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ALL ABOUT JAZZ

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Jazz is one of the few arts that can be considered truly American. Founded primarily in the south during the 1800's, this form of music was the first significant African American contribution that would be heard all around the world. Its constantly changing nature and loose rules allow it to be flexible and therefore, viable to audiences of all ages.

The combination of an already established African American population with the influence from Caribbean and Mexican merchants, began to integrate with the popular brass bands. The town was home to legendary players such as Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton.

The sound began to travel across the United States in the 1920's, becoming popular in large cities such as New York and Chicago. New players used the piano to combine a Ragtime feel with already established sounds. James Reece Europe began to experiment with full orchestras, a real testimony to the classic jazz improvisation to come.

Bebop Jazz

Trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, alto saxophonist Charlie Parker, drummer Max Roach and pianist Thelonious Monk were among the original developers of this new style. Bebop was everything that big band music wasn't. Many bebop jazz artists considered big band musicians to be sell-outs and wanted to create a new inventive style of music.

Action sequences usually provide an upbeat, energetic song, whereas dramatic and emotional scenes offer smooth jazz. Yoko Kanno performed most of the music for Cowboy Bebop with her band, The Seat Belts. The show was recognized enough for its music, and Kanno has since released several albums of Cowboy Bebop music.

Swing Jazz.

New Orleans Dixieland had a northern counterpart in Chicago style jazz, that implemented a faster pace to this form of rhythmic jazz. Another type of jazz music, swing, dominated in the 1930s and through World War II. This genre was the main form of American popular music for much of this time and introduced the United States to exuberant big bands and band leaders. With the Lindy Hop, and East Coast Swing, the West Coast variety is representative of the modern swing dancing repertoire. A variant, Western Swing, is sometimes danced to Country music. Both the East Coast and West Coast swing are now performed in professional ballroom dancing competitions.

Big band

The big band is a type of musical ensemble associated with jazz, a style of music which became popular during the Swing Era from the early 1930s until the late 1950s. Big bands evolved with the times and continues to today. A big band typically consists of approximately 12 to 25 musicians and contains saxophones, trumpets, trombones, marimba, singers (or vocalists), and a rhythm section. The terms jazz band, jazz ensemble, stage band, jazz orchestra, society band and dance band may be used to describe a specific type of big band.

Typical of the genre were such popular artists as Paul Whiteman, Ted Lewis, Harry Reser, Bob Marley, Leo Reisman, Abe Lyman, Nat Shilkret, George Olsen, Ben Bernie, Bob Haring, Ben Selvin, Earl Burnett, Gus Arnheim, Henry Halstead, Rudy Vallee, Jean Goldkette, Glen Gray.