one more significant. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have our lives so enriched. We dedicate this book to Barbara and Gene.

About the Authors

Henry Martin is a professor of music at Rutgers University–Newark. With a Ph.D. from Princeton University and degrees from the University of Michigan and Oberlin Conservatory, he has pursued a dual career as a composer-pianist and a music theorist specializing in jazz and the Western tonal tradition. Martin's compositions (published by Margun Music and Evensong Music, Media, and Graphics) have won several awards, including the 1998 Barlow Endowment International Composition Competition and the National Composers Competition sponsored by the League of Composers–International Society for Contemporary Music. Albany Records released his *Selected Piano Music* CD in 2010 (TROY1171, with performances by Hilary Demske), and Bridge Records released his *Preludes and Fugues* CD in 2004 (Bridge 9140, with Martin performing).

Martin teaches in the master's degree program in jazz history and research at Rutgers–Newark, the country's only program granting a degree in jazz scholarship. He is a co-editor of the *Journal of Jazz Studies*, which is published online by the Rutgers University Libraries. He is the author of *Charlie Parker and Thematic Improvisation* (Scarecrow Press, 1996) and *Enjoying Jazz* (Schirmer Books, 1986). Scarecrow also published his *Counterpoint* in 2005. Martin has published numerous articles on music theory in such journals as *Perspectives of New Music*, the *Journal of Music Theory*, and *In Theory Only*. He is also the founder of the Special Interest Group in Jazz, an organization of music theorists devoted to advancing scholarship in jazz theory.

Keith Waters is a professor of music theory at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He received a Ph.D. in music theory from the Eastman School of Music, a master of music degree in jazz piano from the New England Conservatory of Music, and a bachelor of music degree in applied piano from the University of North Carolina–Greensboro. He is the author of the award-winning book, *The Studio Recordings of the Miles Davis Quintet, 1965-68* (Oxford University Press, 2011), and *Rhythmic and Contrapuntal Structures in the Music of Arthur Honegger* (Ashgate, 2002). He has published articles on Herbie Hancock, Booker Little, Miles Davis, Wayne Shorter, and Keith Jarrett as well as on other topics related to jazz analysis and improvisation.

As a jazz pianist, Waters has performed in jazz festivals and clubs throughout the United States and Europe, appearing in such venues as the Blue Note and the Village Corner in New York City, and Blues Alley and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. He has performed in concert with numerous jazz artists, including James Moody, Bobby Hutcherson, Eddie Harris, Chris Connor, Sheila Jordan, Keter Betts, Buck Hill, and Meredith D'Ambrosia. He has recorded for VSOP Records, and his playing has been featured in *Jazz Player* magazine.

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JAZZ

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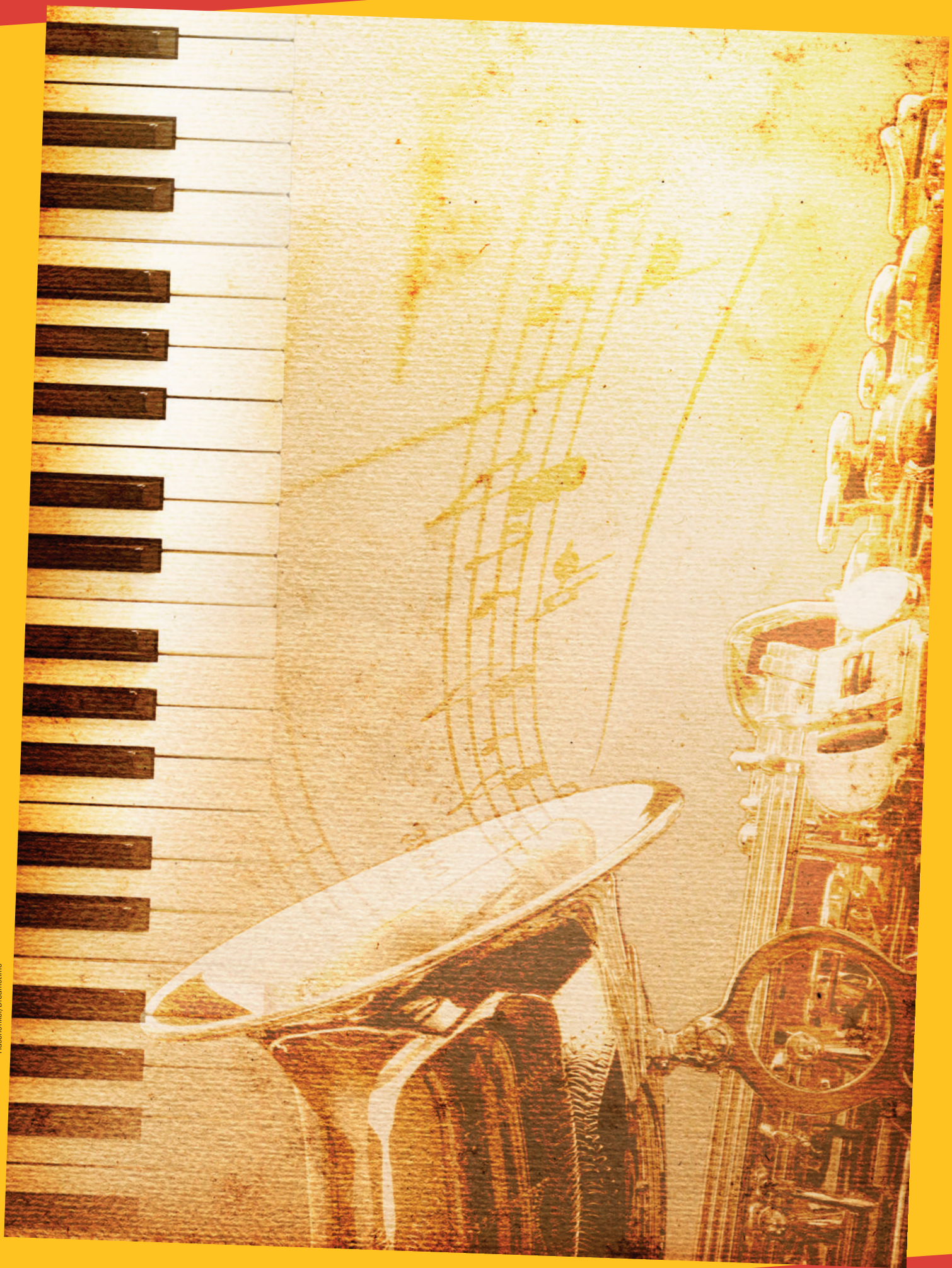
ENHANCED 3rd EDITION



Hasenonkel/Dreamstime

Jazz Basics

Intro

MindTap™

Start with a quick warm-up activity.

TODAY, WE HEAR MUSIC EVERYWHERE. IT IS SO PERVASIVE that we sometimes don't realize that we're hearing it. Music forms the background to movies, television shows, Internet websites and games, retail stores, elevators, airport lounges, doctors' offices, and so on. Some of us walk around listening to iPods; others keep radios and televisions on in their homes to accompany other activities, and of course much of the sound they provide is music. What this means is that we often take the presence of music for granted. When music forms the focus of our attention, however, it becomes foreground rather than background activity, and we have the opportunity to listen carefully rather than carelessly. Careful listening helps us appreciate and enjoy the music more fully.

This Introduction will give you the basic vocabulary you need to talk about jazz.

Our goal in this Introduction is to describe some of the underlying musical ideas in jazz and define its elements so that you will be able to appreciate and enjoy jazz more fully. This Introduction will also give you the basic vocabulary you need to talk about jazz. We will begin with a track from the historical selections that accompany this book and throughout will also refer to the AP Audio Primer tracks that are available on the companion website. These latter tracks demonstrate fundamental principles, the most common jazz instruments, and basic ideas of form.

To help you master all this new terminology, some key terms are shown in **bold** when they first come up in text; this means that the term's definition appears on the page of its first usage, in the Glossary at the back of the book, and as one of the Key Terms at the end of the chapter.

Hearing *Form* in Jazz

What do we do when we listen to jazz? Just what are we hearing? Let's begin with the recording (Track 58) of George Benson's recording of "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise." First, listen to the entire track, and try to hear its different sections (parts of the music) and recognize the instruments that are playing. You may recognize the track as an example of "smooth jazz," a kind of jazz heard frequently in elevators, dentists' offices, and other venues that are attempting to create a relaxed overall mood. You may be used to hearing singing in the music you like, so you should note that there is no singing on this track. Although there are many important jazz singers, much jazz is what we call **instrumental music**, which lacks vocals. You probably have heard smooth jazz, but you may have not listened to it carefully before. Let us analyze what you are hearing in more detail.

Play "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise" again from the beginning. As the track begins, you will hear the music seem to grow from the beginning of the track until time 0:08 when the melody begins. Benson, the featured electric guitarist, enters at 0:08 and plays the **melody** in the foreground of the music. Listen, in particular, to the melody from 0:08 through 0:22. The building blocks of the melody, heard in Benson's guitar, are called *notes* or *tones*. Later in this section we will consider several other musical terms that will help you understand the various aspects of melody.

In addition to hearing Benson play the melody on the guitar, we hear other sounds. The sum total of all the different sounds you hear produces the **texture** of the music. We hear this particular texture as dominated by electronic sounds, including the sound of Benson's electric guitar, which is the featured element in the texture. What other elements of the texture of the accompaniment can you distinguish? You might, for example, notice there is an electronic bass part that provides a lower-range foundation to the sound.

There are also mid-range **chords** (groups of notes, to be discussed later) that were probably produced by a synthesizer, a device that creates sounds electronically. There are also *percussion* sounds that include drums, finger snaps, and so on. Together, these sounds provide a background accompaniment to the *lead* part heard in Benson's electric guitar. Jazz styles can be identified, at least in part, by their textures, so learning to recognize the sounds of the instruments making up the texture narrows down the style.

What else can you hear in the Benson track from time 0:08 to 0:22? For one thing, you may have found yourself tapping your hand or foot to the recording. In most of the world's music you can feel a steady pulse to which you may clap your hands, tap your foot, or dance. That pulse is known as the **beat**. In much of jazz (and in other music as well), the drummer keeps the beat. However, even music without drums (such as a solo piano performance) may still project a strong beat, although there is no drummer "keeping time" or "keeping the beat." Thus, a beat is something that may be abstract, because its presence isn't always as obvious as a drumbeat. In the Benson track, we hear the beat most clearly in the drum sounds, most of which are created electronically.

> In much of jazz (and in other music as well), the drummer keeps the beat.

A beat is an instance of what in music we call **rhythm**. Jazz is especially known for its rhythm, but rhythm pervades all music. When notes follow each other in time, they are necessarily in some kind of rhythm, so we can think of rhythm as the experience of music through time.

Our innate attraction to music may have developed through the experience of rhythm even before birth: our perception of our mothers' heartbeats while we were still in the womb. After birth, our first actual experience of music may have been our mothers' singing the lullabies that calmed us as infants and lulled us to sleep. In listening to our mothers' lullabies, we experience the overwhelming power of music and its effect on our emotions from the very beginning of life.

> Listen to Track 3 of the AP Audio Primer, on which you will hear a melody played on the piano—first without chords, then with chords.

Instrumental music is music that lacks vocals.

Melody is the sequential arrangement of the notes of the scale into a coherent pattern.

The **texture** of music arises out of the sum total of all the different sounds you hear—the number and kind of instruments playing and the manner in which they are being played.

A **chord** is a group of three or more notes played simultaneously and acts as the basic unit of **harmony**.

Beat is a steady pulse, such as a heartbeat, and an instance of **rhythm**, the experience of music through time.

Tempo is the speed of the music's beat, ordinarily ranging from forty to two hundred beats per minute.

Meter is the organization of music into regular groups of beats representing strong and weak pulses. In **duple meter**, the music alternates between two pulses—one strong and one weak (ONE-two, ONE-two)—or, in a common form of duple meter, the music features four pulses—the first pulse receiving the strongest accent and the third pulse an accent stronger than two and four (ONE-two-three-four). In **triple meter**, two weak pulses separate a single strong pulse (ONE-two-three, ONE-two-three). Most music has meter.

A **bar** or **measure** represents each instance of the meter.

Form describes how we organize music in time by dividing a work into individual units called sections. Each **section** contains a set of measures and divides further into sets of measures called **phrases**. We label a section with a capital letter of the alphabet (A, B, C, and so on) and label a phrase with a lowercase letter (a, b, c)—a system that allows us to describe a work's musical form in abbreviated fashion.

The beat of music is roughly equivalent to the human heartbeat, normally around seventy-two beats per minute. The speed of music's beat, its **tempo**, ranges from somewhat slower to considerably faster but within the same basic range: from about forty beats per minute to about two hundred beats per minute. Slower tempos tend to be moodier and more contemplative, whereas faster tempos are livelier. The Benson track features what we might call a "medium tempo"—not too slow or too fast.

Most jazz uses duple meter.

In music, beats are organized according to meter. **Meter** arises from regular patterns of strong and weak pulses or beats. When we feel the music alternating between two pulses—one strong and one weak (ONE-two, ONE-two)—the meter is called **duple**; when two weak pulses separate single strong pulses (ONE-two-three, ONE-two-three), the meter is called **triple**. Meter can also be *irregular* when the strong pulses occur unpredictably. Most jazz, however, uses duple meter. The Benson track is in a particularly common form of duple meter in which we can count a fairly brisk ONE-two-THREE-four, ONE-two-THREE-four, and so on through the track. Each instance of ONE-two-THREE-four is called a **bar** or **measure**. We refer to such bars or measures as being in "4/4 time," an idea discussed more fully later in this Introduction when we treat rhythm in more depth.

In the Benson example, let's begin counting ONE-two-THREE-four at time 0:08 and continue through time 0:22. What do you notice happens at the second time unit? You may have noticed that the melody begins to repeat. That is, during 0:22–0:36 Benson repeats the tune he first played in 0:08–0:22. When we notice parts of pieces repeating, we begin to recognize what we call musical **form**.

Four-bar phrases and eight-bar sections are very common in jazz.

The 32-bar AABA song form

Musical form is the term we use to describe how the music is organized in time. In counting ONE-two-THREE-four from 0:08 through 0:22 in the Benson track, we would repeat "ONE-two-THREE-four" eight times. We say, then, that the melody has *eight bars* or *eight measures* before it repeats. These eight bars denote an important musical unit, typically present in jazz performances, that is called a **section**. The eight-bar section is a self-contained musical grouping. We often think of it as divided into two 4-bar **phrases**. Four-bar phrases and eight-bar sections are very common in jazz, though other measure groups are possible. Benson then repeats the same melody from 0:22 to 0:36, in which we hear another eight bars.

Notice that at time 0:37 the music changes; that is, new material begins. We can label the initial eight bars (the first section) of the piece as A. Because the material repeats from 0:22 to 0:36, the piece, so far, can be described as AA. In general, to develop an awareness of form, you should try to recognize where the music begins to repeat. We often describe the form of a musical work by labeling its sections, frequently with the letters A, B, C, and so on, although some musicologists use lowercase letters. Letters can stand for small units, such as phrases, as well as much longer parts of compositions and performances.

To develop an awareness of form, try to recognize where the music begins to repeat, and count the number of bars that create self-contained, clearly different sections.

In general, to identify the basic form of a piece of music, count the number of bars that create self-contained, clearly different sections. The easiest way to count bars is to keep track of them systematically through

the beat of the music. For example, to count bars of 4/4 time, you should count as follows:

ONE-two-three-four (1st bar)

TWO-two-three-four (2nd bar)

THREE-two-three-four (3rd bar)

FOUR-two-three-four (4th bar)

FIVE-two-three-four (5th bar)

SIX-two-three-four (6th bar)

(and so on)

As you near the end of a phrase (often, four bars) or a section (often, eight bars), listen to how the music creates a **cadence**, where the musical elements combine to create a feeling of closure or ending to that phrase or section. The cadence enables the preceding part of the music to feel self-contained. The more important the sectional division, the more conclusive will be the cadence that helps create that closure.

What of the material from the beginning of the track until 0:08? This brief beginning to the piece sets up Benson's entrance with the melody and is called the piece's **introduction**. We can extrapolate the beat backward from the beginning of the first A section to the beginning of the piece. In so doing, we notice that although the bass hasn't yet entered and beat is not as clear as it will become, the Introduction is four bars long. Hence, we can describe the piece thus far as follows:

Introduction	0:00–0:07	(4 bars)
A	0:08–0:22	first melody (8 bars)
A	0:22–0:36	first melody repeats (8 bars)

We pointed out above that the music changes at 0:37. The new music that we hear is different from the music we called A, so let's call it B. If we then begin counting bars at 0:37, we will notice that eight bars of music will pass by before the A part returns, at 0:52. At the point when the A returns, it also continues for eight bars.

Introduction	0:00–0:07	(4 bars)
A	0:08–0:22	first melody (8 bars)
A	0:22–0:36	first melody repeats (8 bars)
B	0:37–0:51	new, second melody, different from A (8 bars)
A	0:52–1:06	first melody returns (8 bars)

The presentation of the melody can thus be described as AABA, with each section eight bars long, for a total of 32 bars. This is the form of the melody, or original song. As will become evident throughout this text, the **32-bar AABA song form** is one of the most common in jazz. This form, in fact, pervades American popular music, especially songs written before 1950. Sometimes, the A section is called the **head**; the B section is known as the **bridge**. Even though this Benson recording is from 2004, the song

The 32-bar AABA song form is one of the most common forms in jazz.

was actually written in the 1920s and is characteristic of pre-1950s popular music.

Almost all jazz before the 1950s is based on symmetrical sections with the numbers of bars occurring in multiples of four, the common phrase length. We typically find sections of eight or sixteen bars that combine to create larger groups of thirty-two bars. After 1950, symmetrical forms continue to dominate jazz performance, but irregular forms become more common.

Sometimes, in AABA form, if a section repeats but is modified, the repeated section may be denoted by **primes**

A common texture in jazz is that of the piano trio.

added to the section letter: AA′BA″ shows that the initial A section returns twice but is modified, first in one way (A′), then in another (A″).

There are other instances of 32-bar AABA songs included with this text and on the Audio Primer. Listen, for example, to Track 10 of the Audio Primer. You should note that this example is not smooth jazz. Rather, you should be able to distinguish three instruments: piano, bass, and drums. We heard a bass in the Benson recording, but the bass on this Audio Primer example is known as an acoustic bass.

Toward the end of this chapter, we will briefly describe the principal jazz instruments, including the acoustic bass. You should also recognize the piano and drums.

A **cadence** occurs at the end of a section or phrase and creates a feeling of closure. It can also refer to a common closing chord progression.

An **introduction** occurs at the beginning of a piece and sets up the entrance of the melody and first section.

The **32-bar AABA song form** presents the melody in four sections labeled A, A, B, and A, each section eight bars long, for a total of 32 bars.

The term **head** describes the A section or principal melody of a song; **bridge** describes the B section.

A **prime** added to a section letter indicates that a section repeats but in modified form.

A **piano trio** is a performance group made up of piano, bass, and drums. Another form of the piano trio features piano, bass, and guitar.

Harmony defines a **chord**, generally a group of three or four notes played simultaneously.

The essence of jazz, **improvisation** or an *improvised solo* refers to a performance technique in which the improviser or soloist spontaneously creates a melody that fits the form and harmony of the piece.

Together, these three instruments comprise a texture that is common in jazz and is known as a **piano trio**.

The tempo in this recording is faster than what we heard in the Benson recording, so when you count ONE-two-THREE-four, TWO-two-THREE-four, and so on, you will have to count more quickly. In particular, listen to the bass notes: your counting should coincide with the bass notes. If you count through the track, you will note that the recording's form can also be described as AABA. Although the pianist (coauthor Keith Waters) is not playing a melody that you can hum as a tune, you should be able to hear that he is playing basically the same material in the eight-bar A sections and something different during the B section. We will return to issues of form later in this chapter to describe some items in greater detail.

Because the pianist does not seem to be playing a melody on Track 10 of the Audio Primer, what, in fact, is he playing? We have briefly described two of the three elements of Western music as rhythm and melody. The third element is more abstract, but essential to many forms of Western music, including most jazz: harmony. The pianist is playing **chords**, which are groups of notes that represent what we call **harmony**.

Linking chords together successively in music provides a flow of harmony that often serves as accompaniment to a melody and adds richness and context to it. In Western music a singer often performs a song's melody while the accompanying instruments play chords that provide harmony. The piano has long been the basic instrument of Western music because it can function as a kind of one-man band in which the performer can provide melody and harmony simultaneously: a player's right hand can play the melody while the left hand plays chords that provide harmony. Listen to Track 3 of the Audio Primer, on which you'll hear a melody played on the piano—first without chords, then with chords.

Linking chords together successively in music provides a flow of harmony that serves as an accompaniment to a melody and adds richness and context to it.

If you replay the Benson track (Track 58), you will notice that the sustained electronic sounds that provide a background to Benson's melody are in fact chords. In that track, the chords appear in the electronic keyboard parts, whereas in Track 10 of the Audio Primer, you can hear the pianist playing the chords on the acoustic piano.

Listen again to Track 3 of the Audio Primer on which you'll hear a melody played on the piano—first without chords, then with chords.

We noticed earlier that in the Benson track, we hear the melody presented as AABA from 0:08 until 1:07. What happens next in the music after 1:07? Benson continues to play, with a similar background texture, but we no longer hear the melody that we identified as A. Instead, Benson is playing what we call an **improvisation** or *improvised solo*. That is, he is playing spontaneously rather than repeating the melody of "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise." What Benson improvises, however, is not formless, because the other instruments continue to provide the form and harmony of the original song. When the song was first written, the composer created a sequence of chords to accompany the melody. Jazz musicians typically think of these chords as something that can be isolated from the melody of the song. Some of the

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players, then, provide a background texture by playing the song's chords, which frees another player, an *improviser* or *soloist*, to create a spontaneous melody that fits these chords. Much of what happens in jazz occurs in this format: a soloist improvises melodically to a harmonic and rhythmic background supplied by other players in the group. We can hear now that Benson's "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise" follows a 32-bar AABA form followed by an improvised solo.

Much of what happens in jazz occurs in this format: a soloist improvises melodically to a harmonic and rhythmic background supplied by other players in the group.

Introduction	0:00–0:07	(4 bars)
A	0:08–0:22	first melody (8 bars)
A	0:22–0:36	melody repeats (8 bars)
B	0:37–0:51	new, second melody, different from A (8 bars)
A	0:52–1:06	first melody returns (8 bars)
Improvised Solo	1:07–	spontaneous creation of melody to fit song's chords

If we return to the recording on Track 10 of the Audio Primer, we hear the pianist playing the chords to a notably important song, "I Got Rhythm," which was written by George and Ira Gershwin in 1930. Jazz musicians were so comfortable with the harmony of this song that they used it often as the basis of their improvisations. As such, the harmony, abstracted from the song, has itself a name: **rhythm changes**. This name derives from the "rhythm" of the song title "I Got Rhythm" and "changes" as a shortened form of "chord changes," a term used to designate the harmony of a song. Because the song first appeared in 1930, many composers have since written melodies on the harmonies of rhythm changes. One particularly well-known example is the theme song to *The Flintstones*. If you know this tune, you should try singing it to yourself and following the form. Again, as with the other elements that we've introduced here, a further discussion of concepts relating to harmony follows later in this chapter.

The Flintstones
"TV theme"

The aab Blues Form

In addition to the 32-bar AABA form that is so common in jazz, there is another singularly important form that appears throughout the music's history, **blues form**. Blues is actually simpler than 32-bar AABA form because it has only one section, which appears in a 12-bar format. Listen to Track 7, which features the legendary blues singer Bessie Smith, accompanied by pianist James P. Johnson. After a 2-bar Introduction, you should be able to count twelve bars before the melody begins to repeat with a different lyric.

Although the blues is based on a single 12-bar form that typically repeats through a blues performance, that 12-bar form itself typically divides into three 4-bar units, or phrases. Listen to Smith sing the first line at 0:04: "When it rains five days, and the sky turns dark as night." Smith then repeats this lyric with a similar melody at 0:13. Finally, at 0:23, Smith sings a different lyric to conclude the presentation of the melody. (See the Listening Guide for this song in Chapter 1 when we return to its discussion on Track 7.)

In fact, this format is known as the **12-bar aab blues form**, in that the singer typically repeats the first line of the lyric. (We'll use lowercase a and b to distinguish these phrases from the capital letters that we use to denote sections.) The b line typically provides a line of lyric that answers or explains the a line, and often rhymes it. In many blues tunes, the melodies of the two a phrases and b phrases are virtually identical. If so, the phrases are distinguished by the lyrics and their placement in the form as either the first, second, or third phrase.

When a song is performed, we call a single presentation of it a **chorus**. Thus, when Smith starts to repeat the melody at 0:32, she is beginning to sing the second chorus of the song. If you listen to the entire track, you'll notice that her performance consists of seven blues choruses, each one of them twelve bars. In each of these choruses you should be able to hear the aab form of the lyric.

Rhythm changes is a term derived from the form and harmony (or chord changes) of the song "I Got Rhythm."

The **blues form** is a single, 12-bar section that repeats throughout the song and typically divides into three 4-bar phrases. The classic blues featured an aab lyric pattern that fit regular chord changes.

The **12-bar aab blues form** is one in which the singer typically repeats the first line (a) of the lyric in the second line (aa) and in the third line—the b line—supplies a lyric that answers or explains the a line and often rhymes it (aab).

A **chorus** is a single presentation of a song.

Strophic is a term used to describe a musical work that has repeated choruses.

Blues harmony features a standard set of chord changes.

Classic **ragtime form**, borrowed from the European march form, contains three or four sections, called strains, of 16 bars each.

To hear another example of a classic blues performance with repeated aab choruses, listen to Track 6, which features Robert Johnson singing and accompanying himself on guitar. After a brief Introduction (0:03–0:12), you should be able to follow Johnson's performance of four blues choruses.

As we have seen in the Smith and Johnson recordings, a blues performance often consists of repeated choruses in which the melody remains largely the same, but the lyrics change for each chorus. We also noticed that in the Benson song, the AABA structure was repeated, but during the first chorus Benson played the melody of the song, and in the second chorus improvised. Jazz often features music in which choruses are repeated, either with improvisation or with different lyrics. In general, music that features repeated choruses is called **strophic**. Much jazz, therefore, features strophic structures.

Jazz often features music in which choruses are repeated, either with improvisation or different lyrics.

In addition to the 12-bar chorus and repeating chorus format that make up the Smith performance of "Back Water Blues," the song also features a standard **blues harmony**, that is, a set of chord changes that are important and reappear in numerous jazz performances. We will describe these chord changes in the more detailed section on the Blues later, but to hear them in a jazz piano trio, in which there is no melody present, listen to Track 11 of the Audio Primer. There you will hear the pianist, accompanied by bass and drums, play the chord changes of two choruses of the blues emphasizing its harmony. As in the example of rhythm changes on Track 10, follow the form of Track 11 by counting ONE-two-THREE-four, TWO-two-THREE-four, and so on at each of the bass notes, the instrument marking the beat. Note, also, that because the pianist is playing the harmony of the blues, but no melody, the aab lyric structure that we heard with Bessie Smith and Robert Johnson is not present.

There are other forms too that appear in jazz but are somewhat less common than the blues form and the AABA form. Especially significant in ragtime and early jazz is what is called **ragtime form**. Based on a European form heard in the march and other musical genres, this form is particularly important to the music's early history and will be described in Chapter 1. Further, in addition to 32-bar AABA form there is another 32-bar form common in jazz, known as ABAC. It should be noted, however, that jazz composers do not always restrict themselves to these forms but create their own as part of the process of composition. Nonetheless, so much jazz depends on the 32-bar forms and the 12-bar blues that you should practice counting the bars until you are comfortable following them.

So much jazz depends on the 32-bar forms and the 12-bar blues that you should practice counting the bars until you are comfortable following them.

Learning to follow the forms of the 32-bar AABA song and the 12-bar blues will help you hear jazz more deeply and understand what the musicians are working with: what skills they've had to master and the various freedoms and constraints that characterize the different jazz styles. Although this Introduction provides you with the basics of these forms, you should practice following the forms with the Listening Guides that appear throughout this text for each of the historical tracks. There is a popular misconception that what jazz musicians play is formless. This is surely not the case, as should be clear from the examples discussed so far.

Our Introduction to jazz has shown that it has three essential elements (which indeed underlie much Western music): rhythm, melody, and harmony. A fourth element—and our emphasis so far in this chapter—is form, which is related to rhythm because it is basically the temporal organization of the music. For the remainder of this chapter, we will describe these elements in greater detail and relate them to the musical keyboard and basic music notation. The Introduction continues with a description of the instruments most commonly heard in jazz performance groups, then concludes with a brief summary of significant jazz performance terms.

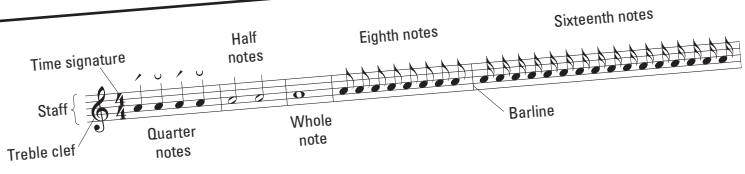
Jazz, indeed most Western music, has four essential elements: rhythm, melody, harmony, and form.

More on Rhythm

Earlier in this chapter, we described the idea of duple meter. Meter, which is common in virtually all jazz, is represented in musical notation by what we call the **time signature**. Music Example I-1 shows a *music staff* (the five horizontal lines) with a *treble clef* followed by a time signature, in this case 4/4, the most common of all time signatures, and an example of duple meter. The top 4 means that there are four beats in a *measure*, or *bar*, of the music; the bottom 4 means that a certain note, called a *quarter note* (♩) receives one beat. The bars are separated by vertical lines (called *barlines*) running continuously through the staff. The four quarter notes correspond to the four beats in the bar. In a bar of 4/4 time, we feel structural, or stronger, *accents* on the first and third beats, as shown by the accents above those notes in Music Example I-1. The music is generally organized in reference to those beats. The weaker beats (2 and 4) may receive dynamic, or secondary, *accents* because drummers, as well as people who clap their hands to the music, may emphasize them as well.

The second bar of Music Example I-1 shows two notes (𝅗𝅥) that are *half notes*, and each receives two beats. The third bar shows one *whole note* (𝅝), which fills the whole measure by receiving the full four beats. The fourth bar shows eight *eighth notes* (♪) that receive one-half beat each. The fifth bar shows sixteen *sixteenth notes* (𝅘𝅥𝅯), each of which receives one-quarter beat. These types of notes are the most common in jazz, although even smaller note values that further subdivide the beat are often heard at slow tempos (because there is more space for players to fill between the slowly occurring beats). Beats can also be divided into threes, but we won't discuss that topic here.

The disruption of regular meter, an important musical effect that is very common in jazz, is known as **syncopation**. Syncopation occurs when the weaker portions of a metrical grid unexpectedly receive stronger accents. Music that normally includes syncopation ends up sounding static or stiff without it. To hear the effect of removing syncopation from a familiar piece that features it, listen to Track 4 of the AP Audio Primer. Notice how flat and uninteresting the ragtime excerpt is when the syncopation is removed from the rhythm.



Music Example I-1

A music staff showing the basic elements of music notation

More on Melody

Melody may be the most familiar of all musical elements. We usually think of melody as consecutive single notes that are usually singable. Jazz musicians often refer to melodies as *tunes*, without implying that they are trite. What gives melody its identity are the distances between the successive notes. The distance between any two notes is called an **interval**. Of particular importance is a crucial interval called the **octave**, in which notes vibrate in a 2:1 ratio. When notes do this, they sound exactly the same but higher or lower from each other. We acknowledge this property by giving notes that are an octave apart the same name: do and do, re and re, and so on. You can hear the sound of an octave for yourself by singing the first few words of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" or "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." The first two notes of each song are an octave apart.

The property of notes being higher or lower is referred to by the word **pitch**, as in "a low pitch" or "a high pitch." For example, women's voices typically have a higher pitch than men's. Musical notes are sometimes called pitches.

We name the notes of music by using the letters of the alphabet and arranging them into **scales** that are organized by the octave. *Scale* is from the Italian *scala*, or

---

The **time signature** is a symbol that appears on a music staff. It consists of two numbers, one on top of the other, that together indicate the music's meter.

Syncopation, very common in jazz, is the disruption of regular meter and occurs when the weaker notes of the designated meter receive unexpectedly stronger accents, as in the second and fourth beats in 4/4 meter receiving stronger accents.

An **interval** is the distance between any two notes.

An **octave** is an interval of eight notes, in which the notes sound exactly the same but are higher or lower than each other, as in the first two notes of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

Pitch refers to a note's sound relative to its place higher or lower on the music scale.

The **scale**, derived from the Italian word for ladder, arranges notes into a series of octaves, the individual notes of which are labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and repeat in ascending or descending order.

The **sharp** symbol ♯ raises the pitch of a given note by one half-step.

The **flat** symbol ♭ lowers the pitch of a given note by one-half step.

The **tonic** is the first note of a given scale and forms the "center of gravity" to which all the other notes in the scale relate.

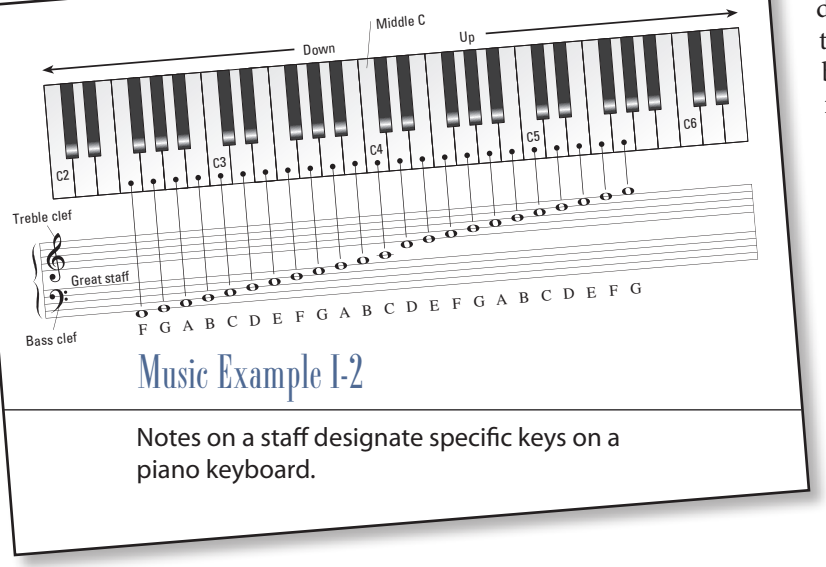
"ladder," because the notes move up and down by step, as on a ladder. Notes that are immediately next to each other in a scale are thus said to be a "step" apart. In the music of Western culture, the note names are given the first seven letters of the alphabet: A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. The next note of this ascending scale would again be A, but this new A would be an octave higher than the original A. This second A is the eighth note above the initial A, which explains the origin of *octave* from the Latin *octo*, or "eight." To hear examples of scales, listen to Track 1 of the AP Audio Primer, in which different scales are played on the piano.

As the diagram in Music Example I-2 makes clear, the seven basic notes, A to G, correspond to the white keys of the piano keyboard. There are five additional notes that are variants of the seven basic white-key notes and are arranged as the black keys of the keyboard. These black keys are normally named relative to the white keys. For example, a black key just to the right of C is called C♯, or C sharp. The **sharp** symbol raises the pitch of C by one half-step. The same black key falls just to the left of D, so it has the additional name of D♭, or D flat. The **flat** symbol lowers the pitch of D by one-half step. It isn't necessary for us to get into the complex issues of why musical notes can have more than one name (the white keys can assume different names as well), but you should be aware that the black keys are usually called sharps or flats depending on their relationship to adjacent white keys. Together, these twelve notes, repeating in lower and higher versions related by the octave, form the basis of Western music.

In Music Example I-2 we also see *music notation*, a system that represents the notes of Western music on a *music staff*. Each line and space on the staff corresponds to a white key on the keyboard. Flats and sharps on the same lines and spaces refer to the black keys. The *treble clef* and *bass clef* (also called the G and F clefs) indicate which notes correspond to higher or lower positions on the staff. In piano and keyboard writing, the staff with the F (bass) clef usually corresponds to music played by the left hand and is lower in pitch, whereas the G (treble) clef usually corresponds to the higher music played by the right hand.

Scales in Western music are combinations of white and black keys, ascending and descending. The simplest scale—one that is often taught first—is the C major scale, which consists of the white keys only and is named after the note C, which is the *tonic* of the scale. The **tonic** is of primary importance to the scale, forming a "center of gravity" to which all the other notes in the scale relate. (The use of tonics gives rise to the sense of *key*, or *tonality*, which we discuss in the following section on harmony.)

The notes of the scale merely ascend and descend. But to create melodies, which are much more interesting, we arrange the notes of the scale into coherent patterns. Melodies are made coherent by the use of patterns that combine predictability on the one hand and surprise on the other. Too much predictability is boring, whereas too much surprise can be incoherent. Jazz musicians often base their playing on *songs*, which generally consist of notes coherently arranged in a melody. We saw earlier in this chapter that jazz musicians also create spontaneous melodies, a process called *improvisation*, which is part of the essence of jazz. The education of any jazz musician includes learning to create improvised melodies that are coherent and emotionally engaging.

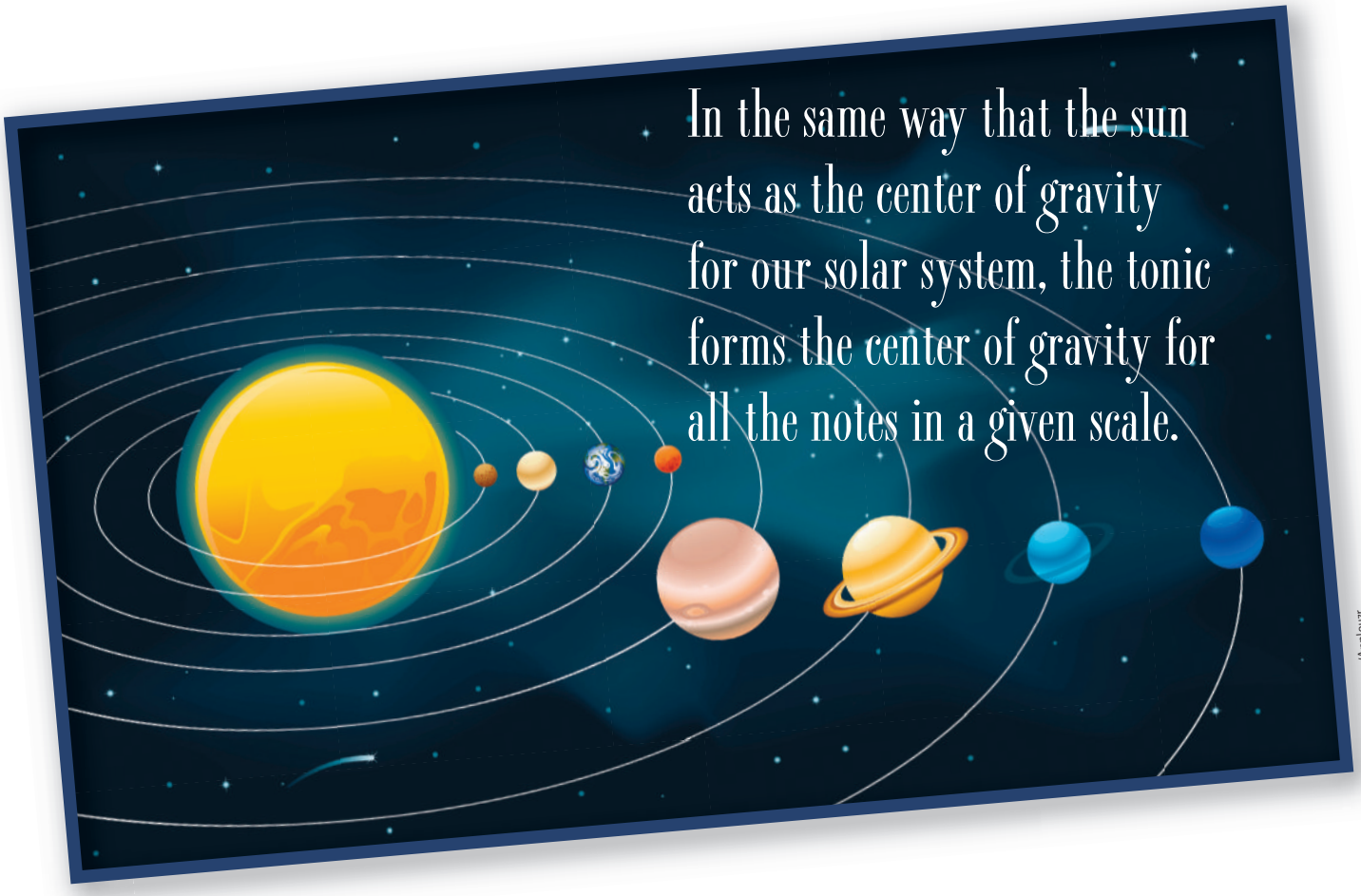


Music Example I-2

Notes on a staff designate specific keys on a piano keyboard.

As we saw earlier, melodies are usually divided into *phrases*: self-contained subgroups that are often four bars long and sung in one breath. Think of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Its first phrase would be "Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light." At that point in singing it, you would probably want to take a breath. Similarly, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" would probably have an opening phrase of "Take me out to the ballgame, take me out with the crowd."

The building blocks of the phrases that constitute melodies are scales in which successive notes are often a single step, or note, apart. You can hear such steps in the familiar Irving Berlin songs "White Christmas" and "God Bless America." The first phrase in each song is built on *stepwise notes*, notes moving in the small increments known as *steps*. Interestingly, the first phrase of "The Star-Spangled Banner" is



built, not on stepwise notes, but on *leaps* or *skips*, intervals between notes that are larger than steps. Leaps give rise to harmony, the third fundamental of music.

Different cultures have different notes and scales. Because jazz is a Western music (although a significant part of its history is non-Western), most of its notes, scales, phrases, and other musical building blocks are Western in origin.

More on Harmony

We saw earlier that harmony, another important feature of Western music, underlies much jazz. Melodies frequently use stepwise notes, whereas harmony is based on notes that are a leap or skip apart. We can create a simple harmony by taking a scale and playing every other note in groups of three or four notes. If we play these blocks of three or more notes simultaneously, we have *chords*, the basic units of harmony. In a C major scale (C–D–E–F–G–A–B–C), we create a C major **triad**, a three-note chord, by playing C–E–G, that is, by skipping over D and F. We can also create a D minor triad by playing D–F–A, or skipping over E and G. In similar fashion, we can build numerous triads by including the black keys and beginning on various keys, both white and black.

When we move through the notes of a chord one note at a time, up or down, the result is an **arpeggio**, the individual notes of a chord played in sequence, a word deriving from the Italian for "harp."

In addition to the triads (the most basic chords) we've already discussed, harmonies with more notes are possible. Jazz, for example, often exploits *seventh chords*, which have four notes. Listen to Track 2 of the Audio Primer for examples of the arpeggios created from seventh chords.

Music can be said to be collections of chords and melodic lines related to the scales from which they are derived. A chord can be built on each note of a given scale. As mentioned earlier, the scale and chords occurring in a piece of music determine its **key**. If the notes of a melody keep the same relative positions, a piece can be *transposed*

A **triad** is a three-note chord, the most basic chord.

An **arpeggio** is the notes of a chord played in sequence rather than simultaneously.

The **key** refers to the **tonality** of a piece of music as determined by the scales and chords that the piece uses. If, for example, a work uses the C scale (a scale that starts on the note C), the work is said to be in the key of C. A key may take a major or minor form, as indicated by its scale.

Tonality is a Western musical system in which pieces are organized according to harmony within some key or with respect to some central pitch. Western tonality rests on a system of twenty-four major and minor keys.

Slash notation is a method of showing the harmonies (or "chord changes") in jazz and popular music. Each slash in a measure denotes a beat. The arranger places chords over the slashes to show the beats on which the harmonies change. (See Music Examples I-4 and I-5 for examples.)

A **chord progression** describes the sequence of chords, usually within a composition.

Harmonic substitution allows the alteration of the original chord progression by the use of new chords that function similarly to the original chords.

from one key to another without changing the nature of the musical piece. This is often done for a vocalist whose best singing range is higher or lower than that of the published sheet music. For example, "The Star-Spangled Banner" begins with the notes G–E–C–E–G–C in the key of C. The same song can be transposed to occur in twelve different keys, each corresponding to a different note on the keyboard.

The musical keys that are derived from the notes of the keyboard have two common forms: *major* and *minor*. There is the key of C major, the key of C minor, the key of B♭ major, the key of B♭ minor, and so on. Melodies in a major key are traditionally considered "happier" or more upbeat. Those in a minor key tend to have a "sadder," more somber mood. When composers write songs or when jazz improvisers create melodies spontaneously, they work within the key system of twenty-four major and minor keys, the basis of Western **tonality**. In later jazz (from the 1950s on), a system called *modality* both extends and partially supplants the major-minor system.

> The three most important harmonic functions are "tonic," "dominant," and "subdominant," which correspond to the I, V, and IV chords.

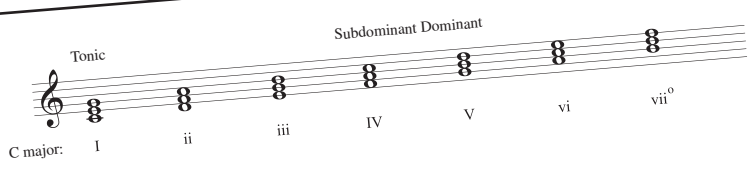
As shown in Music Example I.3, Roman numerals are often used to designate a chord's place in the key that contains it. In general, each of the seven notes of the scale can take a Roman numeral that helps specify what that chord does in the context of the scale's key. The set of chordal usages for a given chord in a key is referred to as its *function*. The three most important harmonic functions are "tonic," "dominant," and "subdominant," which correspond to the I, V, and IV chords. We will refer to these chords and functions throughout the book.

The chordal element of jazz is so pervasive that a system of **slash notation** describing chords has become standard in most jazz styles, as shown in Music Example I.4. The slashes stand for beats, so that in a 4/4 bar we see four slashes, one for each beat of the bar. Above the staff and over the slashes are symbols that specify the chords. A jazz musician, reading the line, would understand that a chord is activated on a particular beat whenever a new chord appears over a slash. Further, if a chord does not appear over a slash, then the previous chord is understood to remain in effect. Thus for the first two beats (slashes) of the example, the chord is Cmaj7 (called "C major-seventh"). The next two beats (that is, beats 3 and 4 of the first bar) are harmonized by an Am7 chord (called "A minor-seventh").

> When improvisers adapt their melodic improvisations to the underlying chords, they are said to be playing inside. When the melody and harmony don't quite match, the improviser is playing outside.

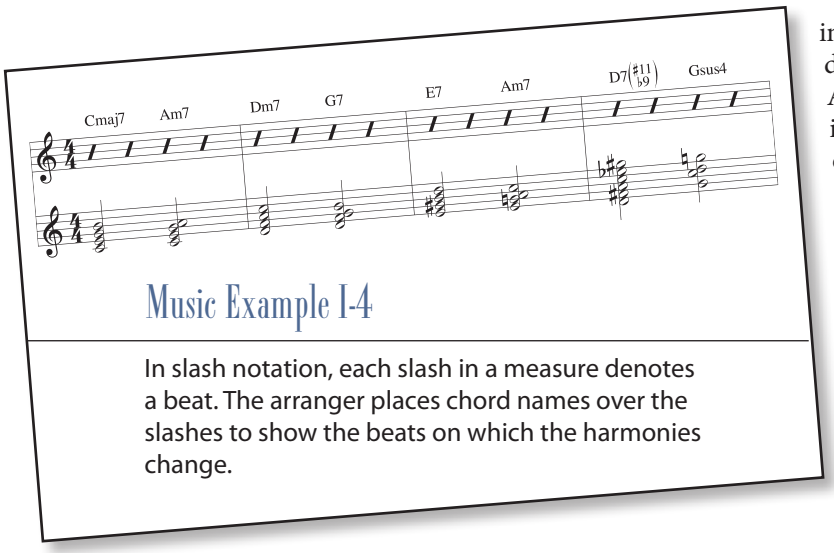
Sequences of chords used in music are typically not random, but based on standard conventions. Such chordal sequences are called **chord progressions** or simply **progressions**. The word *progression* implies that the chords have direction and are not random.

Another feature of jazz harmony is called **harmonic substitution**. The original chord



Music Example I-3

A Roman numeral over a chord indicates the chord's position and function in a given key.



Music Example I-4

In slash notation, each slash in a measure denotes a beat. The arranger places chord names over the slashes to show the beats on which the harmonies change.

progression is altered by using new chords that function similarly to the original chords. On Track 6 of the Audio Primer you can hear a standard jazz chord progression (ii7-V7-I, using the Roman numeral designation) modified by the use of *extensions* (extra notes added to the chord) and *substitution*. (The chord substitution used here is the *tritone substitution*, which was popularized during the bebop era, beginning in the 1940s.)

When improvisers choose to adapt their melodic improvisations to the underlying chords, they are said to be playing *inside*. When the melody and harmony don't quite match, the improviser is playing *outside*. Listen to Track 8 of the Audio Primer to hear the difference between inside and outside playing.

Although there's much more that could be said about rhythm, melody, and harmony, the material here should help you understand most of the references in the text. There are other elements of music beyond these basics, however. We explore them next.

Timbre and Texture

Although rhythm, melody, and harmony are the fundamental aspects of Western music, there are important secondary qualities too, which are important to music's total effect. Among these we note that the specific quality of the sound of a given instrument is its **timbre** (TAM-ber), or tone color. For example, the timbre of a violin is quite different from the timbre of a trumpet or the timbre of a friend's voice.

The *texture* of music, as described at the beginning of this chapter, is what you hear at any given moment: the combination of instruments playing and the manner in which they are being played. Textures can be described as thick or thin, high or low, fast or slow. A thin texture, for example, has few notes and/or instruments, such as a human voice singing without accompaniment. A thick texture may have many notes and/or instruments, such as a large symphony orchestra with all members playing. Some very flexible instruments, such as a piano, can by themselves project many different textures.

To focus on the texture when you listen to music, ask yourself:

- What instruments am I hearing? Can I distinguish them?
- How are they being played? (Lots of notes, few notes, fast, slow, soft, loud, high, low, and so on.)

> Jazz styles can be identified, at least in part, by their textures, so learning to recognize the sounds of the instruments producing the texture narrows the field.

Dynamics and Articulation

Music ranges from very soft to very loud. This is most obvious when you listen to recorded music: you can make the playback louder or softer just by turning the volume control up or down.

However, musical sounds themselves have subtly varying degrees of softness and loudness within the same performance. The notes of a melody would sound very mechanical if all were played at the same volume. The way performers vary the softness and loudness of the notes they play greatly affects their performances and their emotional impact on listeners. The softness and loudness of musical sounds are referred to as **dynamics**.

Notes can be *attacked*, or played, in numerous ways. We refer to the ways that notes are played as **articulation**. For example, the articulation of notes proceeding smoothly from one to another is **legato**. Short, detached notes are **staccato**.

Dynamics and articulation are often included in the overall category of *expression*, because the way a performer varies the dynamics and the articulation of notes greatly affects the overall expressiveness of that performance.

Timbre is the specific quality of sound in a given instrument or voice.

Dynamics in music address the volume of sound, from very soft to very loud.

Articulation refers to the manner in which notes are played, as in **legato**, a smooth movement through a series of notes, or **staccato**, short detached strikes on notes in a series.

Wind instruments produce sound from players' breaths and divide into two families: **brasses** and **reeds**. For brass instruments, a player buzzes the lips into a cup-shaped mouthpiece to create sound; for reed instruments, the player blows through or across a reed that is attached to the mouthpiece to create the sound.

Saxophone

Small Tom / Fotolia

Trombone

Paylessima / Dreamstime.com

Jazz Instruments

Just like those in a modern symphony orchestra, the musical instruments used in jazz are grouped into families based on their construction and function. Their characteristic sounds and playing techniques are all demonstrated in the Audio Primer.

Wind Instruments

Wind instruments, whose sounds are created by players' breaths, are normally divided into two families: **brasses** and **reeds**. In brass instruments, the sound is created by players buzzing their lips into a cup-shaped mouthpiece. In reed instruments, the players blow through or across a reed, which is attached to the mouthpiece, to create the sound.

Among the brasses, the most important jazz instrument is the *trumpet*. Its close cousin, the *cornet*, is common in early jazz and sounds like a trumpet but is mellower and more restrained. Another trumpet-like instrument is the *flugelhorn*, which sounds even mellower than the cornet.

The trumpet can be played open—that is, without mutes—or with various types of mutes. The characteristic sound of the open trumpet is heard on Track 12 of the Audio Primer. Mutes are placed into the trumpet bell (the flared end of the horn) to change its timbre. Cup and harmon mutes are demonstrated on Tracks 13–15 of the Audio Primer.

After the trumpet, the *trombone* is the most important jazz brass instrument. Like the trumpet, it can be played open or with mutes, as heard on the Audio Primer. Track 22 demonstrates a trombone with an open sound and Track 23, with a cup mute. The growl sound on Track 24 is a common brass technique that can also be performed on the trumpet. The tailgate effect of Track 25

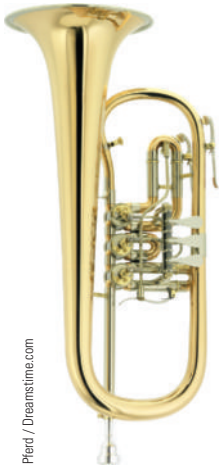
Trumpet

Billyfoto / Dreamstime.com

Cornet

Lebedinsk/Dreamstime.com

Flugelhorn



Pferd / Dreamstime.com

Three different mutes used to change the sound made by the trumpet: the Harmon mute, cup mute, and straight mute

Lightpro / Dreamstime.com

is sometimes heard in Dixieland jazz; it is created by moving the slide while holding a note, a feature technically called a **glissando**.

The *saxophone* is the most important reed instrument in jazz. There is a whole family of saxophones in various sizes. The most common saxophones are heard on Tracks 16–19 of the Audio Primer, ranging from high (soprano sax) to low (baritone sax).

The *clarinet* is a reed instrument that was more common than the saxophone in early jazz. The clarinet has receded in popularity since its heyday in the 1930s but has recently made a comeback. Tracks 20 and 21 of the Audio Primer display two common clarinet stylizations: the swing-style music of the 1930s and the kinds of lines heard in the Dixieland jazz of the 1920s.

© iStockphoto.com/Mac Miller

Clarinet

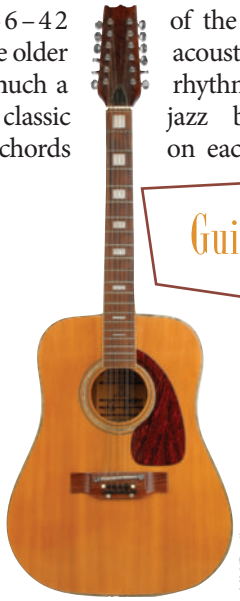
String Instruments

The most commonly used **string instruments** in jazz are the guitar, electric and acoustic, and the acoustic bass. The *acoustic bass* should be distinguished from its cousin, the horizontal electric bass guitar, which is more common in rock and jazz-rock. The acoustic bass was originally played without amplification but now is usually amplified. The acoustic bass is commonly heard in the jazz ensemble but can be heard alone on Track 43 of the Audio Primer. There, it *walks*—that is, the player provides a note for each beat in mostly stepwise fashion. You also heard a walking bass in Tracks 10 and 11 of the Audio Primer, where we suggested you count the form by noting that the beats coincide with the bass notes.

Acoustic bass

The *guitar* comes in both electric and acoustic versions, demonstrated on Tracks 36–42 of the Audio Primer. The older acoustic guitar was very much a rhythm instrument in classic jazz because it played chords on each beat, an effect heard on Track 36 of the Audio Primer. The acoustic guitar was not very loud, but in a small-group setting it could play occasional melodies, as heard on Track 37. Track 38 features bossa nova–style acoustic guitar, a sound that became popular in the 1960s.

© iStockphoto.com/Jake Holme



MM/Fotolia

Guitar

The electric guitar was developed during the 1930s. The use of the amplifier enabled it to be heard in any setting. The early sound of the electric guitar is featured on Track 39 of the Audio Primer; this is the basic sound associated with the jazz electric guitar in non-rock settings. After rock and roll became popular in the 1950s and 1960s, the electric guitar underwent a sonic revolution. Electronic effects were introduced that radically augmented the sounds the instrument could produce. Some of these sounds, typical of jazz-rock and jazz-funk fusion, can be heard on Tracks 40–42.

Percussion Instruments

Drums are examples of **percussion instruments**—instruments that are generally struck with either the hand or a stick or mallet. The *drum set* is like a piano in that the drummer can play a number of instrumental parts simultaneously. Unlike a piano, however, drums cannot play specific pitches to create chords.

Let's summarize the percussion instruments most commonly found in the drum set, demonstrated on solo Tracks 26–35 of the Audio Primer. (To describe playing the various instruments of the drum set, we assume a right-handed, right-footed drummer; this arrangement is sometimes reversed for drummers who favor their left side.)

Track 26 showcases the *snare drum*, usually played with the left hand (if the right hand is otherwise keeping the beat). Tracks 27 and 28 feature high and low tom-toms, which can be played with either hand. The *bass drum* (Track 29) is sometimes articulated on each beat of the bar, especially in older jazz. It is played by the right foot, using a pedal. The *ride cymbal* (Track 30) is usually played with the right hand. The track features what is called a swing beat. The *hi-hat* (Track 31) consists of a pair of cymbals, top and bottom. It is usually played by the left foot pedal, which closes and opens the cymbal pair, thus producing a "chick" sound. The top cymbal of the hi-hat can also be played by hand, usually the right, with a stick. Track 32 shows the simultaneous foot pedal

A **glissando** is the sound created by moving the slide of the trombone while holding a note, in jazz known as the tailgate effect. The notes are slurred directly from one to another, producing a continuous rise or fall in pitch.

String instruments produce sound from a player plucking, strumming, or striking strings drawn over a voice box.

Percussion instruments are those struck with either the hand or a stick or mallet.

The **rhythm section** is a part of a jazz band that provides the rhythmic pulse, harmonies, and bass line. It may include any of the following: piano, guitar, bass, or drums. Early jazz bands sometimes included banjo and tuba in place of the guitar and bass.

The **lead** or **front-line instruments** in a jazz ensemble are usually melodic (playing one note at a time) and are often featured at the front of the stage.

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and hand playing of the hi-hat, which produces a familiar swing rhythm sound. Crash cymbals (Track 33) add color and accents to the drum texture; they are most commonly played by the right hand. On Track 34 all the drum set parts are combined into a swing beat; try to distinguish the different sounds made by each instrument in the set.

Finally, Track 35 shows how the drum set can be played with wire brushes instead of sticks. This creates a lighter, softer sound but one that can still generate considerable rhythmic drive.

The Piano

The *piano*, developed in the early 1700s, soon became the most common of all Western instruments. (Electronic keyboards and guitars may be overtaking the piano more recently.) It is a combination string-percussion

Oleg Kozlov/Fotolia

instrument because hammers with felt tips strike tautly stretched strings to produce the instrument's sounds. The keys of the piano keyboard, when depressed, activate the hammers to strike the strings. Because the keys can be operated independently by the pianist's ten fingers to produce simultaneous sounds, the piano can play both melody and harmony. In fact, solo piano can mimic a larger ensemble because of the piano's ability to fill the functions of numerous instruments. Larger pianos, called *grand pianos*, have longer strings, resulting in a richer, more powerful sound than upright pianos.

In the jazz ensemble, the piano is often grouped with other instruments (banjo or guitar, bass, and drums) to provide a backup accompaniment to the primary instruments playing the melody (cornet or trumpet, trombone, clarinet, or saxophone). This backup subgroup of the ensemble is called the **rhythm section**.

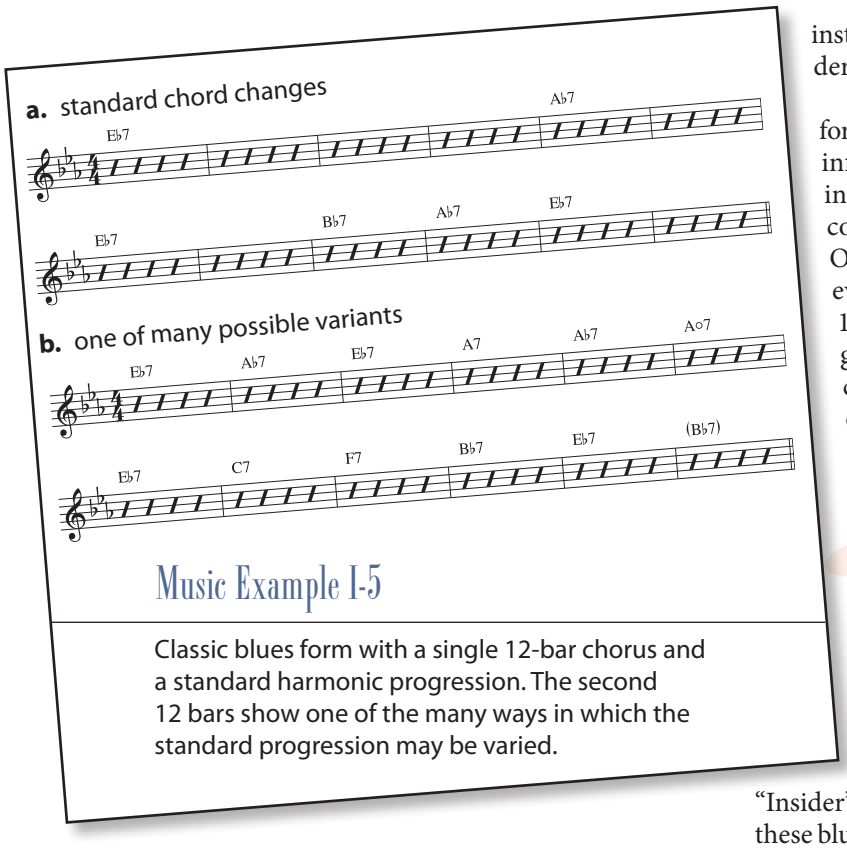
As we saw in the first part of this chapter, Tracks 10 and 11 of the Audio Primer feature a common jazz ensemble called a *piano trio*, which usually consists of piano, acoustic bass, and drum set. (A somewhat less common piano trio consists of piano, bass, and guitar.)

The piano has long been the basic instrument of Western music because the pianist can provide melody and harmony simultaneously, the right hand playing the melody while the left hand plays chords that provide harmony.

A piano trio is essentially a rhythm section without **lead** instruments.

More on the Blues

As we saw earlier in this Introduction, blues form (the kind most commonly used by jazz musicians) consists normally of twelve bars comprising three



Music Example I-5

Classic blues form with a single 12-bar chorus and a standard harmonic progression. The second 12 bars show one of the many ways in which the standard progression may be varied.

4-bar phrases. Music Example I.5a shows a classic form with a single 12-bar chorus and a typical harmonic progression. The harmonic progression of the blues is quite regular, but there are many possible variants, one of which is shown in Example I.5b. One of the most significant harmonic moves of the blues is to the IV chord of the key at m. 5.

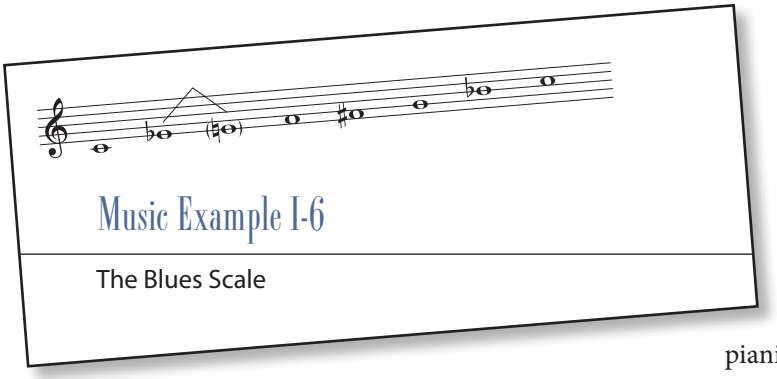
As we saw earlier in this chapter, the melody and lyric corresponding to the 12-bar chorus of the classic blues is aab, with the ends of the a and b phrases often rhyming. This form is ideal for improvisation because the singer can think ahead for an answering third phrase during the repetition of the first. Adding to the ease of improvisation, each a and b phrase usually falls within the first two or three bars of each four-bar phrase. The concluding part of each phrase can be filled with a response from the instrumental accompaniment while the singer ponders the next phrase.

Early blues was less regular than the 12-bar format. Because folk musicians 0ften perform very informally, simplifying the harmony, embellishing the melody, and freely interpolating extra bars, country blues exhibited great flexibility of form. Once we reach the classic blues of the 1920s, however, we can represent the blues form as a single 12-bar chorus with a strict basic harmonic progression. Within the framework of standard chord changes, we can construct variants. As pointed out earlier, Track 11 of the Audio Primer demonstrates two choruses of blues changes in a piano trio format.

The Blues Scale

Earlier we discussed the major scale but referred to the use of other scales in jazz. One particular form often heard in jazz is the **blues scale**, which incorporates notes commonly heard in blues melodies. Some of these notes, not part of the major scale, are called *blue notes*. (See box "Insider's Guide to the Blues Scale.") In many instances, these blue notes suggest pitch inflections or slurred pitches rather than discrete pitches. If, however, we consider blue notes as discrete pitches, we can construct a blues scale, as shown in Music Example I.6.

Sometimes the traditional blues scale has incorporated other pitches. For example, the jazz style known as bebop featured a flatted fifth (conventionally spelled as F♯, as in Music Example I.6, rather than G♭), a note that can take on the quality of a blue note. More generally, it is possible to inflect any note of the scale in such a way that it becomes a blue note, but the blue third and seventh are by far the most pervasive.



Music Example I-6

The Blues Scale

Jazz Performance Terms

Tracks 44–49 of the Audio Primer summarize the material we have discussed so far in this Introduction. They feature a jazz quintet performing the basic blues form. As we describe these tracks, let's define a few other important jazz terms.

On Track 44 we hear the first blues chorus. As pointed out earlier, each time a band or soloist plays through the complete changes of a song or of a given chord progression, it is called a chorus. For this first chorus, all we hear is the bass player walking and accompanied by the drums. Count the bars of the chorus to follow the 12-bar blues structure.

Continuing to Track 45, the band adds the pianist comping chords for the group's second chorus.

A **blues scale** is a form of scale that incorporates the principal notes used in the blues. Most often, 1–♭3 – 4– ♯4 – 5–♭7. Listen to the second scale played on Track 1 of the Audio Primer.

Comping refers to a technique in which a pianist or guitarist plays a chord progression in a rhythmically irregular fashion.

Solo breaks or **breaks** are moments during a jazz performance in which the rhythm instruments stop playing while the soloist continues.

Common since the swing era, **trading solos**—specifically called trading twos, trading fours, and trading eights—are improvisational jazz formats that create climactic moments in performances. In trading twos, for example, each soloist improvises for two bars before the next soloist takes over for two bars.

In classic **call-and-response**, a single voice or instrument states a melodic phrase—the call—while a group of voices or instruments follows with a responding or completing phrase—the response.

Stop time describes a performance technique in which the rhythm section punctuates distinct beats, often to accommodate a soloist's improvisation between the band's chords.

A **riff** is a short melodic idea, usually one to two bars long, that repeats as the core idea of a musical passage.

Comping, probably derived from *accompany* or *complement*, is a technique of playing in which a pianist or guitarist provides chords that follow the chord progression, but in a rhythmically irregular fashion.

For the third chorus (Track 46), the trumpet player takes solo breaks on bars 1–2, 5–6, and 9–10. **Solo breaks** are moments in which the rhythm stops while the soloist remains featured.

On the fourth chorus (Track 47), the trumpet player and the saxophonist trade twos. *Trading twos*, *trading fours*, and *trading eights* are improvisational formats in jazz, common since the swing era. In trading twos, for example, each soloist improvises for two bars before the next soloist takes over for two bars. Any number of soloists may participate, but two to four are most typical. **Trading solos** are often used to create climactic moments in performances. It is also an example of **call-and-response**, a common technique in which players take turns answering one another. In classic call-and-response, a single voice or instrument states a melodic phrase—the *call*—while a group of voices or instruments follows with a responding or completing phrase—the *response*.

Stop time is featured on the fifth chorus (Track 48). In **stop time**, the rhythm section or band punctuates distinct beats, often to accommodate a soloist's improvisation between the band's chords. Here stop time provides a background texture to the saxophone solo.

For the sixth and final chorus (Track 49), the trumpet player provides a background riff while the saxophonist continues to solo. A **riff** is a short melodic idea, usually one to two bars long, which is repeated as the core idea of a musical passage.

Ways of Listening to Jazz

In this Introduction, we have focused on some of the basics necessary for listening to music analytically. Analytical listening is an important skill that can broaden your understanding of how jazz works. We don't always listen analytically, though—nor should we. Sometimes we can simply move to the groove or close our eyes and let the sounds wash over us. The enjoyment of music need

Insider's Guide to...

The Blues Scale

The use of blue notes in African American music is complex.* Some scholars have suggested that blue notes refer to pitch inflections or slurred pitches rather than discrete pitches. For example, Gilbert Chase writes that "it is not the flatted third [or any other lowered interval of the scale] as such, but rather this ambivalent, this *worried* or slurred tone that constitutes the true 'blue note.'"† Others suggest the presence of a ***blues scale*** that incorporates natural as well as "neutral" thirds and sevenths.

Sometimes the blues scale has incorporated other pitches. For example, the jazz style that evolved in the 1940s, *bebop*, features extensive use of a flatted fifth, which can take on the quality of a blue note. More generally, it is possible to inflect any note of the scale in such a way that it becomes a blue note, but the blue third and seventh are by far the most pervasive.

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* For this and the following points, we are particularly indebted to William Tallmadge's article "Blue Notes and Blue Tonality," *The Black Perspective in Music*, 12, no. 2 (1984): 155–164.

† Gilbert Chase, *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present*, 2d ed. rev. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 453.

not always be an intellectual activity, but even when it is appreciated purely emotionally, understanding its technical bases can heighten the experience. We cannot emphasize this point too strongly: analytical listening strengthens music's emotional impact by letting you get more inside the notes. After studying the historical examples presented in this book, you should step back and listen again just for pure enjoyment. Your increased expertise will make the experience more fulfilling.

Analytical listening strengthens music's emotional impact by letting you get more inside the notes.

Although much of the focus on listening in this book is through analysis and commentary, jazz (in fact, all music) can be appreciated even more through an understanding of its relationship to culture, not just through analysis of its technical bases. This more sociological approach to understanding is emphasized by **ethnomusicology**, the study of music in a cultural context. In many cultures, for example, music is used to accompany religious ceremonies or social rituals that mark such significant milestones as births, weddings, and deaths. There are times when we wish to approach music from a technical perspective; analytical listening can help us best in these "internal" considerations of the music. At other times, when we wish to focus on its larger-scale import—that is, its reception, function, and value to a society—both the historical and the ethnomusicological approaches are more appropriate. Although historical events may influence musical creation directly, more often history provides a general context, what has been called a *zeitgeist*, a spirit of the times. By recalling important events and moods in history, we can better appreciate how the jazz produced at that time came about. The social commentary that extends through this book should help you understand how the historical context set the stage for the musical creation.

What's remarkable about music is that its richness encompasses all these multiple perspectives, ranging from the analytical, to the music-historical, to the ethnomusicological. The best jazz, like the best music, binds society together, unites us as a people, and furnishes us with a powerful means of artistic communication and cultural understanding.

Ethnomusicology is the study of music in a cultural context.

MindTap™

Test Yourself on Key Concepts with an additional Chapter Quiz on the text website.

Key Terms

Test your knowledge of the Introduction's key terms by defining the following. If you can't remember the meaning of a term, refresh your memory by looking up the boldfaced term in the chapter, turning to the Glossary at the back of the book, or working with the flashcards at the text website.

12-bar aab blues form **8**
32-bar AABA song form **6**
arpeggio **12**
articulation **14**
bar **5**
beat **4**
blues form (as aab phrases) **8**
blues harmony **9**
blues scale **19**
brasses **15**
bridge **6**
cadence **6**
call-and-response **19**
chord **4**
chord progression **13**
chorus **8**
comping **19**
duple meter **5**
dynamics **14**
ethnomusicology **20**
flat (♭) **11**
form **5**
front-line instruments **17**
glissando **15**
harmonic substitution **13**
harmony **7**
head **6**
improvisation **7**
instrumental music **4**
interval **10**
introduction **6**
key **12**
lead instruments **17**
legato **14**
measure **5**

Published in 1900, this sheet music cover celebrates the birth of the twentieth century with the latest inventions, many of them American. The artist implies that Americans will continue to invent, and the evolution of jazz proved him correct.

Photo Courtesy of the Morgan Collection

1 Roots

MindTap™

Start with a quick warm-up activity.

THE ROOTS OF JAZZ LIE IN ITS AFRICAN, EUROPEAN, AND even Caribbean musical traditions. Although the precise contributions of various cultures and subcultures remain controversial, jazz would not have come into being without their blending. This much is clear: jazz arose not in Africa, not in Europe, and not in the Caribbean, but in the United States, thanks to the importation of nonnative musical elements into the dominant European culture of U.S. society. Because African and European cultures have contributed the most to jazz, we begin with a brief examination of these cultures and the elements that they contributed.

African American Music in the Nineteenth Century

The story of African American music in the nineteenth century can be told only partially. It is the story of the stevedores on the wharves of Savannah, the tobacco pickers in the Piedmont of North Carolina, the cotton pickers on the plantations of rural Alabama, the worshipers at the camp meetings in Kentucky, the Methodist ministers of Philadelphia, the oarsmen of the Sea Islands in South Carolina, the dance hall performers of New York, the riverboat minstrels on the Mississippi, and the conservatory-trained musicians of Boston. Most of their music was not written down but transmitted orally from musician to musician. Except for a few collections of **transcriptions**, the only tangible sources of information are diaries, letters, newspapers, and novels, as well as paintings and pictures—but these do not always depict African American music clearly or reliably.

African American Ring Shouts (Track 2)
1868 – Scott Joplin, Kid Ory, and Buddy Bolden born
African American Spirituals (Track 3)
African American Field Hollers
1885 King Oliver born
—New York City's Tin Pan Alley, the heart of the U.S. song-publishing and sheet music business, begins to flourish
—Ragtime developing
1890 Jelly Roll Morton born
1897 Sidney Bechet born
1899 Scott Joplin publishes "Maple Leaf Rag" (Track 4)
—Duke Ellington born
1900–1917 Ragtime flourishing
—Jazz developing
1901 Louis Armstrong born
1903 Bix Beiderbecke born
1904 Count Basie born
1905 Earl Hines born
1909 Benny Goodman born
—Lester Young born
1917–1930 Ragtime declining
—Jazz flourishing
1920 Mamie Smith records "Crazy Blues," first vocal blues records to sell widely
1921 Sissle & Blake premier *Shuffle Along*, the first black Broadway musical
1927 Bessie Smith records "Backwater Blues" (Track 7)
1937 Robert Johnson records "Love in Vain" (Track 6)

Jazz

1860 1900 1910 1920 1930

Historical Events

1863 President Abraham Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves
1865 American Civil War ends
1869 First Transcontinental Railroad built in United States
—U.S. President Andrew Johnson impeached by the House, cleared by the Senate
1876 Founding of baseball's National League
1882 Electricity powers homes, cities, streetcars, and subways
1898 Spanish-American War
1900 Boxer Rebellion in China
1903 Wright brothers complete first plane flight
1905 First Russian revolution
—Eugene Debs founds the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)
1909 Heredity found to be linked to chromosomes

Sources of Musical Diversity

Countless, mostly nameless, individuals contributed to a rich African American musical heritage before, during, and after the Civil War. This diverse musical culture varied over time and from region to region. There were clear musical differences between the North and the South; among the East, Midwest, and West; between urban and rural areas; and before and after the Civil War. Despite these distinctions, the African American heritage provided a foundation for jazz when it began to develop around the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

To **transcribe** a piece of music is to write in standard European musical notation what the listener, or transcriber, hears. The transcriber's notated version is called the **transcription**. Transcriptions of the same piece of music can vary widely, depending on the quality of the original sound source, the skill of the transcriber, and what the transcriber chooses to include in the notation.

Pedro Antonio Salaverría Calahorra/Dreamstime.com

A transcription—the written (or notated) version of the musical sounds (or notes) the listener hears.

Much of this musical heritage emerged from African music and culture. The earliest slaves came to the New World in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the tyranny of slavery continued for more than two hundred years. Uprooted from their homelands, especially from the rain forests of the west coast of Africa—including Senegal, the Guinea coast, and the Niger Delta—the slaves witnessed the destruction of their families and the elimination of their well-defined social structures. Nonetheless, many West African musical traditions persevered and ultimately blended with American and western European traditions.

Geography strongly influenced the degree to which African slaves preserved their musical traditions. In regions where whites lived separately from African Americans, slaves tended to retain their African traditions. For example, the relative inaccessibility of the coastal Sea Islands of Georgia and South Carolina allowed the resident Gullah blacks to preserve several musical as well as linguistic elements from African culture, some of which survive to this day (see later in this chapter the shout "Daniel," Track 2). But in the northeastern United States, where farms were relatively small and the number of slaves fewer, blacks and whites interacted more often. As blacks in the North converted to Christianity and gained literacy and early emancipation, they were less likely to preserve their African traditions. In contrast, larger plantations in the Southeast, dependent as they were on large numbers of slaves who lived together in separate quarters, made it possible for some African traditions to survive more intact. Furthermore, many owners encouraged slaves to perform their music as well as to learn European musical styles.

The Preservation of African Traditions

When we look at the preservation of African musical traits in the New World, several questions arise: What characteristics of African music took root on American soil? How were they preserved, and how were they adapted? More specifically, which of these elements influenced jazz?

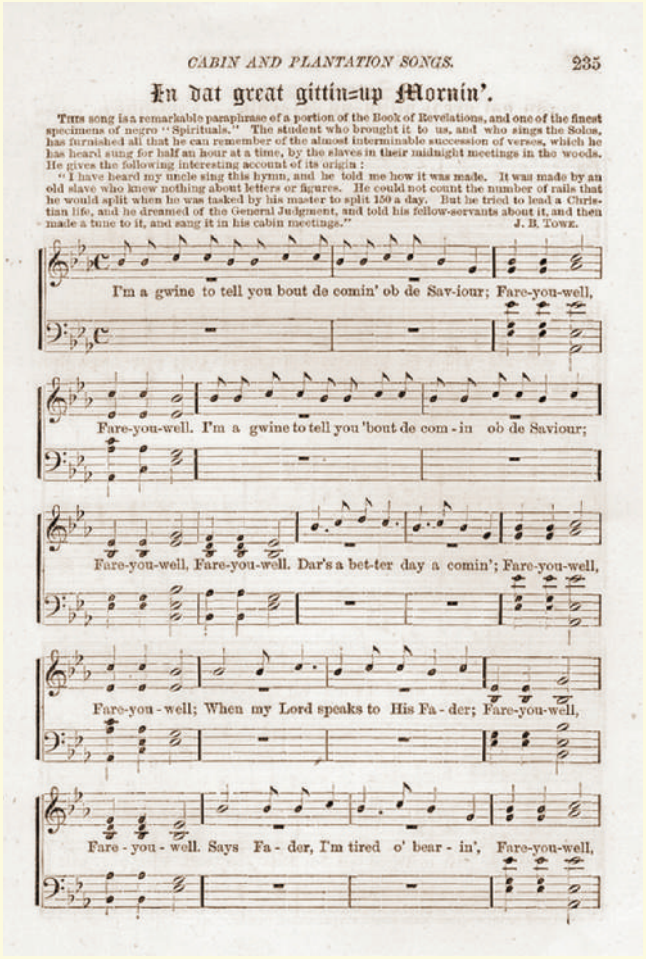
Most slaves came to the New World from the tribes of western, sub-Saharan Africa. These tribes exhibited numerous and varying musical cultures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although these cultures were not studied much at the time, we can assume that the same musically significant traits that exist today in these regions also characterized African music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and therefore must have been part of the musical culture of U.S. slaves. As such, we need to examine twentieth-century African musical cultures to see which musical features likely contributed to jazz.

> Although "slave music is . . . rapidly passing away, it may be that this people who have developed such a wonderful musical sense . . . will produce a composer who could bring a music of the future out of this music of the past."
> ~Thomas P. Fenner, 1875

Above all, traditional African music plays an important social function: it accompanies work, forms an essential part of religious and social events, and is often accompanied by dance. Thus African music is highly functional. Writing in 1952, Richard Waterman identified five characteristics shared by the various tribes that distinguish their functional music cultures from the European tradition:[1]

- **Metronomic sense**. African musicians tend to maintain a steady, underlying pulse throughout a performance. The regularity of the beat can be compared to a *metronome*, a mechanical device that enables

Metronomic sense is a steady rhythmic pulse, often associated with drums and with music from Africa.



CABIN AND PLANTATION SONGS. 235

En dat great gittin-up Mornin'.

THIS song is a remarkable paraphrase of a portion of the Book of Revelations, and one of the finest specimens of negro "Spirituals." The student who brought it to us, and who sings the Solos, has furnished all that he can remember of the almost interminable succession of verses, which he has heard sung for half an hour at a time, by the slaves in their midnight meetings in the woods. He gives the following interesting account of its origin:

"I have heard my uncle sing this hymn, and he told me how it was made. It was made by an old slave who knew nothing about letters or figures. He could not count the number of rails that he would split when he was tasked by his master to split 150 a day. But he tried to lead a Christian life, and he dreamed of the General Judgment, and told his fellow-servants about it, and then made a tune to it, and sang it in his cabin meetings." J. B. Towz.

I'm a gwine to tell you bout de comin' ob de Sav-iour; Fare-you-well,

Fare-you-well. I'm a gwine to tell you 'bout de com-in ob de Saviour;

Fare-you-well, Fare-you-well. Dar's a bet-ter day a comin'; Fare-you-well,

Fare-you-well; When my Lord speaks to His Fa-der; Fare-you-well,

Fare-you-well. Says Fa-der, I'm tired o' bear-in', Fare-you-well,

Photo courtesy of the Morgan Collection

From *Cabin and Plantation Songs* as sung by students of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute of Virginia—now Hampton Sydney University—and published by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1875 at the height of Reconstruction following the Civil War. To raise money for their college, the Hampton students toured the country with this collection of songs. In his introduction Thomas P. Fenner, head of Hampton's music department, noted that although "slave music is … rapidly passing away, it may be that this people who have developed such a wonderful musical sense in their degradation will, in their maturity, produce a composer who could bring a music of the future out of this music of the past." Note the use of black dialect in the lyrics, a feature of much African American music of the time.

West Africa in 1914

musicians to maintain a steady beat while practicing. The dancers' motions generally show the pulse.

- *Overlapping call-and-response*. In **call-and-response**, a solo vocalist sings one line (often improvised), then a group responds. In African traditions, the group response tends to overlap the original solo part.
- *Off-beat phrasing of melodic accents*. This is the unexpected accenting of weaker notes within the melody, or what many scholars describe as **syncopation**.
- *Dominance of percussion*. In African music, percussion instruments are plentiful and used more widely than melodic ones, with some exceptions. The melodic instruments themselves are sometimes played percussively.
- **Polyrhythm**. This is an intricate web of rhythms heard among the different parts.

Call-and-response is a musical procedure in which a single voice or instrument states a melodic phrase—the call—and a group of voices or instruments follows with a responding or completing phrase—the response.

Syncopation is the disruption of regular meter that occurs when the weaker notes of the designated meter receive unexpectedly stronger accents, as in the second and fourth beats in 4/4 meter receiving stronger accents. For an illustration, see Music Example 1-2, third measure (page 15), and listen to Track 4 of the Audio Primer. The Joplin phrase is played first with syncopation, as it was written, then without.

Polyrhythm is an intricate web of rhythms heard among the different parts.

A metronome with its swinging pendulum keeping the beat

Rodho/Dreamstime.com

We should probably consider these five traits as general principles that inform much of West African music, and we hear them in "Kasuan Kura" from present day Ghana, Africa, Track 1, discussed in the Listening Guide. Although the first four attributes of African music are fairly straightforward, polyrhythm is more complex. The rhythmic layering of the different instruments in an African ensemble is typically founded on a single ground beat, usually in duple or triple **meter**. Africans themselves often think of their music's rhythm as projected along a time line in which patterns may be based on large numbers of beats, perhaps as many as twelve. In addition, many of the rhythms arising from this layering can seem independent, though they are not played separately. Thus African music is often described as rhythmically **polyphonic**.

Although there is no way to be sure, we assume that these five traits were generally true of African music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; certainly, many of these elements appear in African American music today. Religious and secular music retained the metronomic sense. Call-and-response patterns, nearly universal in West African culture, formed the basis of work songs and spirituals in the United States and became a significant component of blues and jazz. African American music in the nineteenth century retained the off-beat phrasing of melodic accents, a key characteristic that became part of the jazz tradition.

African slaves brought their tradition of drumming to the United States. Slave owners, however, suspected that the drums allowed slaves to communicate over long distances. Moreover, drumming and dancing were forbidden by Methodists and Baptists, the Protestant denominations that most actively worked to convert slaves to Christianity; so throughout most if not all of the American South, slave owners outlawed drums, thus eliminating a fundamental percussive element of West African music.

Lacking drums, the slaves adapted in ingenious ways. They used stringed instruments in a percussive manner. They added percussion by clapping and stamping, for example, when performing the **ring shout** in religious worship. Finally, *patting juba* (clapping, stamping, and slapping thighs) provided percussive dance accompaniment, frequently without any other instruments. (See the Listening Guide for Track 2, "Daniel," performed by the Georgia Sea Island Singers.)

The survival of polyrhythm is more difficult to trace. In African music, percussion parts are typically played on different drums and rattles, each with its own rhythm, creating a complex overlay of contrasting patterns. African Americans did not retain this practice in the United States, mostly because of the proscription against drums. Instead they expressed percussive rhythm in syncopated melodies and **cross-rhythms**. In this way African rhythmic complexity survived in African American music.

Call-and-response patterns, nearly universal in West African culture, formed the basis of work songs and spirituals in the United States and became a significant component of blues and jazz.

Meter in music is a rhythmic pattern arising from regular groupings of two or three beats. These define, respectively, duple or triple meter. Most music with a steady pulse has meter.

Polyphony describes music with at least two distinct and simultaneous melodic lines. Another name for a polyphonic texture is **counterpoint**.

The **ring shout**, originally derived from African religious practice, was a rhythmic dance performed in a circle. Worshipers moved counterclockwise while singing spirituals and accompanying themselves by clapping and stamping. The worshipers ingeniously circumvented the prohibition against dancing—strictly speaking, to lift and cross the feet—by shuffling. Some historians describe the ring shout as contributing the essence of African song, dance, and spirit to African American music.

Cross-rhythms refer to the performance of simultaneous and contrasting rhythms, such as patterns with duple and triple groupings. By superimposing one rhythmic pattern on another, we create a cross-rhythm. Cross-rhythms are sometimes called polyrhythms.

LISTENING GUIDE

Track 1

"Kasuan Kura"

The People of Dagomba, Ghana: "Kasuan Kura." Field recording (Ghana) by John Miller Chernoff.

The Main Point Listen for these characteristics of West African music: the dominance of percussion in the dondon and gongon drums; the steady pulse; the call-and-response between the leader accompanied by dondons and the chorus accompanied by gongons; the occasional off-beat phrasing; and the complex polyrhythm.

Along with Track 2, this recording is an example of a *field recording*, a recording that folklorists and ethnomusicologists make on-site with performers in their cultural settings. An advantage of field recordings for folk material is that scholars are able to capture the works in context. The performers themselves, who very likely are not professionals, may be more comfortable in their familiar surroundings than in formal recording studios. As a result, we are likely to obtain freer, less self-conscious performances. A disadvantage of such recordings is that audio quality may suffer. Still, it is certainly better for us to glimpse these pieces in their usual settings.

The Dagomba live in northern Ghana in West Africa and are known for their sophisticated oral culture. Indeed, oral culture has served the role of professional historian. "Kasuan Kura," for example, is a *praise-song*, telling the story of an honored ancestor. His name forms the "answer" in this call-and-response format.

We first hear *dondons*, or talking drums, whose pitch can be varied by pulling on leather thongs that connect the two drumheads on each drum. We also hear *gongons* in the ensemble. These are larger drums that have a string stretched over the drumhead to produce a rattle as the drum is played. As the performance develops, the rhythmic relationships between the different types of drums and the singing grow more complex.

0:00 Dondons begin the excerpt, followed closely by gongons. The feeling of the beat is irregular at first, then becomes more regular as the voices enter.

0:12 Voices enter with call-and-response figures. Notice that the response figures remain roughly the same, as is usually the case with a chorus. This type of chorus singing is called *heterophonic*—there is a kind of spontaneous harmony, but not a European-oriented chord progression. A *groove*, or repeating rhythm pattern, underlies the performance, but the dondons engage in a conversation with the lead singer. That is, both dondons and gongons accompany the calls, but usually only gongons accompany the responses.

1:24 The drumming becomes more intense, as does the singing of the leader. Nevertheless, the singers continue with roughly the same answering figures.

Listen to this music in an animated Active Listening Guide available at the text website.

Clearly, rhythm played a prominent role in defining the African musical aesthetic, so it became crucial in shaping the African American musical aesthetic as well.

We might best consider the five attributes of African music as merely a beginning point for understanding a very rich and complex musical heritage. Nevertheless, writers have continued to examine how African approaches to music making have been retained in African American music—a crucial issue in understanding the African roots of jazz. In discussing the relationship between West African and African American music, one writer states:

> The approach to metrical organization with cross-rhythms as the norm, the percussive technique of playing any instrument resulting in an abundance of qualitative accents, the density of musical activity, the inclusion of the environmental factors as part of the musical event, the propensity for certain "buzzylike" musical timbres—all these are African features which have been consistently maintained in Afro-American music.[2]