



Doctor, J., Elsdon, P. and Heile, B. (2016) Introduction. In: Heile, B., Elsdon, P. and Doctor, J. (eds.) *Watching Jazz: Encounters with Jazz Performance on Screen*. Oxford University Press: New York, pp. 1-33. ISBN 978019934767

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Deposited on: 13 June 2016

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## <1> Introduction

Jenny Doctor, Peter Elsdon, Björn Heile

When, in 2009, we first envisaged a project about jazz on screen, it was interesting to study the responses from interested parties, which fell into quite distinct camps. One group assumed that we were interested in “jazz films,” narrative feature films focusing on actual or imaginary jazz musicians (“biopics”), set in the jazz milieu, or at least using jazz as a soundtrack. Another group, typically represented by jazz musicians or fans, immediately thought of live footage of jazz greats in performance, enthusing about the possibilities of studying, and potentially emulating, their idols’ playing techniques and performing gestures, or the secret, and not so secret, conscious and unconscious signals musicians use to communicate while playing together. Yet another, somewhat smaller, group fantasized about historic footage showing what jam sessions in Harlem clubs in the 1920s and ’30s were really like (needless to say, there is no known surviving material of this sort). What interests us here is how these groups had very clear ideas about what our project was about, but that their ideas were often, even typically, mutually exclusive. These responses were not part of a scientific survey and are neither representative nor statistically meaningful, but we gained the impression that although many people think they know what is meant by “jazz on video” (the phrase we most likely used at the time), what they really have in mind may represent quite distinct things.

In reality, jazz on screen took and continues to take a confusing variety of shapes and forms, many of which are covered in this book. As we mentioned above, jazz can be heard on narrative feature films, either diegetically (typically showing the musicians performing the music we hear) or as underscore; indeed, there are instances of silent movies in which jazz can be seen but not heard. Following the initial love affair between jazz and film, during both

these cultural forms' "golden eras" between the 1920s to '40s, jazz became a staple of the new medium of television. More than "jazz and/on film," the scope of "jazz on TV" covers a confusing variety of quite different formats, from (mimed or live) appearances of jazz performers on variety TV, documentaries, and educational programs, to studio performances (with or without audience) and televised concerts (not primarily staged by or for television)—and that is not to mention theme or underscore music in other programs, serials, or advertisements.

Film and TV are only two, albeit two of the most widely consumed and long-lasting, of the screen media with which jazz has been associated. There have also been "soundies," and "Snader Telescriptions" featuring performances of jazz, to name just a few; recent years have seen a plethora of new digital media, such as commercial DVDs and clips on internet sharing sites, such as YouTube. Although a significant proportion of the material was typically not produced specifically for these media, but was originally destined for film or TV, the amount of digital footage produced for dissemination over the internet is growing rapidly. In this context, McLuhan's maxim that the "medium is the message" holds true. The way we encounter media shapes the way we consume their content, which in turn has a bearing on what meanings they hold for us. Paying an entrance fee to watch a film on the big screen creates different expectations than settling down on the sofa to watch TV (thereby possibly encountering material that we would not deliberately seek out), to say nothing of watching clips on smartphones or tablet computers. The possibility of rewinding, pausing, or slowing down footage on video, DVD, and digital media allows for a detailed analysis of minutiae of the performance or its representation that would not be possible in the typically momentary encounters that are the norm in film and television viewing. Moreover, the search function and playlists provided by internet services, or the circulation of clips through social networking, often lead to serendipitous discoveries, although they can also result in dispersed

attention and episodic viewing of short fragments (something that is also common in television viewing).

The contributors to this volume are united in the belief that audiovisual recordings of jazz have too often been overlooked in the past. Their study not only represents a significant quantitative addition to the corpus available for study, but it also opens up new perspectives. Simply put, watching as well as listening to jazz allows new insights to be gained about the music itself, about the way it is performed, as well as about the way it is represented.

Traditionally, jazz history and scholarship have been based on sound recordings. For example, the major jazz histories have employed sound recordings as their primary sources, with complementary resources, such as still images, written documents and oral histories, used to flesh out accounts of revered figures whose canonical status rested on the acclaim of their major recordings. This heavy reliance on one particular type of source has been the object of sustained critique ever since the emergence of what is sometimes called “The New Jazz Studies.” For instance, Paul Berliner has quoted numerous influential musicians who argue conclusively that, to be understood fully, jazz needs to be seen and not just heard, since so much information about performers’ unique ways of playing and their interaction with one another, as well as with audiences, is not captured on records.<sup>1</sup> He has also provided evidence for the problematic status of jazz recordings, including conflicts between the artistic aspirations of musicians and the commercial prerogatives of the industry, and the low quality, particularly of early recordings.<sup>2</sup> There are countless examples of musicians whose best work is not captured on record, either because the opportunity did not present itself or because they found the studio atmosphere inhibiting. Other scholars have also expressed fundamental reservations about the role afforded to sound recordings. For instance, Jed Rasula has described recordings as a “seductive menace” in jazz history, while Frederick Garber has argued that “jazz is an art of performance,” leading him to question the authenticity of

recordings.<sup>3</sup> What is—perhaps conveniently—masked in audio recordings are aspects such as race and gender, as well as the communal basis of music-making, the inaudible threads that bind the musicians to a wider culture. In this way, whether deliberately or not, the concentration on sound recordings aided the construction of jazz as a decontextualized, autonomous art music that critics such as Gary Tomlinson, Eric Lott, and Scott DeVeaux have deplored.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, despite the widespread criticism of the privileging of sound recordings, there have been relatively few constructive proposals of alternatives.<sup>5</sup> Recently, Alyn Shipton has argued for greater and methodologically more sophisticated use of oral history, over and above the often apocryphal and hagiographic legends peddled in standard biographies and histories.<sup>6</sup> While this is undoubtedly a welcome and fruitful approach, its limitations are no less apparent: what it amounts to is a history *without* jazz. Although it offers new historical insights into jazz and its cultural contexts, these are no longer directly tied to anything we can see or hear directly. Conversely, publications such as the *Oxford Studies in Recorded Jazz* series openly address the type of source with which they engage; however, this approach runs the danger of further entrenching the view of jazz as a series of masterworks embodied in “seminal recordings,” rather than a living culture and widely shared communal practice.

What this volume provides is not a comprehensive alternative history of jazz as seen through the manifold variety of its screen representations. Instead, it offers an alternative approach to jazz premised on the simple proposition that watching jazz tells us something new about it: audiovisual sources provide additional information about the music, about the people who produced and consumed it, and the ways in which they did so, about the economic structures supporting it, and about the cultural discourses (not least visual discourses) through which jazz was encountered and understood, which may be obscured on audio recordings. But it is not only *what* is shown on screen—jazz performance—that is of

interest, but also *how* it is presented to us: its mediatization. Our usage of this term is primarily influenced by Philip Auslander who, in turn, has adapted it from the work of Jean Baudrillard. Auslander has defined “mediatized performance” as “performance that is circulated on television, as audio or video recordings and in other forms based in technologies of reproduction.”<sup>7</sup> The significance of Auslander’s usage of the term lies in his insistence on the cultural dominance of mediatized performances, as a result of which live performance, far from remaining independent of it, has to acknowledge and engage with the culture of mediatization; indeed, it is frequently reliant on it. More than a straightforward technical process, mediatization concerns the economic and ontological structure of cultural forms and media. This line of thought has proved influential, as can for instance be seen in the work of Paul Sanden, and our own contribution should be seen in this context.<sup>8</sup>

According to this view, mediatized representations are never transparent or straightforward: audiovisual media do not allow us to see what jazz performance “is really like,” only how it is presented to us. The performance context, and the technologies, stylistic frameworks, and understandings involved in its representation, inevitably impact on our perception. Although on one hand this mediating process prohibits direct access to what is being presented, seeming to interpose itself between us and what we are viewing, on the other hand it allows us to observe how an idea of jazz is constructed before our very eyes and ears. Indeed, following Auslander and Sanden, it would be problematic to establish a categorical distinction between jazz performance itself and its mediatized representation; the two are intimately related, and it is well-nigh impossible to conceive of jazz performance that remains unaffected by jazz’s long history of recording, broadcasting, and filming. Indeed, it could be argued that there has been what Murray Forman, following Jenkins, calls “media convergence” between the music and the visual media it has been associated with, whereby the two have been “merged in deliberate fashion”<sup>9</sup> with films, soundies, and later television,

affecting jazz even outside these media; conversely, jazz had a lasting impact on cinema and other media, even where these do not feature the music.

Take for instance the various “jazz myths”—its glamour, but also its association with racist oppression, poverty, drink, and drugs—that are inextricably bound up with its audiovisual representations. One prominent example is the combination of cigarette smoke, shiny horns, and hipsters in sharp suits, half-lit in the chiaroscuro produced by single spot lights in otherwise dark spaces that provided the cornerstone of jazz iconography—or one influential strand of jazz iconography, at least between *Jammin’ the Blues* (1944) and *’Round Midnight* (1986).<sup>10</sup> As this example indicates, diverse though the mediatic forms may have been, they were not isolated from one another: they tended to impose a similar mode of representation on jazz, or constructed jazz in a similar fashion. To illustrate such influences across different media genres, Foreman has pointed out how the conventions for presenting musical performances on TV were adopted from earlier genres, such as musicals and soundies.<sup>11</sup> In this volume, Kristin McGee similarly discusses how the visual language developed for the presentation of stars from the swing era exerted an influence on TV variety shows of the 1950s, reflecting and acting upon popular tropes of that time concerning celebrity, race, and gender. Similarly, as Nicholas Gebhardt argues in his essay, the notorious detachment on view in live footage of Miles Davis in performance goes hand-in-glove with a different image of jazz that emerged fully in the 1960s, preceded by examples such as *Jammin’ the Blues*—one that centered on artistry and sophistication, and for which the crowd-pleasing of jazz entertainers of previous generations was anathema. However, as audiovisual documents clarify, the two conflicting aesthetics of jazz as entertainment and jazz as art, both with their associated musical ideas and visual languages, overlapped significantly, and arguably continue to coexist up to the present day.

As these examples remind us, jazz is a concept that is notoriously hard to define and variously contested and contradictory. In its roughly century-long history, it has evolved from communitarian music-making through a commercial form of mass entertainment to a form of high art, often with avant-gardist aspirations. Unusually, the initial stages of this development have never been fully superseded. Although no one can claim that jazz music-making today has the kind of broad community basis that it reputedly enjoyed in its New Orleans hey-day, or that the music still possesses the popular appeal and commercial power wielded by the likes of Benny Goodman during the swing era, jam sessions and amateur jazz bands remain a vibrant part of musical culture in many parts of the world, and stars, such as George Benson and Diana Krall, are selling multi-platinum albums (although that very fact jeopardizes their jazz credentials in the eyes of some). The different aspects of jazz remain in creative tension, engaging in often surprising alliances, and this complex dynamic encompasses not only musical style, but also verbal discourses and visual presentation.

In this book, authors engage with all kinds of jazz: there are no pre-established chronological, stylistic, or geographic boundaries. It will come as no surprise, however, that popular forms of jazz and those with high-art associations have, with few exceptions, been served better (if in different ways) by audiovisual media than communitarian or avant-gardist ones, and the contributions in this volume reflect this. The same point can be made about provenance: American artists are better represented than their counterparts from other parts of the world, although, particularly in recent decades, a substantial proportion of the audiovisual recordings are of European origin. Within this spectrum, the contributors have staked out different terrains that reflect their particular interests: Jonathan DeSouza and Kristin McGee focus more on the popular, and Tony Whyton and Nicholas Gebhardt on the artistic, ends of the spectrum, while others either fall somewhere in between, or else concentrate on the medium, context, or means of representation, rather than on repertoire. Despite these different



emphases, the book as a whole makes no argument about what is “real jazz” and what isn’t. Instead, what unites the authors is that they are not beholden to the concentration on stylistic innovation that still holds sway in much jazz historiography: the audiovisual record tends to provide a better indication of what kinds of jazz were popular, widely consumed, or regarded as “valuable” at any time than standard histories which focus on technical novelty and stylistic developments. Many leading musicians were captured on film or TV long after they had supposedly made their contribution to jazz history. Björn Heile’s contribution is particularly unapologetic in focusing on footage of artists long after their purported prime.

Thus, through vicariously watching jazz on screen, this book enables an enriched understanding of the genre. By watching jazz, we can evaluate *who* was featured on screen, both on “stage” and off it, *what* kinds of jazz repertoires were represented, both diegetically and non-diegetically, *how* the performers communicated and interacted with each other and with their listeners, and, perhaps most curiously, *the ways* that jazz was mediatized on screen by reviewing the kinds of audiovisual media that were home to jazz as both the genre and the media developed throughout the 20th century. Therefore, we will consider that issue next, in a summary of different ways that jazz played on screen.

## <2> A typology of jazz on screen

In outlining the different types of audiovisual representations of jazz, the crucial parameters are the specific recording and dissemination or broadcasting media, the type of performance, and the presence or absence of an onscreen audience, along with the mode of address of the audience or the position offered to them. While this typology focuses on the main forms of jazz on screen, there are a number of exceptions, as well as combinations of different attributes.

<Insert table 0.1 here>

Table 0.1 presents an overview of different forms.<sup>12</sup> An important sub-genre of films with musical performances is the “short,” popular particularly in the late 1920s and ’30s. Often using the Vitaphone sound system, where the soundtrack was issued separately on phonograph records, shorts typically string together musical numbers with a flimsy plot and are discussed in this volume by Emile Wennekes. Shorts represent a substantial proportion of the audiovisual material available from that period and contributed significantly to musicians’ livelihoods. The soundie is a variant of the short; the significance of this type of film, in terms of the music and its visual representation, is out of proportion with its short lifespan. Produced only between 1941 and ’47, these featured three-minute clips which could be viewed on “Panorams,” coin-operated film jukeboxes placed in bars, cafés, and dancehalls.<sup>13</sup> Soundies largely dispensed with plot and focused on the musical performance (and typically dancing); not unlike in the later music video, which is often viewed as the soundie’s successor, sets could be elaborate and, in conjunction with song lyrics, could suggest a narrative. Panoram screens were roughly the size of large television sets, although, due to their public setting, the viewing experience arguably owed more to the cinema than to the intimacy and privacy of television.

The soundie’s legacy can be seen in the Snader Telescriptions, three-minute clips made between 1951 and ’52 for television. Usually used as fillers, telescriptions typically showed the musicians in performance addressing the camera directly. There is one crucial difference between soundies and Snaders, however: whereas the former featured often awkward, mimed performances to pre-recorded music, the latter were typically shot live.<sup>14</sup> They are thus among the earliest extant live audiovisual recordings of jazz performance. Although production standards generally remained low, this brought a liveliness and realism

generally lacking in earlier formats, and it also increases the value of Snaders as sources for studying performers' playing techniques. Moreover, Snader Telescriptions sometimes presented genuine alternative versions of titles that can be added to the discographic record. A 1952 Telescription of Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo," for instance, features a unique arrangement, as well as giving a better idea of the band's playing than earlier soundies, such as *Hot Chocolate [Cotton Tail]* (1941).

The feature film with musical performances was and is a common phenomenon in Hollywood and beyond, although, as far as anything resembling jazz is concerned, its hey-day lies arguably in the 1920s to '40s. Although performances—whether vocal or instrumental—are more or less integrated into the plot, they tend to act as production numbers and musical interludes. Hit tunes and bankable stars could contribute significantly to a movie's success, and many if not most of the great swing bands appeared in Hollywood films. Although the camera tends to focus on the musicians, their onscreen audiences are typically captured too, providing viewers with a subject position within the film. The musicians' performances are usually mimed and rarely realistic, but the interest of these scenes may lie elsewhere, in revealing prevailing ideas about jazz at the time; for instance, the scene may lend showbiz glamour or, as is typical of the *film noir*, it may act as a sonic signifier for the fast life, associated with sex, crime, drink, and drugs.

Jazz has been a particular subject of film, probably more so than most other styles and genres of music. The "jazz film" is a somewhat problematic and ill-defined genre, located somewhere between the biopic, the documentary, and the ordinary narrative feature film, set in the jazz milieu or with a jazz musician as protagonist. Most jazz films fall into this category, from *Young Man with a Horn* (1950, dir. Michael Curtis), through *Paris Blues* (1961, dir. Martin Ritt), with Duke Ellington's music and a cameo by Louis Armstrong, Clint Eastwood's *Bird* (1988) and *'Round Midnight* (1986, dir. Bernard Tavernier) to Woody

Allen's *Sweet and Lowdown* (1999) and beyond. These films range somewhere between the fictional and the biographical: Ram Bowen and Eddie Cook (Paul Newman and Sidney Poitier) in *Paris Blues* are entirely fictional, Rick Martin (Kirk Douglas) in *Young Man with a Horn* is loosely based on Bix Beiderbecke, and Dexter Gordon's Dale Turner in *'Round Midnight* on a composite of Lester Young and Bud Powell; only *Bird* closely follows Charlie Parker's biography. The prize goes to Woody Allen and Sean Penn, whose creation of Emmet Ray has fooled more than one cinema-goer into believing that he was real (just like many thought that Penn had played the guitar himself). In terms of both narrative and form, these differences matter surprisingly little. The main distinction to other forms of feature film concerns the importance placed on performance scenes: what elsewhere is an interlude becomes the main attraction. Two main problems arise from this: one is the integration of these scenes into the plot, and the other the convincingness of the performances themselves. Few individuals have genuinely crossed the divide between musical performance and acting, so the choice tends to be between actors uneasily miming to playback in what are supposed to be climactic scenes, or musicians stumbling and mumbling through their parts (indeed, since musical performance is almost always synched, musicians are not even necessarily good impersonators of themselves). As in other forms of feature film, footage of the performance is usually contrasted with occasional shots of listeners, offering identification for viewers in the diegesis.

Actual biopics cause added difficulties due to the availability of the subject's own performances. In *Bird*, given that attempting to recreate Charlie Parker's playing would appear tantamount to blasphemy, but, at the same time, the scratchy sound of the surviving materials could not be integrated with the visual image, Parker's original solos were cleaned up digitally and combined with new performances from the backing instruments—with the result that Parker's playing is abstracted from the ensemble interplay that played an integral

part in his performances. Perhaps the most radical solution is represented by Tavernier's *'Round Midnight*, in which all performances were in fact played live by a stellar cast, including, in addition to Dexter Gordon, Herbie Hancock, who also acted as composer and arranger, Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter, John McLaughlin, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams. Gordon proved himself a charismatic actor, gaining an Academy Award nomination (on top of Hancock's award for best original music). It is noteworthy, though, that the remaining musicians are shown only when playing (although Hancock, in particular, comports himself well).

The jazz underscore is of limited direct importance to this volume, since it does not include visible performance. However, the diegetic/non-diegetic divide is rarely as clear-cut as is often believed. Furthermore, the uses to which jazz is put can tell us much about the ideas associated with it, ideas which connect back to the moment of performance. Thus, it is possible to construct a continuity from jazz in silent film, where it is seen but not heard (unless it is recreated in live accompaniment), to the jazz underscore, which is heard but not seen.

The musical is another of the classic "jazz film" genres. In contradistinction to musical numbers in other feature films, the production numbers are no mere interludes, but the film's *raison d'être*; yet, in contrast to biopics (whether of fictional or real characters), the musical's plot does not normally revolve around the music and its performers. Not surprisingly, the attention also tends to be directed at singers and dancers rather than at instrumental musicians. As Peter Elsdon points out in this volume, there is another subtle difference: particularly in the so-called "backstage musical," the performance is more often directly addressed at the camera (and the viewer beyond) than in most other forms of fictionalized performance, which more typically includes an audience in the diegesis, thus offering viewers a different subject position.

Live performance is a rare phenomenon in film; it is more common on television. It would be too simplistic, however, to squarely associate synchronized playback performance with film and live performance with TV. The aforementioned *'Round Midnight* is a counterexample, although the live performances are fictionalized and, not least due to the heavily stylized sets, feel anything but spontaneous and natural. More to the point, fictional feature films are not the only cinematic genre to feature jazz performance. Documentary films were probably the first to introduce footage of live performance. Newsreels frequently reported on the exploits of jazz musicians, and Paul Whiteman, who would become an unlikely pioneer of teen TV in early television, was a particular favorite. In footage from August 1926, he can be seen in a Dutch seaside resort, giving an impromptu performance conducting a local band (necessarily silent, as sound film only became available in the following year).<sup>15</sup> Of greater interest from a musical point of view is a Fox Movietone feature from May 1928, showing Whiteman ripping up his old contract with Victor, having just signed with Columbia, and, at the stroke of 12 midnight signaling the contract's expiry, striking up "My Ohio Home" with his band, featuring Bix Beiderbecke.<sup>16</sup> This is likely to be the first audiovisual recording of jazz in performance. As certain discrepancies between image and sound, as well as the absence of a visible microphone, indicate, however, the sound must have been pre-recorded and the performance enacted. The same has to be said about "The Birth of Swing," an episode in the newsreel series *The March of Time* (vol. 3, no. 7, 19 February 1937), featuring Nick LaRocca reassembling his Original Dixieland Jass Band to profit from the swing fever.<sup>17</sup> (The preference for white musicians is hardly coincidental, although "The Birth of Swing" briefly shows Chick Webb.) By the late 1950s, this changes—not least due to technical improvements—with the emergence of documentaries that appear to "witness" live performance primarily intended for audiences, not the camera. Seminal in this regard was *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (1960), which presents footage from the 1958 Newport

Festival alongside, somewhat incongruously, images from the America's Cup, which took place at the same time.

These sorts of documentaries, whether based on a particular musician, style period, or the history of jazz as a whole, have since become a staple of television, and the controversial 10-part PBS series *Jazz*, directed by Ken Burns, is only the most famous example.<sup>18</sup> The format of documentaries allows the use of any kind of archive material, whether audio, audiovisual, or still photos, so they typically feature relevant materials from earlier films or newsreels. This often makes up a smaller proportion than one might imagine, though: *Jazz*, for instance, makes extensive use of what came to be known as the "Ken Burns effect," whereby still images seem to be set into motion by panning and zooming, thus compensating for the relative paucity of actual footage.

Documentaries are not the only, and arguably not the most medium-specific, genre that television has contributed to jazz on screen. As Forman has shown, television has a privileged relation with popular music, and a confusing variety of formats, including the TV variety show (discussed in this volume by Kristin McGee), the chart or DJ show, and live relays from nightclubs.<sup>19</sup> Although jazz normally played a relatively minor role in most of these genres, the importance of television in supporting musicians and disseminating the music should not be underestimated. Indeed, Forman has argued that television profoundly influenced the aesthetics of musical performance during the second half of the 20th century. Although he is primarily referring to newer forms of popular music, such as rock 'n' roll, which soon eclipsed jazz, not least due to their televisual appeal, the possibility that television also had an effect on the older and more established aesthetics of jazz performances should not be discounted.<sup>20</sup>

One key difference between jazz in film and jazz on TV is that, whereas cinematic realism aims at allowing viewers to appear to witness an unfolding story, TV seems to

persuade them that they are actively taking part in the events. As Lynn Spigel has put it: “Television at its most ideal promised to bring audiences not merely an illusion of reality as in the cinema, but a sense of ‘being there,’ a kind of hyperrealism.”<sup>21</sup> Producers and practitioners of the genre were fully aware of the linkage between television’s intimacy and its promise of direct presence, as this quotation from Dave Rose (musical director on *The Red Skelton Show*) demonstrates: “With television you have it right in your front room. You will be sitting there right beside the musicians, the way it should be.”<sup>22</sup>

In this context, the presence of the onscreen audience is given added significance. As Forman has observed, it “provides the TV viewer with an identifiable point of reference, helping to concentrate attention on the performance contexts.”<sup>23</sup> Not all televisual formats relied on an onscreen audience, however; others gave viewers seemingly immediate access to the performance, without the interference of framing devices, such as a presenter or visible studio props. Thus, the spectrum in presentation modes and viewing perspectives provided by television goes well beyond that explored in film. Forman discusses the struggle for dominance between what he has called “musicking and televising,” namely between the attempt to make the music fit the exigencies of television and, conversely, the endeavor to create televisual formats that would best capture and communicate the musical performance.<sup>24</sup> The difference in mode of address and corresponding viewing experience can be considerable; compare, for instance, the footage made by Danish Television of Duke Ellington’s performance in a piano trio and with an octet on 23 January 1967,<sup>25</sup> with his appearance in a BBC production shot in the Lime Grove Studios (London) in December 1973<sup>26</sup> (broadcast in May 1974). The former, shot in moody black and white and showing the performers from relatively close up in the artificial space of a studio, without a host, an onscreen audience, or other framing devices, appears unusually intimate, as if we as the viewers were secretly witnessing a jam session or as if the musicians were playing in our own



living room. Although showing live performance and shot for TV, the aesthetic is strongly reminiscent of *Jammin' the Blues*. The BBC performance, by contrast, is all glitz and glamour, with glittering chandeliers and gaudy stage dress, and formal address to the onscreen and television audience. This contrast between the almost ostentatiously artistic and the commercial showbiz sides of jazz maps the difference between “musicking” (the Danish TV broadcast) and “televising” (the BBC show), illustrating the diversity of formats through which jazz has been and is being presented on television, as well as the versatility of Ellington as a musician—possibly the last jazz musician to be able to straddle that divide with seeming ease.

Many exciting jazz performances on screen have occurred on television. Pride of place has to go to the celebrated *The Sound of Jazz*, airing live on CBS on 8 December 1957. Jazz critics Whitney Balliett and Nat Hentoff had been drafted in to produce the show, and they brought together many of the most renowned performers of the day, including Coleman Hawkins, Thelonious Monk, and Red Allen, with a rump line-up from the Count Basie Orchestra as a basis. Arguably, the highlight of the show was the reunion of Billie Holiday with her most distinguished partner, Lester Young, in Holiday’s “Fine and Mellow,” shortly before both of their deaths. “Lady Day” and “the Prez,” as they called one another (both nicknames catching on more widely), had been estranged for some time, and the emotions on Holiday’s face in response to the first bars of Young’s solo have justly become television legend.<sup>27</sup> Particular emphasis should also be placed on the series *Jazz 625* and *Jazz Goes to College*, produced by the BBC in the 1960s, the former discussed in this volume by Jenny Doctor. Both struck a successful balance between the atmosphere of a live performance and the demands of television. The episodes were shot with live audiences, and presentation was generally non-intrusive, the focus on the performances themselves, with the musicians playing full sets. While *Jazz 625* took place in London clubs or studios set up to capture the

live performances using interesting televisual effects of the day (“televising,” in Forman’s terminology), *Jazz Goes to College* was, as the title suggests, recorded in university performance venues (musicking).

In later years, television has been a major force behind audiovisual recordings of jazz concerts that were primarily given for the benefit of the live audiences. From the late 1950s onwards, the national broadcasting companies of European countries were active in this area. By that point in time, jazz had lost much of its popular appeal, which made it unattractive to commercial stations in America, whereas the public broadcasting companies of Europe tended to regard jazz as part of their public service remit. This is a major reason for the relative prevalence of footage of European origin featuring American artists. The specific value of these resources today is that, although we understand that the presence of TV cameras always mediate the captured event, the performances were primarily aimed at the live audiences, so the cameras provide a sense of witnessing the performance (including the performance venue, the audience, and the like).<sup>28</sup>

Despite some notable exceptions, such as clips featuring the Chick Corea Elektric Band in the 1980s, the music video has generally not played the same role in jazz as in other forms of popular music where, in particular following the introduction of MTV in 1981, it revolutionized both production and consumption. This is particularly true of what is often called the “concept video,” which does not simply show the musicians performing the music heard, but instead presents a narrative, typically connected to song lyrics, or other, more indirectly related, images. There are a number of possible reasons for this minimal interest in the jazz music video. One is that the aesthetics and culture of jazz tend to foreground the music and its performance. A more practical reason is provided by the costs involved in producing professional videos which are prohibitive for most jazz musicians and their labels. Similarly, despite channels such as BET Jazz (later called BET on Jazz, BET J and currently

Centric TV), there has been no genuine counterpart to MTV in the jazz world. Nevertheless, there is no shortage of jazz video clips on such sharing sites as YouTube or Vimeo, or music sales platforms such as iTunes; websites such as [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com) have a video category with daily playlists (typically linked from YouTube). More recently, EPKs (Electronic Press Kits) have become very widely used by many groups and musicians (Robert Glasper is an excellent example) as a marketing tool, signaling the importance of online media for contemporary artists and record companies. While most of these clips are relatively simply produced video recordings of live performances, there are also more elaborate and adventurous productions. These tend to cluster around the popular and experimental ends of the jazz spectrum. In the former case, there is presumably an expectation that the investment will be recouped through additional sales; in the latter, the musicians appear to be guided by an artistic interest in the expressive possibilities of the medium.

Needless to say, the internet plays host to enormous amounts of audiovisual recordings of jazz. Most of them are not specific to the medium: examples of all the forms discussed here have been digitized and uploaded; indeed, it is probably fair to say that the vast majority of extant audiovisual recordings of jazz in performance can be found online. Much of this material is distributed widely in the chaotic world of YouTube and similar sites, although some collectors/uploaders, such as the “JazzVideoGuy,” Bret Primack, who at the time of writing (5 December 2014) has 43,935 subscribers with 24,686,562 views, bring some order to the materials. In addition to these “archival” materials, many musicians upload video recordings of their playing directly, so the internet is increasingly becoming the primary location of audiovisual materials, in addition to duplicating resources that originated on other media. The same is true of educational clips, with many people uploading teaching materials on such issues as instrumental technique, ensemble playing, improvisation or music theory. Jonathan DeSouza’s contribution to this volume touches on some of the audiovisual

discourse proliferating around Pat Metheny's playing (not all necessarily featuring Metheny himself).

The latest innovation at the time of writing is probably live webcasting, usually undertaken by established jazz venues and some festivals.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps more than any other medium and technology discussed here, these livestreams are based on the promise of liveness, a form of direct participation (although most new media seem to have started with this promise). It is difficult to predict what impact this format may have on jazz and forms of viewing and listening to it; the increasing convergence between the internet and specialized pay-TV channels may well give jazz a renewed presence and future in the media landscape. Who, after all, would have predicted that cinema broadcasts of theater and opera performances would set a trend?

## <2> Methodology

The genesis of this volume was prompted not only by the diversity and range of materials described in the previous section, but also by the lack of any thorough-going methodological attempt to interrogate what they might tell us. As with the sound recording, there has often been an unspoken assumption of the medium's transparency: what screen media tell us remains self-evident and unquestioned. In that respect, the time for a proper consideration of exactly what is being represented and how, is long overdue. But it is not that these questions have been entirely overlooked, far from it. They have been considered in a variety of disciplinary contexts, but it is fair to say that at least until recently, the treatment of these issues tended to be somewhat disparate.<sup>30</sup> The recent publication of *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics* signals the degree to which different perspectives on these questions are being brought into meaningful dialogue, and the emergence of an approach to screen media which moves beyond restrictive disciplinary boundaries.<sup>31</sup> In this section, we

survey some of these approaches in an attempt to sketch out some of the key methodological issues tackled by the different contributors in this volume, and how these issues might relate to jazz specifically.

As suggested in the previous section, the different kinds of manifestations jazz takes on screen can be categorized in a number of ways. One might, for instance, begin to categorize according to the mode of performance (mimed, or “live”), the context of performance (staged or unstaged), the audience (onscreen or offscreen), and so on. But the one thing that might be said to link all of jazz’s many and varied appearances on screen media is the idea of performance. Our use of the term as part of the title of this volume may well be interpreted in a very narrow sense, as *musical* performance. But in considering jazz on screen, such a narrow view of performance is unhelpful. Take for instance Philip Drake’s characterization of acting as a *subset* of performance, characterized by the highlighting of “the presence of character.”<sup>32</sup> Other kinds of performance, a category in which he includes song and dance performances, have more to do with “the display of skills.” Drake does not just distinguish between different kinds of performance, but sees modes of performance as bound together under a larger umbrella. This broad conception of performance is hardly anything new, indeed it goes back decades to the work of theorists such as Richard Schechner, in particular.<sup>33</sup> The implications for thinking about music are nicely summed up by Auslander, when he writes that, “when we see a musician perform, we are not simply seeing the ‘real person’ playing; as with actors, there is an entity that mediates between musicians and the act of performance.”<sup>34</sup> Thus, he suggests, “[w]hat musicians perform first and foremost is not music, but their own identities as musicians, their musical personae.” Richard Leppert has recently put it this way, “[m]usic, in short, is not simply made, it is simultaneously *acted*.”<sup>35</sup> This way of thinking should dispel any idea that watching jazz performers on screen can or should be seen as thoroughly different from watching actors.

But it is not just our view of performance that is at stake here. As Drake suggests, “discourses of screen performance almost invariably assume that the presence of the performer is uncomplicated.”<sup>36</sup> To quote him at length:

Much discussion of screen performance ... assumes that the ontological ground from which the performance grows is the body of the performer. However, mediated forms of performance, including screen performance, draw upon many other signifying elements in order to become meaningful, elements such as systems of editing, cinematic framing, and conventions of genre.<sup>37</sup>

Drake here identifies a kind of duality that characterizes the literature in this area. On the one side is consideration of the role of the performing body, both as signifying force and locus of meaning, and on the other are the cultural and technological processes that are sometimes seen as *extra* to performance. But these technological processes are critical in the way in which they place performing bodies on the screen in different ways.

We might begin by thinking about jazz and its role within narrative film, particularly its presentation on screen, through performances of one kind or another. Narrative is perhaps the crucial term here, in the sense that the music is bound up in a context in which it has often been seen as subservient to the central drive of the film. As Krin Gabbard suggests, jazz in such contexts is sometimes regarded by fans as experiencing a loss because of a subjugation of music to narrative.<sup>38</sup> But such a sense of loss is tied in to what he saw, via John Corbett, as the fetishizing of the sound recording, or as he put it, “the myth of the music’s autonomy.”<sup>39</sup> In a similar way, Frederick Garber suggests that there is a difference between watching jazz in such a context and viewing a musician like Thelonious Monk in a documentary-style film, where one can see the performer and hear the music at the same time.<sup>40</sup> Gabbard’s approach is to see jazz within the context of American cinema as revealing an alternative history from the officially accepted one. It illuminates the music’s participation in larger cultural

narratives of race, gender, and so on. What we find, for instance, is an exploration of the range of potential representational functions the performing body can take, such as Gabbard's exploration of the idea of the trumpet as phallic.<sup>41</sup> His work is exemplary in demonstrating how jazz performance, implicated in the context of the Hollywood film or the biopic, can reflect larger discursive themes.<sup>42</sup>

If the performing body and its representational power has been a central theme in Gabbard's work, then we find a very different but complementary emphasis in the literature on music video. Such studies provide an important forebear in many respects here. They offer a context in which the image of the performing body is generally still important, even if highly stylized, operating in a context where it is harnessed as part of a genre-specific set of codes. Writers on this medium have tended to work to distance it from narrative film. Thus, in an influential book on music video from 1993, Andrew Goodwin argued for this distinction on the basis of mode of address—or rather, he implied that the methodologies for interrogating narrative film do not transfer as a result, citing the idea that pop's stories “are told by visible narrators.”<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Carol Vernallis argues that music videos do not generally present conventional narratives, but fragments of narrative organized in non-traditional non-linear ways.<sup>44</sup> While this argument against narrative distances music video from most cinema, there is another sense in which commonalities can be found. Even before Goodwin or Vernallis's studies were published, Sally Stockbridge argued that music video should be thought of as *spectacle*.<sup>45</sup> She suggested that spectacle involves two kinds of gaze depending on the interpretation: one from viewer to performer, often conceptualized in feminist terms as an objectifying male gaze, and one from performer to viewer. This kind of approach is particularly important for the music video, given that performers frequently address the camera directly. Another important aspect of Stockbridge's approach is that she emphasized how music video as screen medium affords a range of reading positions. This

approach is crucial for consideration of performance on screen, because it helps to conceptualize mode of address—whether the viewer is framed as the object of the performance, or as observer of performance and so on. Indeed that kind of distinction, based on address rather than genre, can serve as a guiding principle for most of the contributions to this volume.

Some approaches to music video continue the theme of interrogating the relationship between sound and image, as in Björnberg's 1994 study, which outlined a kind of typology of such structural relationships.<sup>46</sup> But perhaps the most fruitful approaches combine tools drawn both from musicology and film studies, as illustrated by Vernallis's 2004 study. Vernallis attempts to create a taxonomy of shots for music video, that serve to highlight the similarities to and differences from Hollywood filmic convention.<sup>47</sup> This integration of methodologies from different disciplines can be seen in a range of recent literature, such as a recent article by Lori Burns and Jada Watson on a music video by the Dixie Chicks.<sup>48</sup> More relevant in this context is Burns's and Watson's essay, "Live Concert Film."<sup>49</sup> Here they develop what they call three "crosscutting analytical concepts: *form and space*, *gesture*, and *address*." Burns and Watson use these concepts to interrogate lyrics, music, staging, and film. This approach recognizes the complexity of the text, in the sense that it is a film of a performance, a performance staged for an audience, but also filmed for an audience viewing on screen. Significantly, though, the mode of analysis avoids any easy distinction between these different textual layers, and instead seeks to uncover how these elements interact. What this essay sets out is a contemporary view of what this kind of screen media demands: a detailed examination of music, performing body, film technique, mode of address, viewer position, and so on, and also the way in which these elements interact and work together in creating a whole.



A different area in which consideration of the performing body has been undertaken is within branches of musicology particularly concerned with empirical approaches to performance.<sup>50</sup> There are perhaps two related aspects to its consideration in this field, which might be described as its expressive import and its functional importance in terms of the mechanics of performance (either in terms of executing musical gestures, or ensemble coordination). To begin with the first, research has clearly demonstrated that our opinions of a performance can be heavily motivated by visual information, even if we are not necessarily aware of this process. In a study conducted by music psychologist Jane Davidson, a number of subjects were shown a video of two performances by a pianist.<sup>51</sup> In one performance, the pianist restricted bodily movements, while in the other, the movements were exaggerated, but the musical aspects of both performances were kept as close as possible. The results of the study demonstrated that the participants found the performance with more motion from the performer to be more expressive. Davidson's work also includes a number of essays that attempt to analyze gestures made by popular music performers.<sup>52</sup> A similar approach is taken by Laura Leante, who has applied a taxonomy of gesture when analyzing progressive rock performances, specifically those by the group Genesis.<sup>53</sup> The performance Leante analyzed is overtly theatrical, in the sense that Genesis front-man Peter Gabriel helped to project the complex themes of the group's songs to their audiences by employing a range of costumes and mannerisms. And of course there are songs that come ready-made with a certain amount of semantic content, ripe for expression.

The second kind of approach to the performing body relies on an understanding that is far more functional in nature. Thus, a whole range of studies of performance focus attention on how physical gestures are employed both to create sound, aid expression, and so on.<sup>54</sup> Particularly pertinent in this case, Mark Doffman has shown how video material can serve in the analysis of creativity in the context of a jam session environment.<sup>55</sup> Doffman focuses his

attention on how musicians negotiate ending a piece when the context precludes any rehearsal, and analyzes screen media (documentary film of the jam session) to look at how the collaborative social process of performance plays out. In this case, the screen text provides a wealth of information that can be used to understand the performance event. As Martin Clayton points out, the approach taken by Doffman of using documentary screen material to provide the raw materials for analysis has a long tradition in studies of interpersonal behavior.<sup>56</sup> Many of the methods Clayton describes employ computer software to aid in marking out significant moments, using screen material as raw data to be demarcated and analyzed. Indeed, this kind of approach is largely representative of that taken by scholars working in this field, who view screen media as a resource for empirical analysis. But in the field of empirical musicology, there tends to be an assumption about the transparency of the medium. The screen media are read as unmediated, seeming to provide direct access to information about performing bodies, with no consideration of the processes that are involved in placing those performers on the screen.

The methodological gap between this empirical approach and that taken by scholars on music video is striking. And that perhaps provides the challenge for this volume: to consider the import of the performing body on screen in ways that reflect its discursive position in terms of larger cultural narratives, understanding it as signifying information about the mechanics of performance, but also conceptualizing it as a mediated and mediatized representation, placed on the screen in a certain way and according to certain codes and conventions. That then is the challenge in this instance, to forge a way of bringing these different approaches together to see how, applied *in toto*, they might provide new insights into jazz on screen.

<2> *Watching Jazz* in Overview

To summarize, then, this book started from the premise that watching jazz allows new insights to be gained—not just about the music itself, but equally importantly about the performance and the performers, about the audiences and their reactions, about the contexts, the framing, the presentation, and the effects of mediatization. The notion of watching jazz tells us to pay attention to the technologies, the stylistic frameworks, the modes and gestures of performance, and the cultural and visual discourses through which jazz on screen has been encountered, interpreted, studied, and remembered to this day—experienced through the films, television shows, and other audiovisual media that disseminated jazz throughout the twentieth century. And, of course, many of those performances are accessible again on screens today—whether viewed on televisions or in cinemas as previously, or on computers, tablets, smartphones, or myriad other ways that are continuously evolving to make access to audiovisual media of the past and present ever-easier.

The ten essays in *Watching Jazz* focus on particular aspects of encountering jazz on screen, providing detailed and thoughtful explorations of many of the themes that have been touched on in this introduction. Rather than organizing these chapters into sections that focus on audiovisual formats, live or studio contexts, performance styles, or jazz repertoires, the essays fall under three conceptual headings that we offer to the burgeoning field of jazz on screen media as foundational areas for future study.

In “Representation and the Body,” four essays consider jazz in terms of representation, framing, gesture, and embodiment. These essays share the view that through mediatization, jazz on screen processes ideas about music expressed in visual ways, supporting a mode of analysis that lets sight inform hearing and thinking. Meaning is created not only at the point of production, but at the moment of viewing; and that viewing experience adds to the understanding and experience of jazz. In one example, audible gestures of cultural contempt and overt racism take on visual representation in the context of

a Hollywood film, reflecting larger discursive themes. In “Ontologies of Media,” three essays examine artist case studies in order to explore fundamental questions about how audiovisual mediatizations of live performances influence what we see, hear, and experience as jazz. Ultimately, these essays challenge and deny essential jazz myths, such as that recordings play a secondary role to live performance, and that jazz performance is essentially defined by spontaneity and uniqueness. In the final section, “Shaping Nascent Screen Media,” three essays examine aspects of early film and television, exploring particular examples of how jazz performances helped to shape and identify the mediatization practices of the new media.

The research, analysis, and arguments of all ten of these essays has led us to question and challenge the contexts and conditions under which we have come to understand jazz, viewing, analyzing, and interpreting performances on screen with new awareness and insights. *Watching Jazz* provides us with a redefined sense of the genre’s artistic realities—and a recognition that approaching and analyzing jazz through encounters on screen will in time lead to revised discussions about the nature of jazz and its modes of performance in Jazz Studies generally.

### <3>Representation and the Body

Peter Elsdon’s essay, “Framing Jazz: Thoughts on Representation and Embodiment,” initiates this volume by challenging some of the categorizations and distinctions that have been applied to jazz on screen. Significantly, he argues that production is musical interpretation: it is a reaction to music, expressed through visual devices and located within a cultural context and a set of filmic practices specific to a certain period. On-screen footage of jazz musicians provides not only historical evidence of those musicians and their bands, but also evidence of representation and how jazz was conceptualized. Thus, Elsdon challenges us to see jazz on screen as a history of ideas about music expressed visually. He draws on work from Film

Studies to understand the ways that the camera frames the performance space, imposing a vantage point for the viewer. The placement of the musicians within a shot communicates information about musical expression. The viewer is directed to gaze at the performing bodies through techniques of framing or changes of focus, subtle aspects of representation which comment on the music and create a dialogue between the musicians and audience. Thus the filmic representation does not simply comment on the music, but overlays a certain kind of reading onto it. Elsdon concludes that the production processes resulting in these depictions and representations have influenced how jazz is understood and how film has been complicit in creating our understanding of jazz.

In the second “Representation and the Body” essay, Jonathan De Souza explores differences between hearing a recording and attending a live performance in “‘All Sights Were Perceived as Sounds:’ Pat Metheny and the Instrumental Image.” De Souza posits that non-sonic aspects of music performance are essential to the music’s significance; visual, kinesthetic, and other aspects of performance help constitute both music’s social meanings and its perceived sonic organization. As case studies, he compares the audio recording of the Pat Metheny Group’s *Imaginary Day* (1997) with its companion video, *Imaginary Day Live* (2001). De Souza analyzes the imagery and symbolism of Metheny’s guitars, as well as his performances on them, and asks how those images affect how the music is heard. Drawing on the ideas of performativity and citationality, De Souza argues that Metheny’s instrumental diversity, a key to his crossover success, affects his social legibility. He examines Metheny’s techniques, involving body–instrument interaction and awareness of the different ways that musical instruments structure space, culminating in Metheny’s solo performance of “Into the Dream” on the 42-string Pikasso guitar. De Souza uses jazz on screen to support a mode of analysis that acknowledges that “the potentials of the guitar” are sonic, visual, and

kinesthetic. Instead of treating music as a purely audible structure, this approach lets sight inform hearing and thinking.

Next in the “Representation and the Body” section is Paul McIntyre’s essay, which challenges the often-held conception that jazz performance on television is an imperfect substitute for live performance. In “Jazz Performance on Screen: Mediatization of Gesture and the Notion of Bodily Empathy,” McIntyre argues that watching jazz on the small screen offers a distinct type of musical experience, based on television’s capacity to create an illusion of intimacy and direct presence, seeming to bring musicians into the viewers’ homes. Television’s focus on musicians’ gestural languages is particularly significant here; televisual techniques, such as close-ups, zooms, changing perspectives, and freeze-frame shots, allow the perception of performance aspects that would be invisible to live audiences. McIntyre employs concepts of viewer intimacy, gratification, and empathy, adopted from television and communication studies. Notions of attention, connectedness, and involvement are implicit in empathic responses to jazz performance on-screen and are bound up in performer action and audience perception. The use of close-up shots, and focus on instrumental technique and bodily gesture, allow viewers not only to identify with and empathize with musicians, but to feel “part of the music,” partaking of a shared experience. In this essay, then, McIntyre correlates jazz performance, its mediatization, and the viewer’s experience, coupling gesture and empathy at the heart of the performance, through its mediatization on the small screen.

The final essay in the “Representation and the Body” section broadens this heading to encompass aspects of representation in terms of racial dynamics. In “Playing the Clown: Charles Mingus, Jimmy Knepper, and *Jerry Maguire*,” Krin Gabbard explores the relationship between Charles Mingus and Jimmy Knepper, the white trombone virtuoso, who played as a sideman in Mingus’s group, the Jazz Workshop, in the late 1950s and early ’60s.

Immediately after Knepper joined the group, Mingus asked him to perform as “the clown” on the title track, when the album *The Clown* (1957) was recorded. The album also included “Haitian Fight Song”—celebrating Haitian slave rebellion victories at the end of the eighteenth century—which would be used nearly 40 years later to accompany a scene in the Hollywood film *Jerry Maguire* (1996). Gabbard argues that just as *Jerry Maguire* features a white man’s relationship with his black employer, the conflicted Mingus/Knepper relationship was riddled with racial and professional tensions. The essay follows the troubled, at times violent, relationship through its entire chronology, also analyzing Mingus’s long association with “clown” imagery and the reverse minstrelsy that was a regular part of his act, probably as a way of distancing himself from the minstrel legacy that still echoed in the entertainment arena during that period. Gabbard concludes that there is no way to ignore the fact that Mingus asked a white man to play the clown. The essay’s final section examines the use of “Haitian Fight Song” in *Jerry Maguire*, questioning whether the producer, Cameron Crowe, was aware of the legacy behind the music and its aptness to the racial tensions and black employer/white employee dynamics that are central to the film.

### <3>Ontologies of Media

The “Ontologies of Media” section opens with Tony Whyton challenging the myth that jazz is at its most intense and essential when encountered in a live setting. In “Seeking Resolution: John Coltrane, Myth, and the Audio-Visual,” Whyton examines the complex relationship between audio and moving image recordings following the release of Coltrane’s seminal album, *A Love Supreme*, in 1965. He argues that within a studio recording, the lack of the visual and Coltrane’s sound create a context for music to be experienced as more profound and mysterious; thus the album transcends its status as a physical object to become a reified phenomenon. Whyton compares this experience to video footage of the Classic Quartet’s

festival performances at Antibes-Juan-les-Pins and Comblain-la-Tour, filmed a week apart in 1965. In the black and white Antibes recording, the low quality of image and sound, and the shaping and framing of the performance by the camera-work, affirms the experience as a mediated act, an event that feels distant and time-specific. Watching jazz also makes it easier for the viewer to pick up on the musicians' mistakes in that performance. In the Comblain-la-Tour recording, the use of multiple cameras and camera angles provides views from different vantage points, conveying a feeling of both the chaos and the liveness of the festival event. This is not a polished studio recording, but a performance that is grappling with the elements and competing with its surroundings. Counter-intuitively, Whyton argues that these audiovisual examples of the Quartet performing "live" do not have the same impact on the listener as the profound experience of the studio album. In the case of *A Love Supreme*, the liveness of Coltrane's studio album is often heralded, whereas recordings of the live Antibes or Comblain-la-Tour concerts are clearly products of mediatization.

In the next essay in the "Ontologies of Media" section, Nick Gebhardt questions what happens when we watch a televised broadcast of a jazz performance, exploring how the different screens and screening formats through which we receive a live performance influence what we see, hear, and experience as jazz. In "Screening the Event: Watching Miles Davis's 'My Funny Valentine,'" Gebhardt observes television as a medium that monitors the world, and considers its implications with respect to issues of spontaneity, immediacy, and improvisation in jazz performances. As a case study, he examines the performance of "My Funny Valentine," given by Miles Davis's quintet at the Teatro Dell'Arte in Milan, on 11 October 1964, and broadcast on Italian television. He contextualizes this in terms of the emergence of jazz modernism; the Quintet's performances of popular ballads like "My Funny Valentine" were then raising issues about jazz's future as an art form. By 1964, the group was pushing popular standards to their limits as forms available for jazz improvisation. Noting the



previous neglect of television in jazz studies, Gebhardt's analysis of camera shots conveys the processes by which the television camera participates in and redefines our sense of the Quintet's performance. Gebhardt reasons that in this broadcast, the producers want us to experience the band's internal dynamic; in tuning into the show—in watching jazz as the live monitoring of events—we not only access the band's collective self-understanding, but also the continual reworking of that collective sense through the act of performance. Thus, Gebhardt concludes that as viewers of the Miles Davis quintet performing live on television, we are brought through the medium into a new relationship with their music and music-making.

In the final essay in the "Ontologies of Media" section, Björn Heile interrogates the myth of jazz as a spontaneous, improvisatory art to be appreciated at the moment of performance. In "Play it again, Duke: Jazz Performance, Improvisation, and the Construction of Spontaneity," Heile explores footage from European tours undertaken by the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1969 and '71, and by the Giants of Jazz in 1971. Heile chooses these materials specifically because they grant insight into mundane qualities of jazz touring, exposing everyday performances of musicians and experiences of audiences at events that are not regarded as legendary. He contextualizes this approach in the serial nature of performance with its repetitive qualities, contesting the myth that constructs jazz as an unrepeatable music of pure immediacy and spontaneity. Heile considers the myth's paradox, which simultaneously offers jazz as the last refuge of liveness and overlooks its dependence on sound recordings. This essay reveals that although a live performance or recording represents a musical experience of a particular moment, in fact it is usually one in a series of marginally different takes. For example, watching moving image recordings of four concerts of the Duke Ellington Orchestra leads Heile to remark on elements of repetition and routine. While the musical programs show some variation, the choreography and presentation are virtually the

same. More significantly, most solos are repeated literally, note for note. Heile looks at examples of live concerts performed by the Giants of Jazz, and discovers comparable similarities. Moments of implied spontaneousness prove to be precisely planned and executed elements of showmanship; they are thus moments of constructed *illusions* of spontaneity. These concerts therefore recreated in live performance experiences for audiences that were used to sound recordings. Heile concludes by considering Auslander's characterization of jazz improvisation as a social arrangement between performers and audience, recognizing that the spontaneous quality of performance matters more to audiences than whether the music is literally improvised. A critical analysis of jazz performance on screen can aid such a change of perspective, since audiovisual documents reveal aspects of jazz and its wider contexts that remain invisible on records.

### <3> Shaping Nascent Screen Media

The volume's final section, "Shaping Nascent Screen Media," begins with "'All Aboard!': Soundies and Vitaphone Shorts," Emile Wennekes' investigation of these two early types of sound film, specifically exploring jazz performance in relation to the development of innovative techniques to synchronize music with cinematic images. Three-minute Soundies, produced from 1940 to '47, were bundled into groups of eight per film reel, designed for viewing on coin-operated Panoram jukeboxes, which were installed in public venues all over North America. For his first case, Wennekes looks at the Soundie *Hot Chocolate* (1941), featuring the Duke Ellington Orchestra playing "Cotton Tail" and Lindy hop dancers. He analyzes elements of the film's staging, song structure, and shot sequences, concluding that the musical structure is integral to the filmic composition, with the changing images fading in and out mostly on the beat; the cutting effectively becomes a parameter of the music. While Soundies showcased one artist/group performing one song, Vitaphone shorts—the sound-on-

disc format launched in the 1920s—usually included three or more songs in a film. As his second case, Wennekes examines a Vitaphone short featuring Paul Tremaine and His Aristocrats performing “I’ve been Working on the Railroad” (1929). Wennekes suggests that the shift from the train sequence of the beginning trailer to the indoor bandstand for the main performances constitutes an audio dissolve from one diegetic space to another. The director creates a sense of spectacle that elevates the short into a cinematic space, drawing attention to the process of mediatization. Wanting to find a Soundie that displays similar qualities of crossing over to a cinematic space, Wennekes turns, for his third case, to Count Basie’s *Take Me Back, Baby* (1941). He analyzes the song’s structure, the supplementary story-line, and the camera work, discerning that the shots are cut to the pace of the music, closely following the interchanges between the band’s instrumental sections. But through the supplementary narrative, Wennekes recognizes that the film’s director offered 1940s audiences a visualized and fantasized representation of the performance of the band, which in those days could never have an equivalent in (or within) a live performance. Wennekes concludes that Vitaphone shorts and Soundies represent early stages in the aesthetic and technical development towards an idiomatic approach to presenting jazz performance on screen.

In the next essay in the “Shaping Nascent Screen Media” section, Kristin McGee challenges the peripheral status that has been accorded to jazz singers on early American television. In “Assimilating and Domesticating Jazz in 1950s American Variety Television: Nat King Cole’s Transformation from Guest Star to National Host,” McGee champions the case of this crossover jazz crooner. Noting that jazz scholarship has generally overlooked television, she suggests that this may be due to the medium’s commercial, lowbrow, and feminized reputation during this experimental period. In McGee’s first case, she looks at Cole’s role as guest star within the CBS network variety program, Ed Sullivan’s *Toast of the Town*. McGee observes that Sullivan designed his “something for everyone,” family-based

formula for a multi-generational, multicultural public. He invited a culturally and racially diverse community of guest artists onto the show, while at the same time codifying a post-war conception of middle-class America through shots of his all-white audience. In McGee's detailed analysis, Cole is presented to viewers as an entertaining and morally sound black musical star, associated with broader conceptions of civic engagement. His performances of popular hit songs occupy a symbolic place in the multi-ethnic, socially engaged format of Sullivan's variety show. McGee notes that by the mid-1950s, the racial climate of television had altered, and Cole was one of a few African American artists invited to host his own show. For her second case, McGee examines *The Nat King Cole Show*, launched by NBC in November 1956. Cole performed newer popular hits and older jazz and crooner repertoire, his musical versatility an immense asset of the show. McGee points out episodes that helped educate audiences about television's technological advancements. She also demonstrates how the program promoted different images of the American family, challenging essentialized views of post-war suburban domesticity as exclusively white. McGee reveals that although the show was popular in urban areas, finding syndication and sponsorship proved difficult, and lack of sponsorship forced the series off the air in December 1957. McGee observes that Cole's musical versatility, charismatic personality, and civic activism earned his show a special place in the history of early music television; yet the program's commercial failure betrayed the continued racism guiding American mass culture at that time. McGee concludes that these obstacles—exacerbated by jazz critics who prioritize modern instrumental jazz as America's national art—have contributed to the peripheral status of television jazz singers, like Cole, of the post-war era.

The final essay in the "Shaping Nascent Screen Media" section, and the volume, looks at jazz in relation to early television with a British focus. In "'Jazz Is Where You Find It: Encountering Jazz on BBC Television, 1946–66,'" Jenny Doctor contemplates watching

jazz on British TV in the post-war milieu—that is, transferring jazz performance from the audio-only medium of radio to the audiovisual one of television, at a time when television was markedly inferior in technical quality. As early as 1946–7, the BBC aired *Jazz Is Where You Find It*, featuring British musicians. Doctor analyzes surviving scripts and camera plans, revealing that the five episodes performed popular tunes within a narrative framework of artificial “realism.” Doctor next examines *Jazz Session*, broadcast in 1954 and again featuring British players. Because other television jazz series had failed to materialize due to lack of visual interest, the producer focused the cameras on dancers, so that their movement would give on-screen expression to the musical essence of jazz. *Jazz Session* was not continued until 1957, when a series of six late night shows presented British groups, but without much impact. Doctor suggests that jazz was not featured again on BBC TV until visual and audio transmission quality could be improved. In April 1964, the night that launched BBC2 also introduced the series, *Jazz 625*. Three seasons, produced by Terry Henebery, aired between 1964 and 1966. Filmed in club-like environments, some programs featured top American jazz artists, while others showcased British bands. Doctor analyzes individual episodes, examining shot choices that enabled television to enhance the experience of jazz performance. Doctor suggests that Henebery constructed for British viewers an authentic sense of “liveness” that they could only rarely have accessed through unmediated means. Significantly, the production choices emphasized both musicians playing and in-view audiences responding to the action. Doctor proposes that Henebery’s in-view audiences implied a British jazz base that was more mixed in terms of gender, age, and race than the predominantly white, middle-aged, male group indicated by record sales. She concludes that since Henebery’s focus was on the music-making, he recorded the players expressing their musical ideas in intimate, yet public, settings, and exchanging them with both studio audiences and BBC2 viewers. Through watching these jazz performances on television, or

any screen media for that matter, today, tomorrow, and into the future, viewers continue to play fundamental roles in the process of experiencing mediated liveness—receiving, exchanging, and thus re-telling from their enhanced perspectives, the remarkable story of 1960s jazz.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz : The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 105–10.

<sup>2</sup> Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz*, 473–84. See also, *inter alia*, Scott DeVeaux, “Bebop and the Recording Industry: The 1942 AFM Recording Ban Reconsidered,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 126–65; Herman Gray, *Producing Jazz* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> Jed Rasula, “The Media of Memory: The Seductive Menace of Recordings in Jazz History,” in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 134–62; Frederick Garber, “Fabulating Jazz,” in *Representing Jazz*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 70–103. For a recent discussion of the issues, including further bibliography, see Tony Whyton, *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), in particular chapter 2, “Jazz and the Disembodied Voice,” 38–56.

<sup>4</sup> Gary Tomlinson, “Cultural Dialogics and Jazz: A White Historian Signifies,” *Black Music Research Journal* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1991): 229–64; Eric Lott, “Double V, Double-Time: Bebop’s Politics of Style,” *Callaloo* no. 36 (Summer 1988): 597–605, repr. in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed. Gabbard, 243–55; Scott DeVeaux, “Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography,” *Black American Literature Forum* 25, no. 3 (Autumn 1991): 525–60, doi:10.2307/3041812.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kenneth E. Prouty, “Toward Jazz’s ‘Official’ History: The Debates and Discourses of Jazz History Textbooks,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 1, no. 1 (2010): 19–43. Prouty is more

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concerned with the reliance on canons in traditional historiography of jazz than with recordings as such, but, as outlined above, it is difficult to conceive of a jazz canon in another other form.

<sup>6</sup> Alyn Shipton, “New Jazz Histories: Can a Reconciliation of Widely Differing Source Material Offer New Opportunities for the Jazz Historian?,” *Jazz Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2009): 127–44. See also Whyton, *Jazz Icons*, esp. chap. 5, “Witnessing and the Jazz Anecdote,” 106–26.

<sup>7</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Sanden, *Liveness in Modern Music: Musicians, Technology, and the Perception of Performance* (London: Routledge, 2013). It is worth pointing out that this usage of the term “mediatization” in the arts and humanities has diverged from that in the social sciences, where it typically refers to the influence of the mass media on political and social discourses (although the importance of Baudrillard points to a common origin or at least substantial overlap). Cf., for example, Elena Block, “A Culturalist Approach to the Concept of the Mediatization of Politics: The Age of ‘Media Hegemony,’” *Communication Theory* 23, no. 3 (August 2013): 259–78, doi:10.1111/comt.12016; Nick Couldry and Andreas Hepp, “Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments,” *Communication Theory* 23, no. 3 (August 2013): 191–202, doi:10.1111/comt.12019; Andreas Hepp and Friedrich Krotz, *Mediatized Worlds: Culture and Society in a Media Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Stig Hjarvard, “The Mediatization of Society: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change,” *Nordicom Review* 29, no. 2 (2008): 105–34; and Knut Lundby, ed., *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> See Murray Forman, *One Night on TV Is Worth Weeks at the Paramount: Popular Music on Early Television* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 6–7.

<sup>10</sup> A more recent instance is represented by the cover of Gary Giddins and Scott Deveaux, *Jazz* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009). The commentary on IMDb.com (accessed 22 July 2013) characterizes *Jammin’ the Blues* as “[d]arkly lit and with a mood that matches the music” (by “garykmc,” accessed 22 July 2013, [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036968/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036968/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)), seemingly unaware that we

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may associate this “mood” with the music specifically as a result of the conventions created by *Jammin’ the Blues* and texts like it. The account presented here does not deny the power and influence of jazz photography: the different visual media influenced one another in ways that are probably inextricable.

<sup>11</sup> Forman, *One Night on TV*, 172–73.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Ernie Smith et al., “Films,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd ed., by Barry Kernfeld (London: Macmillan, 2002), online as *Grove Music Online*, accessed 7 December 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libezproxy2.syr.edu/>.

<sup>13</sup> See Amy Herzog, “Discordant Visions: The Peculiar Musical Images of the Soundies Jukebox Film,” *American Music* 22, no. 1, Music and Moving Image special issue (Spring 2004): 27–39, doi:10.2307/3592964.

<sup>14</sup> Amy Herzog, “Illustrating Music: The Impossible Embodiments of the Jukebox Film,” in *Medium Cool: Music Videos from Soundies to Cellphones*, ed. Roger Beebe and Jason Middleton (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 43.

<sup>15</sup> “Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra,” cinema newsreel, filmed 1 August 1926, produced by Dutch Polygoon-Profilmi, digital version curated and posted by Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, 2:09, accessed 25 July 2013, [http://vpro.openbeelden.nl/media/52540/Paul\\_Whiteman\\_en\\_zijn\\_orkest](http://vpro.openbeelden.nl/media/52540/Paul_Whiteman_en_zijn_orkest).

<sup>16</sup> “Paul Whiteman Orchestra with Bix—‘My Ohio Home,’ 1928,” newsreel clip, filmed by Fox Movietone, on 18 May 1928, Youtube video, 1:49, posted by “harryoakley,” 22 February 2009, accessed 25 July 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmD7jeIEkfg>.

<sup>17</sup> “The Birth of Swing,” newsreel episode, 19 February 1937, from *The March of Times* series, vol. 3, no. 7, online as “March of Time – Original Dixieland Jazz Band,” YouTube video, 6:51, posted by “adamgswanson,” 26 November 2009, accessed 20 December 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHZIsfJ-m8U>.

<sup>18</sup> Ken Burns, dir., *Jazz: A Film*, 10 episodes, aired January 2001, PBS, 2004, DVD.

<sup>19</sup> Forman, *One Night on TV*, see esp. chap. 3.



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<sup>20</sup> Forman, *One Night on TV*. It is also tempting to adapt Forman's wider hypothesis of mutual convergence between popular music and television to that between jazz and film.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted from Forman, *One Night on TV*, 146.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted from Forman, *One Night on TV*, 147–48.

<sup>23</sup> Forman, *One Night on TV*, 149.

<sup>24</sup> Forman, *One Night on TV*, 179ff.

<sup>25</sup> This performance is listed by Klaus Stratemann, *Duke Ellington: Day by Day and Film by Film* (Copenhagen: JazzMedia, 1992), 548, Ken Vail, *Duke's Diary: The Life of Duke Ellington* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 306, and also on the "1967" page of "Ellington Sessions," on *A Duke Ellington Panorama* website, accessed 2 September 2013, <http://www.depanorama.net/67.htm>. It was shown in full as a documentary biography, *A Duke Named Ellington*, in the PBS "American Masters" series (season 3, episode 2, 18 July 1988), and distributed as *The Duke Ellington Masters, 1967: The First and Second Sets from DR TV Centre Copenhagen, 23rd January 1967*, Quantum Leap QLDVD 0249, 2001, DVD.

<sup>26</sup> Stratemann, *Duke Ellington*, 661; Vail, *Duke's Diary*, 447.

<sup>27</sup> The program, together with similarly influential footage, including of the Miles Davis Quintet, has been issued as *Vintage Collection 1958–1961*, Jazz Masters series (Warner Classics WEA 460058, 2004, DVD); it is also available online as "Fine and Mellow" on the *Billie Holiday* website, accessed 20 December 2014, <http://www.billieholiday.com/portfolio/fine-and-mellow/>. See also Whitney Balliett, "The Sound of Jazz," in *Goodbyes and Other Messages: A Journal of Jazz, 1981–1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 86–90, repr. in *Riffs and Choruses: A New Jazz Anthology*, ed. Andrew Clark (London: Continuum, 2001), 444–46; and Nat Hentoff, "Fine and Mellow," *All Things Considered*, *NPR*, 20 April 2000, <http://www.npr.org/2000/04/10/1072753/fine-and-mellow>.

<sup>28</sup> Many such performances have subsequently been distributed on video cassette or DVD, on which many of the earlier forms discussed here are likewise available, often in compilations.

<sup>29</sup> Notable examples include webcasts from Ronnie Scott's club in London, the Jazz at Lincoln Centre series, and Small's jazz club in New York.

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- <sup>30</sup> This point is also made in Nicholas Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), v.
- <sup>31</sup> John Richardson, Claudia Gorbman, and Carol Vernallis, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- <sup>32</sup> Philip Drake, "Reconceptualizing Screen Performance," *Journal of Film and Video* 58, nos.1/2 (Spring/Summer 2006): 85.
- <sup>33</sup> See, for instance, Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988).
- <sup>34</sup> Philip Auslander, "Musical Personae," *The Drama Review* 50, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 102.
- <sup>35</sup> Richard Leppert, "Seeing Music," in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture*, ed. Tim Shepherd and Anne Leonard (London: Routledge, 2013), 7–12.
- <sup>36</sup> Drake, "Reconceptualizing Screen Performance," 86.
- <sup>37</sup> Drake, "Reconceptualizing Screen Performance," 87.
- <sup>38</sup> Krin Gabbard, *Jammin' at the Margins: Jazz and the American Cinema* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 6.
- <sup>39</sup> Gabbard, *Jammin' at the Margins*, 4.
- <sup>40</sup> Garber, "Fabulating Jazz," 78.
- <sup>41</sup> Gabbard, *Jammin' at the Margins*, 138–59.
- <sup>42</sup> On the biopic and its representational work, see Simone Varriale, "Rockin' the Jazz Biopic: Changing Images of African American Musicians in Hollywood Biographical Films," *Jazz Research Journal* 6, no. 1 (2012): 27–46.
- <sup>43</sup> Andrew Goodwin, *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993), 75.
- <sup>44</sup> Carol Vernallis, *Experiencing Music Video* (New York: Columbia, 2004), 3–5.
- <sup>45</sup> Sally Stockbridge, "Music Video: Questions of Performance, Pleasure and Address," *Continuum* 1, no. 2 (1987): without pagination; repr. online, accessed 16 August 2013, <http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/1.2/Stockbridge.html>. As she acknowledged, Stockbridge also drew on the work of Jane Feuer on the Hollywood musical.

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<sup>46</sup> Alf Björnberg, “Structural Relationships of Music and Images in Music Video,” *Popular Music* 13, no. 1 (January 1994): 51–74. The theme of interrogating the relationship between image and music/sound has been a widespread one. The work of Michel Chion provides a good example in this instance. See Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Vernallis’s comments in the new *Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics* seem to sketch out a reframing of this relationship in terms of music and image as partners, or what she calls a “hyper-being.” Carol Vernallis, “Music Video’s Second Aesthetic,” in *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*, ed. John Richardson, Claudia Gorbman, and Carol Vernallis (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 439–40.

<sup>47</sup> Vernallis, *Experiencing Music Video*, 28–37.

<sup>48</sup> Lori Burns and Jada Watson, “Subjective Perspectives through Word, Image and Sound: Temporality, Narrative Agency and Embodiment in the Dixie Chicks’ Video ‘Top of the World,’” *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 3–37.

<sup>49</sup> Lori Burns and Jada Watson, “Spectacle and Intimacy in Live Concert Film: Lyrics, Music, Staging, and Film Mediation in P!nk’s *Funhouse Tour*,” *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 7, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): 103–40.

<sup>50</sup> See, for instance, Anthony Gritten and Elaine King, eds., *Music and Gesture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), and *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> Jane W. Davidson, “Visual Perception of Performance Manner in the Movements of Solo Musicians,” *Psychology of Music* 21, no. 2 (April 1993): 103–13.

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, Kaori Kurosawa and Jane W. Davidson, “Nonverbal Behaviours in Popular Music Performance: A Case Study of *The Corrs*,” *Musicae Scientiae* 9, no. 1 (March 2005), 111–36. Jane W. Davidson, “‘She’s The One:’ Multiple Functions of Body Movement in a Stage Performance by Robbie Williams,” in *Music and Gesture*, ed. Gritten and King, 208–25.

<sup>53</sup> Laura Leante, “Multimedia Aspects of Progressive Rock Shows: Analysis of the Performance of *The Musical Box*,” in *Proceedings of the International Conference “Composition and Experimentation in British Rock 1966–1976”* [Cremona, October 2005],

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ed. Gianmario Borio and Serena Facci, special issue, *Philomusica Online*, accessed 7 December 2014, <http://www-3.unipv.it/britishrock1966-1976/pdf/leanteeng.pdf>.

<sup>54</sup> The Gritten and King volumes cited above represent a good starting point to this literature.

<sup>55</sup> Mark Doffman, “Jammin’ an Ending: Creativity, Knowledge, and Conduct Among Jazz Musicians,” *twentieth-century music* 8, no. 2 (September 2011), 203–25.

<sup>56</sup> Martin Clayton, “Observing Entrainment in Music Performance: Video-based Observational Analysis of Indian Musicians’ *Tanpura* Playing and Beat Marking,” *Musicae Scientiae* 11, no. 1 (2007), 27–59.