

A Comparative Discussion about the Issues Surrounding ‘Jazz Studies’ within America’s Formal Education System.

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Abstract

Early methods of learning jazz between c.1920 – c.1945 were relatively informal, consisting of aural imitation during one-to-one lessons and performance experience at live events. Since the first degree program was founded in 1947, however, the rise of institutionalised jazz education resulted in jazz education becoming more formalised, systematised and structured, adhering to the concept of a canon and the same pedagogies used to teach classical music. A plethora of teaching/learning methods and materials followed suit, but in recent year’s critics of these academic programs claim that many of the procedures, methods, and materials used have abandoned the aural-imitative tradition and as a consequence, creativity and identity are becoming lost.

By referencing a variety of literature, the aim of this paper is to address the question of whether or not ‘Jazz Studies’ belong in the formal pedagogical setting of the American Institution, or within the realms of a more informal learning environment. My conclusion is that the institutionalisation of jazz is not entirely to blame for the way in which jazz teaching has become standardised and that subsequently both the formal and the informal communities made their own contributions to the way this genre is taught today. Throughout this paper there develops an underlying belief that to become a successful, capable and cultivated jazz musician, one must be motivated to self-study, attend private tuition and partake in ensembles that will ultimately make them the best musician that they can be.

Key Words: Jazz, Pedagogy, Canon, Education, Tradition

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Background and Context.

Each of us who study, perform, or listen to jazz appear to know what this music is, and what it represents as both a musical and social framework. However, a wide body of research demonstrates that a definitive and authoritative knowledge of what creativity is, how it relates to jazz and the best means by which to acquire it are profoundly debated among and within various communities. Common discourses around the genre generally acknowledge that jazz has its roots as an aural tradition. However, scholarship on what leads to ‘identity’ within jazz, and how the process of acquisition might best be nurtured, is not well developed (Deluke, 2008). Ultimately, we are still unsure about the best way to teach jazz performance and theory. What we do know, however, is that within the academic institution the introduction of formal ‘jazz studies’ programs has substantially affected the direction of the music as well as its reach (Gioia, 2011).

Jazz scholarship has witnessed the development of an increasingly unorthodox stance within the past thirty years as the institutionalisation of jazz has gained momentum (Prouty, 2012). Krin Gabbard makes the following point in his 1995 edition ‘Jazz Among the Discourses’:

Directly or indirectly, all the essays in this book and its companion volume ‘Representing Jazz’, strongly argue that jazz has entered the mainstream of the American academy. The institutionalisation of jazz is consistent with the current demystifications of the distinctions between high and low culture, with the growing trend toward multiculturalism in university curricula, and with the postmodern cachet now enjoyed by marginal arts and artists (Gabbard, 1995, p. 1).

The above statement is supported by the reality that, today there are more than one-hundred-and-twenty American colleges and universities where students can study degree programs in jazz, thus providing academics with a unique opportunity to study the process of institutionalisation and its effects on creativity in pedagogy and performance (Harris, 2014). Once upon a time, however, these institutions never existed. In writing an opening dialogue to John Fordham’s book *Jazz*, Sonny Rollins states:

Nothing like this was available for my generation when we were growing up. We had to pick up what we could when we could and where we could. It was mainly recordings in those days until we were old enough to be admitted to nightclubs (Rollins, 1994, p. 2).

Overview of Topics Covered.

The distinct cultural heritage of jazz and its history of informal teaching and learning techniques that Rollins refers to, poses questions as to the ways in which this style of music has been interpreted by modern day school and university curricula. Does classroom jazz education restrict the pool of creativity? What past factors influence how jazz professors develop their curriculum? Has jazz teaching become uncreative and standardised producing musical ‘clones’, or is it vibrant, inventive and able to foster individual identities? Ultimately, can both informal and formal tuition settings work together to foster a ‘better’, more effective, learning process?

The variety of dimensions within jazz education at present provide us with an opportunity to engage with the changing cultural status of jazz and the debates currently surrounding it. In the comparative chapters that follow, this paper will explore the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of jazz in the institutionalised setting, and come to conclusions about whether such academic programs belong within the American academy, or whether a return to the learning methods used in the early 1900’s would be more beneficial to aspiring musicians. I will use the terms ‘jazz in the academy’, ‘jazz in the educational institution’ and ‘formal jazz studies’ in this paper interchangeably, however, all are intended to describe the study of jazz as part of America’s school and university curriculum. I will be using a variety of literature to discuss personal accounts of teaching and learning jazz in both the informal and formal environment and further question the ways in which this creative art has been interpreted by industry professionals, music teachers and music students. Finally, I will conclude with thoughts on the future of creativity and identity in relation to jazz in the academy and the informal community. One hypothesis underlying these discussions is that: to reach the highest standards of musical performance, several years of sustained and focused learning and ample performance experience are required within both and formal, informal, private and public learning environments.

CHAPTER ONE: CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING INSTITUTIONALISED ‘JAZZ STUDIES’.

1.1 The Emerging Accessibility to Jazz.

There are few discourses within jazz as highly debated among jazz communities over the last half-century, than that of the discourse concerning jazz within the educational institution and the means by which it is taught (Prouty, 2012). The majority of music educators no longer view jazz a passing style; instead, jazz is recognised as both a highly intricate, expressive genre and an appropriate topic for serious study (Harris, 2014). The following passage from the introduction to *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies*, a 2004 anthology of jazz scholarship summarises this changeover:

Our new century is witnessing the development of jazz studies as a new field in the liberal arts curriculum at the college and graduate school levels. For at least fifty years there have been maverick efforts as well as established classes tracing jazz's beginnings and development . . . What is new here is the conviction that jazz is not just for players and aficionados who can count the horns and boxes of the music "from Bunk to Monk," as the saying goes (O'Meally et al, 2004, p. 1)

Here, the authors highlight a divide between the self-taught/performance-based approach and the contemporary textbook style institutional approach, which is generally referred to as 'jazz studies'. The writers are careful to not be too dismissive of the institutional approach, but their comments do pertain a suggestive sense of "our approach is better, leave it to us" (Prouty, 2012). Perspectives such as this are common within the walls of esteemed jazz clubs, yet they are by no means the majority, since many from outside the capability of playing jazz find the idea of jazz studies in an academic setting both admirable and intriguing (Guilfoyle, 2009). Furthermore, this new "conviction that jazz is not just for players and aficionados" highlights a fresh way of looking at the jazz community. It is a view that departs from a 'stiff upper lip' attitude that focuses only on the people closest to the music's production to one where anyone from anywhere is welcome to learn jazz (Prouty, 2012).

1.2 A Summary of the Current Jazz Pedagogy used in the Educational Institution.

At present, more and more jazz musicians define themselves as not within 'traditional paradigms', but in conscious resistance to them. (Prouty, 2012, p. 3) This is interesting when one considers that many of the resources for learning jazz, such as lead sheets for song standards, are of a traditional nature (Beale, 2000). The modern jazz education setting runs a 'limited' scope of programs, from small jazz appreciation clubs to advanced professional training programs, often housed within established schools of music, such as Berklee (Prouty, 2012, p. 46). In the American educational institution, pedagogy often places some attention on the concept of the ensemble (though big bands still form the core of most university-level programs) however, the primary emphasis is placed on detailed coursework in improvisation, arranging/composition, jazz history, and other areas (ibid). As an example, below is a table detailing the module contents of the only undergraduate 'jazz studies' course at Stony Brook University (USA). All data was attained and directly quoted from the institution's website (Stony-Brook, 2016).

Stony Brook University – BMus – With Jazz Studies. Module Content Overview (Stony-Brook, 2016)

‘The minor in Jazz studies is designed to provide undergraduate students with a foundation in music theory and history that incorporates a jazz perspective in addition to the opportunity to perform in a jazz ensemble. It is particularly well-suited to students interested in developing their skills as jazz musicians while pursuing a broader education in music history and theory. Coursework includes an introduction to the study of music, courses in improvisation, music theory, the history of jazz, two semesters performing in a jazz ensemble, and a choice of courses on specialized topics, including American music, popular music, and music’s of other western and non-western traditions.’

MUS 189: Beginning Jazz Improvisation	MUS 220/221: Musicianship	MUS 267: Jazz Combo	MUS 264: Big Band Jazz Ensemble	MUS 308: History of Jazz
‘Beginning study of jazz theory, nomenclature, and chord-scale relationships as they relate to the playing of improvised jazz solos. In-class performances and transcription analysis are an integral part of the course	‘Sight-singing, dictation, and transcription of more complex melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic material, including diatonic chord progressions’	‘Arranging and extended improvising skills for the small jazz ensemble. Emphasis on in-class performances, transcription assignments, and learning standard jazz compositions.’	‘Study and performance of works for jazz ensemble. Grading is based on attendance.’	‘Historical survey of jazz styles from their antecedents in the late 19th century and early ragtime and blues, through New Orleans jazz, swing, bebop, "cool" jazz, "free" jazz, fusion, and Latin styles. Guidance in the appreciation of jazz and related musics, musical analysis of representative works, and demonstrations of improvisation. Jazz as an expression of cultural pluralism.’

In addition, jazz students from a variety of schools and universities must often complete additional coursework in Western art music history and theory, as well as applied study on their instrument(s), all of which is often a major complaint among both students and teachers (Prouty, 2012). Is this effective? Is there *still* a bias towards classical ideologies? At the highest levels, small numbers of post-university jazz students perform at a level comparable to many professional jazz musicians, and students from such programs often find employment with professional musicians (ibid). More often, however, students emerging from such programs must make their own way in an increasingly denser, competitive and economically challenging jazz scene (Goodrich, 2008).

1.3 The Emphasis on the Jazz Canon.

So, it transpires that jazz courses, such as the one at Stony Brook do give students *some* opportunities to perform. Why then should critics of jazz in the academy have reason to question the ‘variety’ of performance pedagogies on offer? The pedagogies above represent a departure from the traditional aural learning nature of jazz, with many of the new ways of transmitting knowledge about jazz tending to focus on the “teachable” aspects, such as theory and history (Beale, 2000). Among other things, this approach results in a premium being placed on having an analytical understanding of ‘the great’ jazz

improvisers (such as Tatum and Davis). However, this leads to the possibility that through adopting particular ways of teaching the traditional aspects of jazz, the musicians that study for long periods of time in this context end up playing a kind of music, different to what they studied, and either need to retrain with a modern community of jazz musicians, or perform a different style of music. (Gatien, 2009).¹ Historian Gary Tomlinson speaks of the formalisation of jazz, saying that the genre has followed an American notion of ‘high culture’ to build a jazz canon and that this respected notion of a canon now informs, yet restricts, the majority of pedagogical methods associated with Jazz Education (Tomlinson, 1996). The concept of ‘canon’ is quite broad. A dictionary definition of the term reads: ‘A canon is ‘a body of rules, principles or standards accepted as axiomatic and universally binding in a field of study or art’ (RH-Dictionary, 2016). Tomlinson explains that in his opinion ‘canonical construction, largely through its ‘exclusionary nature’, results in a narrowing of what can be studied and how it can be taught (Tomlinson, 1996, p. 76) In Tomlinson’s observations, the canon which underpins jazz courses around America features ...

.... exemplars of timeless aesthetic value instead of being understood—as the European works next door should also be understood but too rarely are—as human utterances valued according to the dialogical situations in which they were created and are continually recreated. (Tomlinson, 1996, pp. 76-77)

David Ake, a scholar, lecturer and accomplished pianist also shares this fear. Ake examines the canonical pedagogical methods used by the institution to study John Coltrane’s music. Ake articulates how particular facets of jazz lend themselves very naturally to formal study while others do not (Ake, 2002). According to Ake, work produced early on by Coltrane in the 1940’s is ‘teachable’ (lending itself more easily to analysis and thus can be systematised) while from his later ‘avant-garde’ period, his work is largely ignored (ibid., p.145). It becomes apparent that realistically, only Coltrane’s earlier work fits into the ideological mold of an American model for formal music education. Ake concludes with two thoughts. Firstly: when the institution selectively excludes the late work of Coltrane a type of musical ‘half-truth’ is ‘passed on from teacher and institution to student’ (Ake, 2002, p. 145). The second conclusion is that the tendency to teach Jazz in pedagogical ways associated with teaching classical music results in a restricted comprehension of what jazz actually is in America today (ibid., p. 145).

In expressing a comparable concern about seeing the jazz canon as only a fixed collection of past accomplishments for study and preservation, Jarrett rhetorically asked ‘When did jazz become a theory thing, not a process; a package, not an experience?’ (Jarrett, 1996 in Gatien, 2009 p.101) Jarrett suggests that within the educational institution there is an over emphasis placed on learning finite theoretical

¹ This is of course highly dependent on the academic institution in question, because whilst in some institutions performance studies are only given so many hours a week of teaching time, other institutions place much more emphasis on musicianship and live performance.

knowledge and that canon-building has seriously changed the traditional approach to learning (Jarrett, 1996, p. 36). Jarrett continues by saying: ‘Jazz is about closeness to the material, a personal dance with the material, not the material itself’ (ibid., p.36). Jarrett’s opinions, unfortunately, do not then link to the role of jazz in the institution however American musicologist Robert Walser does make a relation. He makes the point that the current methods of transmitting and analysing jazz within the academy that have been adopted from ways of teaching Western art music, fail in helping us understand jazz (Walser, 1999, p. 359). Furthermore, jazz education’s adoption of formal/traditional pedagogies has been condemned by the informal community for not stepping up to innovate ‘old-fashioned’ ideologies in formal music education (Gatien, 2009).

Ronan Guilfoyle, a lecturer in music, opts to defend the nature of knowledge filtration within the institution:

In music schools we tell students that you must learn X amount of information in X amount of weeks, but of course students are always of differing abilities and may have different life circumstances, and while one student may absorb the information fully, another may struggle. In western society we have developed a system of education which is geared to educate the many rather than the individual. While this is ideal for certain subjects (science and math’s for example) it is less than ideal for music. But for better or for worse, this is the structure we have and the one we have to deal with.

Jazz school courses are staffed and run by professional jazz musicians. These are musicians who deal with the realities of playing the music, and who are aware of the skills necessary to survive in the professional milieu.

And it is largely these same musicians who decide the curricula for the schools – so the information that is provided is largely a body of information – harmonic, technical and rhythmic as well as repertoire – generally agreed by most professionals to be part of the essential toolkit of the contemporary jazz musician. If you discard the academic model, you must also discard many of the students - there is no other way to educate larger groups of people efficiently (Guilfoyle, 2009)

Guilfoyle makes a very strong case for jazz education within the institution, however he does not deny that although the traditional aspects of jazz have gained recognition and deemed worthy of studying, they have also become a study of accomplishments from the past, regarded as “canonically significant” and not easily replicable (Gatien, 2009, p. 100). Similarly to Jarret, self-taught guitarist Pat Metheny has also expressed apprehension towards the canonically limited syllabus’ often found in schools and universities across America (Gatien, 2009).

The attempts to make jazz something more like classical music, like baroque music for instance, with a defined set of rules and regulations and boundaries and qualities that MUST be present and observed and respected at all times, have always made me uncomfortable’ (Metheny, 2011).

1.4 Mass Produced Pedagogical Resources and their Effect on Creativity.

To aid the type teaching that is coherent with methods used to teach classical music, a vast range of teaching/learning materials and utilities have been developed. These include: computer audio tracking software, jazz history/appreciation texts, jazz theory books, jazz play-along recordings, jazz charts. The majority of these texts appeal to students through using popular melodies and grooves, however many of these resources are written with specific aims, such as accessing important historical works, developing improvisational skill and ultimately developing a sense of the jazz canon (Gatien, 2009). If we choose to agree with Metheny's view, then it becomes apparent that these jazz education pedagogies and their accompanying materials are the product of an unquestioning adoption of classical musicological practices and as Walser states, 'music that can be analysed according to pre-existing academic methods and ideals receives the 'lion's share' of attention in institutional settings' (Walser, 1993, pp. 347-348).

According to Andrew Bowie, lecturer in philosophy and music at Royal Holloway, University of London, in parallel to the emerging educational practices highlighted above, and the growth of supporting materials/utilities, the history of harmonic and melodic practice in jazz, can be viewed as a continuum of steadily increasing complexity from the beginning of the twentieth century right up until the 1970/80's (Bowie, 2009, p. 179). 'Steadily' is a key word here, and similarly the development of jazz education has taken a lengthy period of almost seventy/eighty years.² Bowie further highlights that as 'jazz studies' continue to become institutionalised and the resources for playing, listening to and learning jazz become ever more readily available, it is easier to play at a high level previously only attainable by a select few (Bowie, 2009, p. 185). However, Bowie suggests that the widespread consequence is a general improvement in technical competence but a diminishment in creativity and identity within the pool of emerging musicians (Bowie, 2009, p. 186). Bowie goes on to say that these changes in the educational approach to modern genres that have led to previously "marginal" styles, like jazz, being taken more seriously in this way, can threaten to defuse its critical potential, by creating imitated norms that may inhibit new ways of playing, lead to conformism and create clones (ibid). Writing in 1995, jazz pianist and academic Ben Sidran likewise demonstrates a comparable feeling of concern:

In many ways, these are the best of times and the worst of times for jazz. On the one hand, music schools are turning out thousands of thoroughly 'prepared' young players who, at an earlier age, are better versed in the grammar and idioms of jazz than ever before. The recorded evidence speaks eloquently of the "success" of our

² Although, the length of transition in terms of musical complexity may at first seem like a long time, one should remember that what had taken 200 years in Western art music, a development from basic diatonic structure to one of extreme chromaticism, had taken roughly only 40 years in jazz.

education system On the other hand, most of the new jazz prodigies don't sound like anybody ... Why doesn't today's education lead to the development of style? (Sidran, 1995)

Noted jazz musician, arranger and instructor Bob Brookmeyer concurred with Sidran's opinion, when speaking about the obstacles faced when writing for modern day jazz musicians: "All of us (jazz composers) have structural problems with solos, where to put them, how they belong, because the soloists have become so generic" (Ramsey, 1999, p. 92). Both Sidran and Brookmeyer address an expansive concern that the formation of an authoritative, canonical, systematised way of comprehending jazz has prompted a loss of musical identity and uniqueness.

1.5 Immitation vs Innovation.

So, why apparently does today's formal Jazz Education not lead to the development of originality? In 2007, Jazz pianist and educator Michael Cain, stated that "... I found that jazz pedagogy in the academy and jazz pedagogy among practitioners, as I came to know it, often had very little in common" (Cain, 2007, p. 35). One of the particular styles of teaching that Cain picks up on is the 'imitation via transcription' technique. Cain suggests that whereas in the past gone by, training musicians learnt melodies aurally; today the availability of and teacher's dependence on pre-written transcriptions has stifled imagination and led to many musicians sounding like clones of their 'idols' (ibid) Cain's opinion is especially common in non-academic communities and is based on the belief that the older masters of Jazz, (Davis, Tatum, Peterson e.t.c) were helped by the fact that they did not attend 'jazz school' and thus their originality was affirmed by their contrasting knowledge.

Much of the literature discussing issues of creativity, identity and originality within the academy generally acknowledges the increasingly common phenomenon of the technically excellent player, who is essentially just playing 'borrowed' material learned from another great soloist (Aleinikoff, 2012). This process frequently occurs when students all learn from the same pre-written transcriptions in an attempt to imitate virtuosic solos and quickly achieve an 'authentic' sound. Scoring software such as Sibelius has made this much easier, and Audacity allows one to slow down a track so that every detail can be heard. The result, according to some skeptics, is a reduced need for innovation. It is indeed true that many musicians in their interpretations today have adopted musical gestures of considerable sophistication and complexity developed by musicians such as Art Tatum, Bud Powell and Bill Evans (Beale, 2000). For example, recordings of Evans continue to inspire younger pianists including Taylor Eigsti, Bill Charlap, Jason Moran, and Jamie Cullum (Deluke, 2008). The author James Lincoln Collier says:

‘With students all over the United States being taught more or less the same harmonic principles, it is hardly surprising that their solos tend to sound much the same. It is important for us to understand that many of the most influential players developed their own personal harmonic schemes, very frequently because they had little training in theory and were forced to find it their own way (Collier, 1993, p. 155)

David Guilfoyle, a lecturer in music, goes on to label this ideology as the ‘noble savage syndrome’, and critically states that Lincoln’s argument “is like suggesting that if you want to become a writer it would be better to be illiterate and figure out the rules of English yourself, rather than go to school and be shown great writing of the past, be taught how to read and how spelling, grammar and syntax work” (Guilfoyle, 2009).

1.6 How can Pedagogy Enhance Creativity and Preserve Stylistic Trends?

On the contrary, Eli Aleinikoff, a masters graduate in Music Studies from Columbia University suggests that jazz is naturally a genre that allows for and debatably even encourages imitation of the great soloists, ‘both as a part of the effort to preserve stylistic trends from earlier eras and to the extent that imitation aids in the development of a musician’s personal, creative voice’ (Aleinikoff, 2012). Aleinikoff then suggests that jazz has always been, and always will be, ‘peopled by a few innovators and many imitators. The imitators either find a personal wrinkle for themselves within the canon created by the innovators, or they just regurgitate the surface gestures of the great ones’ (Aleinikoff, 2012, p. 62). Aleinikoff goes on to say that improvisers, young and old, rely heavily on the works of the ‘jazz greats’ which act as a pool of material for any performer to dip in and out of. (ibid).

In a ‘jazz summer school’ speech, Branford Marsalis, a highly respected saxophonist explains that improvisation is ‘not really about making up your own ideas any more than speaking English is about making up new words’ (Marsalis, 2011). Marsalis picks up on the “jazz as a language” metaphor which as of late has become a popular figure of expression in jazz pedagogy. This metaphor accurately describes improvisation as a vocabulary; a vocabulary that can only be memorised by sharing a set of musical ideas. ‘Students of jazz develop a vocabulary by memorising the work of their predecessors, whose improvised solos as repositories of “words” and “phrases” (Marsalis, 2011). Overall, Marsalis’ view is that accurate imitation is not necessarily a negative skill to possess, and there is still recognition to be given; much in the same way that the spectacular art forgery is admired for its attention to detail and striking resemblance. But is the act of imitation more questionable now because the means that allow to it to happen are more readily available within the educational institution? It is worth considering that perhaps the institution isn’t entirely to blame since a person could still access many of the resources used by the educational institution to teach themselves jazz outside of the classroom via the internet.

1.7 Does the Institution Prepare Musicians for the ‘Real World Jazz Scene’?

Nevertheless, the skill of being able to imitate a virtuosic solo using a written transcription deserves credit. However, when it comes to preparing musicians for the ‘Real World Jazz Scene’ it becomes evident that educators must strive towards establishing students with a balance between acquiring the technical means to express oneself through imitating pre-written music, and simultaneously being capable of finding a way of playing that is one’s own. In modern popular music, the concept of ‘feeling’ is a prevailing one, but can it be taught (Beale, 2000)? Answering a question like this requires resources from areas of anthropology, sociology and philosophy and would deviate too far away from issues surrounding the institutionalisation of Jazz; For the purposes of this piece of writing I will acknowledge that students from the realm of the academy who are focused on ‘authenticity’ have been criticised for overlooking ‘feeling’ and substance in favour of raw technical prowess. These are all qualities that are, according to industry professionals, an absolute necessity (Prouty, 2008).

To illustrate the consequence of a technically advanced but creatively restrained musician, Cain makes a comparison between the audition processes he has experienced as an expert jazz performer with the auditioning procedure used in university-based jazz study programs. When combined, his observation reveals that although the two processes are linked somehow through a shared musical heritage, but they are not recognisably related (Gatien, 2009). Cain says:

.... no jazz school would consider auditioning students the way Jack DeJohnette and Robin Eubanks audition their players, and yet they are two musicians most jazz schools would want their graduates to work with
(Cain, 2007, p. 36).

Whilst Sidran earlier asserted that ‘Jazz Studies’ are training up jazz musicians to be “thoroughly prepared” (Sidran, 1995, p. 3), Cain brings a real life perspective and shows us that this ‘preparation’ does not always set one up for the reality of the ever changing professional domain of jazz. This detachment between the academic approach to teaching jazz and the methods used by older, more experienced jazz practitioners can be partially interpreted as a result of the route in which the academic study of jazz became ‘formalised’. This divide resonates within the longstanding tensions between academic and non-academic constituencies in musical study, tensions that are unlikely to go away as jazz programs continue to develop (Gatien, 2009).

1.8 Summary.

All of the opinions and observations that Ake, Brookmeyer and Bowie have made could simply be an issue of older ‘wiser’ musicians not liking the fact that young musicians have the means to access and demonstrate the intricacies of jazz so easily. Or, could it be true that actually, the pedagogy of institutional jazz education actually stifles creativity? Giving jazz the chance to be taught ‘formally’ has undoubtedly altered the type of music people can engage with, the kinds of ensembles, instruments, histories, and theories that are offered. However, it has not generously altered the ways in which people learn and transmit music with the education institution (Gatien, 2009). Taking only into consideration this argument, we could simply conclude that the institution has got it completely wrong. However, this conclusion would not explain coherently what jazz education actually does for music education and the way in which it has transmuted our thoughts on formal music education. Instead, it is useful to understand the circumstances under which jazz became formalised. If we know more about the ways in which jazz entered the educational institution, then we can achieve to see and understand a bigger and longer process happening (Gatien, 2009). With particular reference to Ken Prouty, writer of *Knowing Jazz: Community, Pedagogy, and Canon in the Information Age*, I will now address this process of formalisation in a historical context, in order to present some of the principal motivations behind the efforts to ultimately establish jazz as part of a broader musical tradition (Prouty, 2012).

Chapter Two: Putting the Past Into Perspective.

2.1 Summary of the Evolution of Formal Jazz Education.

In summary: Jazz was born over one hundred years ago as the reviled, absonant music of brothels, clubs and other places of ill-repute in New Orleans (Phelan, 2007). By the 1970s, the jazz community accepted that technology would change the music, yet most performers would have talked about the spread of synthesizers and keyboards, advances in electric guitars, and the impact of various other plugged-in devices on the stage (Gioia, 2011). In the gallant days of jazz fusion, where jazz musicians pranced around like class-a celebrities, few would have foretold the real technological revolution that would take place a generation later— but mostly offstage, in the ways music is taught, conceived, recorded, distributed, marketed, and shared (ibid). This is the jazz scene of the new millennium, where the music is evolving more slowly than everything surrounding it (ibid). Jazz progressively became part of the academy, and as we have learned, traditional ways of transmitting the music were and continue today to be changed, ‘compromised, or subverted to formal methods of instruction that fit more comfortably in the conventional western education environment’ (Karlsen & Vakeva, 2012, p. 53).

According to Prouty there are three identifiable periods of historical development in the literature of jazz education's history (Prouty, 2012). The first period, from the birth of jazz to c.1945, is usually treated as a kind of 'prehistoric era', with little or no records of pedagogical activities in jazz (Prouty, 2012, p. 48). 'Activities that did take place are treated as prototypical, positioned as events that, in the long run, served mainly as forerunners to later developments' (ibid). Secondly, there is a definitive change of thinking and chronological boundary drawn during the 1940's with the establishment of compulsory modern musical curriculums at a number of institutions, most notably North Texas State College (now UNT) and the Schillinger House in Boston (now Berklee); For many historians, this marks the birth of formal jazz education (ibid). The third and final period of historical Jazz Education was between the 1960s and 1980s and is widely acknowledged as a period of immense growth when the 'fledgling movement of the 1940s comes into its own' (Prouty, 2012, p. 48). Although within the annals of jazz education the specifics of organisational structure do vary, the timeline that has been described above is repeated frequently in historical accounts of the field (ibid).

One of the first recognisable jazz education programs appeared in North Texas State College and Schillinger House in the 1940's. But Why? Prouty suggests, it is likely that the increasingly professional and competitive jazz performance environment might have been a factor behind their establishment (Prouty, 2012, p. 53). This could suggest that the administration in the music department understood the economic stakes involved with the study of popular music, the enormous potential for trained musicians in this field as well as their own profitable gains. Dance-band music, a sub-genre of jazz, made for profitable business, and the establishment of a dance-band program at the school would serve as an enormous advantage in recruiting students to a school seeking a sense of upward mobility in the world of musical academia (Prouty, 2012). The fact that the school already had a student in place (M. E. "Gene" Hall) to institute such a program made matters easier.

The fundamental orientation of Hall's program was big-band music, a much more commercially attractive proposition than the styles that were emerging from New York at the time (ibid). Prior to the 1940s, countless musicians found not only employment in big bands but also opportunities to receive on-the-job training in music, any other training opportunities were scarce. After the war, schools had a ready market of musicians returning to civilian life after having served in military bands, and eligible for tuition benefits under the G.I. Bill. Thus, in the late 1940s, a program in "dance band" such as that at North Texas was well positioned to respond to these changes in the jazz world (ibid). As a result, we can see that a development of a jazz education program might not simply be a function of stylistic forward thinking, but a reflection of jazz's real-world economics.

2.2 An Early Need for Theoretical Learning Resources.

Another link between jazz-as-professional-practice and jazz education that Prouty notes, comes in the area of jazz theory, which we already know would later be regarded, by some, as being diametrically opposed to the aesthetic considerations of jazz improvisation (Prouty, 2012). A standout among the most controversial but necessary steps in creating academic jazz program was standardisation and formalisation of jazz music. Before the first academic jazz programs were introduced, musicians endeavored to create literature that clarified jazz in a formal way (Worthy, 2013).

Joseph Schillinger wrote and published his book, *The Schillinger System of Musical Composition* in 1941. This was one of the first textbooks of its kind and featured Schillinger's own methods of arranging and re-harmonising. It quickly became one of the most widely used jazz textbooks in America (Beale, 2000). Later, in 1953 George Russell published a book entitled *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*, which conveyed the now widely accepted theory that jazz chords and their extensions have corresponding scales that can be used for vertical improvisation (Worthy, 2013).³ In a review, Art Farmer said that the book "opens the door to countless means of melodic expression" (Harrison, 1991, p. 58). More and more people became interested in learning jazz and thus it became increasingly crucial to manufacture standardised resources (ibid). Early jazz educators such as Jamey Aebersold laid the groundwork for a more universal educational practice. His collection of "Play-A-Long" instructional books/CD's and CD collections which used Russell's chord-scale system, were an internationally renowned resource for jazz education. (Deluke, 2008). However, this set of textbooks and other published resources was characterised by a narrow core of material and emphasis on strict formalisation. Because the content of such books was filtered and restricted, harmonic progressions and voicings also became codified. For example chord progressions such as the 'ii-V-I' cadence and the twelve-bar blues were made out to be the most important (Beale, 2000).

This early publication of more theory-oriented materials aimed at anyone wishing to learn jazz continued to increase and increasing numbers of 'schooled players' began to enter the community; thus abstract theoretical constructs became more common in jazz, but were by no means universally applied or understood (ibid). For example, Coleman Hawkins, one of the most prominent of theory-based players on the jazz scene in the late 1920s, is often positioned as an alternative to a soloist such as Louis Armstrong, who displayed an improvisational bent toward blues and riff-based solo techniques (DeVeaux 1999, 84). Nevertheless, many musicians continued to study music theory with instructors in the Western art music tradition, and to apply such methods to jazz (Suber 1976, p.367).

³ 'Vertical Improvisation' is when a different scale is played down over each chord in a progression. 'Horizontal Improvisation' is where the same scale is used to play over multiple different chord changes.

What we are left with in the late 1950's is a situation where the increasingly intricate language of jazz improvisation was being related more directly to a theoretical understanding of music, leading to the development of a new knowledge economy of jazz. This tells us that there was a demand for more 'formal' ways of transmitting knowledge about jazz before the birth 'Jazz Studies' within the academy. The emergence of bebop necessitated an even more pressing need to function within this context (Prouty, 2012). The complex language of bebop became, in David Baker's words, the 'lingua franca' of contemporary jazz improvisation (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009). Although some would dispute this claim, particularly those who were and still are involved in the creation and performance of contemporary styles, with respect to jazz education today Baker's assessment is appropriate. Nearly every improvisational method on the market is comprised of concepts and/or patterns directly related to this style. Bebop was, like previous styles, grounded in the "aural-written" learning tradition outlined by Al Fraser, employing largely unwritten methodologies, an emphasis on imitation and elaboration of recordings, and at least a basic (and in reality, sometimes quite sophisticated) awareness of musical structures, arising from both jazz and Western art traditions (Fraser, 1983). Moreover, like previous forms, bebop gave rise to a certain amount of how-to methods and instructional aids. These, however, were largely produced too late, and their scattered occurrence and lack of coordinated approach to the music made them somewhat unrepresentative of the bebop language as it was emerging. In short, there was no one theoretical construct for bebop that large numbers of musicians could agree upon.

2.3 Paying Homage to Berklee and other institutions.

According to Ted Gioia in *The History of Jazz*, credible jazz musicians such as 'David Murray, Benny Green' and 'Rodney Franklin', were educated via the modern jazz education schooling system (Gioia, 2011, p. 380). Gioia reinforces the likely assumption that many academic environments such as colleges and universities have greatly benefited from 'early jazz schooling programs' because these programs serve as 'sources of talent' (ibid). Furthermore, this indicates that whilst, once upon a time, jazz studies were absent from the academic setting, they have now grown to be vibrant and in demand. Gioia writes: 'The most prominent of these environments, the Berklee College of Music, has risen from humble roots to become something of a Juilliard of jazz' (Gioia, 2011, p. 380).

Berklee is a name, renowned all over the world with a reputation for incredible facilities and a challenging student audition process. According to its most recent statistics, the institution accommodates 3,126 male undergraduates and 1,321 female undergraduates (Berklee COM, 2016). Furthermore, there are 329 ensemble and practice rooms available which have brought success to over 250 alumni Grammy winners (ibid).

Whilst in the years gone by, jazz has been a genre with delicate techniques that were spread informally by word of mouth, Berklee has transformed it into a systematised course, 'as though it were calculus or accounting' (Gioia, 2011, p. 380). Not only this, but courses such as these have broadened access to pedagogies that were once only available to a select few (ibid). Gioia writes:

This has influenced everything from the historical consciousness of today's performers to the way they phrase - increasingly with clean, crisp notes hit dead center with no bent edges or murky aftertaste. One is even tempted to divide jazz history into pre-Berklee and post-Berklee eras, a way of conceptualising the music that is no doubt simplistic yet represents a meaningful divide in the evolution of the art form (Gioia, 2011, p. 380)

This demonstrates how institutions such as Berklee have, without a doubt, changed the way in which the broad majority of jazz practitioners acquire knowledge (Gioia, 2011, p. 380).

2.4 When Jazz Studies Weren't Made to Feel Welcome.

To include 'Jazz Studies' into the curriculum of American schools and universities, a compromise was required (Gioia, 2011). The formal education system was required to acknowledge that jazz was a subject worth learning about. However, this acknowledgment presented a variety of challenges and took a considerable amount of time to implement. 'The Etude' was a very popular American music teachers journal, and in 1924 a particular article attempted to deal with the issues the institution had with 'jazz studies' well before it had even happened. The text assuredly said that addressing the 'jazz problem' should not be interpreted as an advocacy of jazz. The whole article was particularly derogatory towards jazz; the only positive aspects that the magazine's editor seemed to endorse was that the number of students playing wind instruments had increased because of an interest in the genre (Walser, 1999, pp. 41 - 54). Roughly fifteen years later, a widely used university textbook, published in 1941 stated that:

Jazz and art music are at opposite poles of the musical earth. In most respects they contradict one another... educationally they are antagonistic... (jazz) tears down what the music educator is trying to build up; and it is because the pupil hears so much more jazz than real music that his artistic tastes tends to deteriorate.

(Dykema and Gehrekens, 1941, p. 203)

Surprisingly, even during the middle of 1960s when more of society was accepting of jazz, many in the academy would try to justify the exclusion of jazz from the curriculum by suggesting it was a music only for delinquents. Harry Allen Feldman writes,

Training a boy to blow a horn no longer ensures that he will not blow a safe. It might blow him into delinquency, for who can deny the close relationship between jazz and delinquency (. . .) How can one justify the serious discussion on the college level of a subject which, in the words of Professor Ernest Bacon of

Syracuse University makes an art out of vulgarity; is monotonous and pornographic, and often outrageously funny; and is replete with intellectual and cultural pretensions (Feldman, 1964, p. 61)

From 1997, another, more personal example is documented by the highly esteemed saxophonist Benny Golson. It reads:

When I went to college, I could have been expelled for playing jazz. The official attitude about jazz was not good then. I had to practice my saxophone in the laundry room of the dormitory at night because I could not enter college and practice the saxophone as a part of the studies. I had to major on the clarinet. It seems to me that it was a European thing they were trying to uphold (Fisher, 1997, pp. 11 - 15)

2.5 Chapter Summary

The idea of including jazz into what was already a very strict and narrow curriculum was clearly controversial. The move faced much criticism early on; Charles Beale writes in the Oxford Companion to Jazz: ‘The need to justify jazz education as worthy of institutional and cultural attention led to a clear, if in retrospect slightly limited, definition of a single jazz style and related set of skills’ (Beale, 2000, p. 759). In the context of all the quotes above, jazz comes across as being very isolated from the established traditions of musical academia. This could either be due to its apparent vulgarity and profanity or through an ignorant way of viewing ‘new music’ as unnecessary. Ken Prouty makes an interesting point that “the European traditions of teaching classical music were believed to be of higher artistic quality than African-American tradition thus, it is difficult to separate from the widely held assumption that composed music (well-composed music) was of superior quality to improvised music” (Prouty, 2008). This ‘rejection of jazz could be seen as one manifestation of a larger rejection of improvised traditions within American musical academia’ (ibid). To overcome this rejection, jazz educators based their pedagogies for the teaching of jazz improvisation on methods more common to higher musical education, drawing upon the unquestioning influential power of the canon itself; perhaps this is why today we see many jazz studies programs with limited, uncreative syllabus’ (Prouty, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE: TRANSMITTING JAZZ ‘THE OLD WAY’

3.1 Using Old Methods To Support New Pedagogies.

From looking at the progression of jazz education, we can see that in some ways the formalisation of jazz pedagogies emerged from the demand for theory orientated resources, but also because it suited the prevailing economic desires of the academic institutions involved. From another perspective, we can see that the actual implementation faced considerable amounts of backlash from even the

institutions themselves. Today, the impact of Jazz Education has often and justifiably been framed negatively by those not part of the educational institution. Nevertheless its very presence (accompanied by all of the debates) has probably informed the kinds of approaches to music education that prompted studies by pedagogists, (for example, Lucy Green's book titled 'Music, Gender Education'). However, for the work of Green to have greater significance on formal jazz training, we must place current instructional methods into context with the methods of transmission depended upon by jazz before it became part of the educational institution. In this final chapter, I will look at a common learning method used by the oldest practitioners of Jazz. It is my hope that by being better informed about the resources and methods used by them, institutions may be willing to place less emphasis on 'spoon-feeding' theory from books and pre-written transcriptions and instead give students more room to discover their own musical identities by learning through doing. It is not my belief that the institution has 'got it wrong', but perhaps that it has held back too much, and been bound by the restraints of classical teaching ideologies.

3.2 The Value of Learning From an Elder

The 'old way', the relaxed, colloquial way of transmitting jazz is largely recorded in personal records and oral histories. In the 1920's knowledge about jazz theory was conveyed via simple aural/visual learning methods. Students had limited access to printed music or theory books that systematised the process of developing fluency and therefore were left to learn by themselves (Gatien, 2009). There was little interaction between jazz students and jazz teachers although it was by no means unknown. Many occurrences of tuition tended to be private, in the form of a one-on-one lesson which was often prompted by an aspirational learner (ibid). There are numerous examples of youthful jazz musicians studying with older 'wiser' jazz masters. For example, Johnny Hodges studied under Sidney Bechet; Dizzy Gillespie gave insights to young bebop musicians; Lennie Tristano taught Lee Konitz and both Sonny Rollins' and John Coltrane's had tuition with Thelonious Monk (Beale, 2000).

Sonny Rollins refers to the developmental 'lessons' he had with Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk . In particular, he describes how these encounters always happened in the context of playing or rehearsing, but nonetheless, Rollins still links formal educational appraisal to them. In this quote, Rollins provides a description of his 'apprenticeship' with Monk:

Every day after school I would go to Thelonious Monk's place and practice with his band. He never really told me what to play, because I guess he respected my playing. But I learned a lot from Monk just hanging out with him (Rollins in Nisenson, 2000, p. 31).

Like Rollins, there are many jazz musicians who speak of their interactions with elders in ways that suggest a vacancy of ‘explicit’ instructions is better than a ‘saturated in theory’ approach to the sharing of expertise (Gatien, 2009). The conversation that follows between George Goodman and Sonny Rollins is a good example of this: “I had wanted to ask Rollins what he learned from Monk. He answered me in a word: ‘Everything.’ What was it that Monk taught him? ‘Nothing ...’ (Goodman, 1999, p. 84).

In order for Rollins to have those lessons with Monk, he would have needed to possess basic skills before hand. For example, Monk omitted to teach him melodic saxophone playing positions (Gatien, 2009). There are many other examples of when ‘jazz apprenticeships’ including Coleman Hawkins with Louis Armstrong with King Oliver, Don Byas with Art Tatum required the student to be that pre-musically developed at an earlier stage prior to ‘proper’ jazz tuition). On the other hand, it is clear that working with Monk still covered and transformed all aspects of Rollins’ musicianship. Similarly, when Coltrane was already ‘fairly’ musically adapt, he had lessons with Monk, and in a memoir Coltrane recalls how Monk would spontaneously begin to play anything, “maybe just one of his tunes”, over and over again until Coltrane would ‘get it’ (Porter, 2001, p. 108). It becomes conclusive that ‘learning through doing’ was a big factor in the methodology of this apprenticeship style relationship. Allowing students a lot of freedom to learn in a way that suits them whilst monitoring their progress was and is, with no doubt, beneficial.

There is ample anecdotal evidence in the form of biographies and trade journal interviews that suggest Rollins and Coltrane and a plethora of other jazz musicians seem to have acquired their virtuosic instrument mastery by primarily listening to and playing along with recordings. Furthermore, there are many accounts of eager hopeful musicians getting together outside of their place of education to listen to recordings they admired, as well as practice as an ensemble. The following quote is from Benny Golson who describes his informal experience with friends:

And it was an empirical process, trial and error, bouncing off of one another. We imitated others, but that wasn’t the total end. We were highly eclectic. How could there be anything else? You know, we bought the records.

We listened to them. I copied solos. But we used that as a basis, intuitively. We didn’t know what we were doing, but we set up our own infrastructure upon which we could build things in the future

(Golson and Merod, 1998, p. 37).

Naturally, by studying in this informal manner, other parts of musical trends were passed on. For example adopting fashion ideas, speech patterns The list is endless. Here, Sonny Rollins describes the idolisation of Coleman Hawkins and what he meant to him.

We used to follow Coleman Hawkins all around. He was my idol and just being in his company was thrilling for me. He lived in elegant style, driving a new Cadillac and always dressing really well. I admired his sense of

style almost as much as I did his playing... We learned a lot about what it meant to be a jazz musician)
(Nisenson, 2000, pp. 30 - 31).

Overall, the function of an older, 'wiser' teacher is not just about conveying knowledge of music but it can also be about teaching certain perspectives of culture. It also transpires that whether the apprenticeship relationship comes in the form of performing with elders in ensembles, or playing along to the accompaniment of recordings of those elders, the apprenticeship part of learning jazz, in particular the 'distanced relationship', is a key element to the transmission of knowledge and the building of self-identity.

CONCLUSION

4.1 Giving Credit to Jazz in the Academy

I naturally feel inclined to wonder how many of the 'jazz greats' would have utilised jazz studies at educational institutions had they been available to them? And if they had, would such a program have stifled their creative flow? Would John Coltrane have reproduced the sound of thousands of other saxophonists? Surely to believe this "would deny his innate genius and originality" (Guilfoyle, 2009). Undeniably, 'jazz has been changed from a socially learnt music to a high school art form' (Goodrich, 2008, p. 18). However, I am further inclined to give this change praise for forming not only a gap in educational institutions for 'other kinds' of music but also for provoking a much-needed debate about the ideas teachers are conveying, and how they are being taught.

Playing jazz has a lot to do with "finding your own voice," but is it so problematic to have a voice derived from that of the great players? Bowie raises some interesting points about this and the consequences of the increasing availability of learning materials within the educational institution. However, I think it is firstly important that we remember that not all institutions place so much emphasis on using standardised resources for learning jazz. Secondly, texts such as the ones by Joseph Schillinger (1941) were appearing well before the introduction of formal jazz programs and thus, whilst the institution may have amplified the emphasis on canonical jazz, it is not the institution that is entirely to blame. Furthermore, though students learning from the same resources may end up sounding similar to one another and to the artist studied, these materials can help give students new ideas about the numerous possibilities available to them. This gives reason to believe that there is still ample research needed if we are to know how creativity is best nurtured.

At present, I am left thinking that no matter how well regarded a jazz studies program may be, it cannot facilitate the manufacturing of creativity; however such programs could possibly speed up the journey

for the most unique students while simultaneously giving an engaging jazz education to students who may not be among the elite in terms of musicality, but who nevertheless have talent and wish to be part of the great ‘musical tradition’ of jazz. I am further inclined to say that the best method for becoming a well-rounded jazz musician is by learning through doing. Once a student understands the basic principles of each area of study, the most beneficial way forward is probably practical experience, and this is something that cannot easily be provided by any music institution.

4.2 Bridging the Divide

It is very unlikely that the divide between the informal and formal learning communities will go away as the number of jazz studies programs continue to grow. Possibly, the pool of musicians who learn jazz independently of the institution will get smaller because the amount of ‘Jazz Studies’ programs will increase and a complete return to pre-jazz education modes of teaching would be hard to implement; however, I do not believe the independent community is a demographic that will die out completely. The suggestions and questions offered by the informal jazz community are worthwhile opportunities and challenges to jazz educators, which will be likely to encourage more debates around the jazz canon and the ways in which it is filtered, conserved and distributed. These debatable issues that emerge from jazz education may involve educators addressing the challenge of giving students more space to nurture their own identity whilst also guiding them along the ‘right’ path. However, who is to say what the ‘right’ path is?

I conclude by saying that both the informal and formal learning environments have benefits each to their own, and that the institutionalised setting has a lot to offer to students who are new to the realms of jazz. However, in today's age where the harmonic and melodic possibilities of jazz improvisation are becoming more complex, it is obvious that many students will want to be more unique and creative. This desire, I do not think can be solely catered for by the canonical pedagogies of the institution. Aspirational jazz musicians who seek their own identity should first and foremost listen to and play along with recordings, and secondly, seek guidance from an experienced private mentor.

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