More than Music:

Jazz and Civil Rights

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In the introduction to *The Spirituals and The Blues,* James H. Cone states that "Black music must be lived before it can be understood. Black music is a living reality. And to understand it, it is necessary to grasp the contradictions inherent in black experience."[1] This sentiment is echoed in the words of jazz musician Charlie Parker, who said, "Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn."[2] Cone and Parker's quotations show a continuity across the Spiritual and the Blues, setting the foundation for Jazz to follow in musical, social, and political ways. I argue that this continuity lies in the function of all three musics, all of which are created through and for the survival of Black Americans, and that genres of Jazz, especially Bebop and Post-Bop (Free Jazz and Hard Bop) that emerged simultaneously with the Civil Rights Movement, are therefore functional music for the Black community.

To fully understand the social function of Jazz, one must first understand the foundations of Black American music by looking to the Spiritual and the Blues. The Spiritual functioned as a form of covert communication and expression; as enslaved Africans came from different tribes and cultures, the forced conversion to Christianity allowed people to communicate and organize (slaves were allowed to congregate for worship in private on Sundays) in a way that was previously impossible due to language barriers. Spirituals functioned to unite enslaved Africans under a common language and belief, and became a form of communication and an integral part of protest and revolution. This use of music as a form of communication is kept alive in the Blues, which Cone calls "the Secular Spiritual," adding that "the spiritual and [the] mood of the blues have roots stretching back to slavery days and even to Africa."[3] The Blues, like the

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[1] James H. Cone, *The Spirituals and The Blues: an interpretation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 13, 16.
[2] Carl Woideck, *Charlie Parker: His Music and His Life.* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998), vii.
[3] Cone, *Spirituals and the Blues*, 132.

Spiritual, is a preservation and confirmation of identity, humanity and culture for a group of people who have been objectified and forced into a subhuman status.

I believe that this foundation can also be traced in the genres of Jazz, especially in the 1960s. Some say that 1959 is the year that Jazz "died," however in the midst of the Civil Rights, Jazz was arguably more alive, and more connected to its roots, than it had ever been. Through analysis of music and the context in which it was created, I will show that Jazz, especially the genres of Bebop, Hard Bop and Free Jazz (or Avant-Garde) are closely connected to and deeply rooted in the traditions of the Spiritual and the Blues. Using Matthew D. Morrison's concept of Blacksound, I will analyze and discuss how this music is used to combat the racial structures that underpin the majority of popular music in America. I will also engage with Kalamu ya Salaam's categorization of "Great Black Music" to further deduce what and how these musics succeeded to communicate to Black communities.

The Spiritual and the Blues

In order to understand and, consequently, identify these roots in the mid-century genres of Bebop, Hard Bop and Free Jazz, I will begin with a discussion of the origins of the Spiritual and the Blues. The Spiritual was born from the forced integration of African people of different tribes and countries in combination with the forced conversion to Christianity. Enslaved people were not allowed any privacy except for worship. As a result, the Church became the only safe haven for Black people in America; it served as a place for worship, community, and revolution. The enslaved Africans' interpretations of the scripture preserved their knowledge that they were human, not products, and that no one could take that humanity away from them. This can be seen in the Spiritual genre. Scholar John Lovell "perceives three central themes within the Spiritual:

'(1) a desire for freedom,' (2) a 'desire for justice in the judgement upon his betrayers,' and (3) a 'tactic battle, the strategy by which he expected to gain an eminent future.'"[4] The use of scripture as Spiritual lyrics served as a form of covert rebellion, and Africans identified with biblical events that related to oppression, justice, and divine intervention, such as Moses freeing the Egyptians. The enslaved Africans adapted the literature and religion that they were forced to assimilate, which made the Spiritual music for worship, protest, and creative expression. This use of scripture to express themselves within a violently oppressive and racist structure is the foundation of African-American music and continues to the present day.

Like the Spiritual, the Blues is music that functioned for the survival of the Black community. While it is impossible to identify an exact origin date for the Blues, it is likely that the Blues began around the abolition of American Slavery. According to Cone, "As with the Spirituals, the Africanism of the blues is related to the *functional* character of West African music."[5] The subject matter of the Blues is derived directly from the lived experiences of Black people, rather than Biblical texts and interpretations. Post-Emancipation, the genre spread across the nation as Black people searched for the families from which they were separated, or moved to different states and cities seeking a new life. The sound and structure of the Blues imitated their lives: just as improvisation was a crucial part of the Blues, Black people had to improvise in order to survive. "Black music, then, is not an artistic creation for its own sake; rather it tells us about the *feeling* and *thinking* of an African people, and the kinds of mental adjustments they had to make in order to survive in an alien land."[6] As Cone states, Blues music of the late 19th and early 20th centuries is a reflection of the improvisation of life, the physical and mental

[4] Cone, *Spirituals and the Blues*, 25-26.
[5] Cone, *Spirituals and the Blues*, 132.
[6] Cone, *Spirituals and the Blues*, 132.

adjustments required to survive during times when it was difficult to find work, food, and a place to live, in addition to the constant, looming threat of death because of skin color.

The Blues sound, form, and ideology are some of the core elements of Jazz music, and follow the music even into today's Jazz. The Blues form reverses the Classical music roles of the subdominant and dominant chords, and the "Blues scale" is born from improvisation over this form. The "Blue Note" found in the Blues scale is used to bend between the 4th and 5th intervals, and functions to release or invoke emotion. Improvisation in the Blues and Jazz is an expression of life, the music serves as one of the only safe spaces for Black people to be themselves; Blues and Jazz are not just art for entertainment's sake. Kalamu ya Salaam notes this link between the Spiritual, Blues and Jazz when he quotes Franklin Rosemont's preface to Paul Garon's text on surrealism and Black music, *Blues and the Poetic Spirit*:

> It should be emphasized, since so many critics pretend not to notice it, that all authentic blues and jazz share a poetically subversive core, an explosive essence of irreconcilable against the shameful limits of an unlivable destiny… this revolt cannot be "assimilated" into the abject mainstream of American bourgeois/Christian culture except by way of dilution and/or outright falsification… Born in passionate revolt against the unlivable, blues and jazz demand nothing less than a new life.[7]

Blacksound and Great Black Music

In his article "Race, Blacksound, and the (Re)Making of Musicological Discourse" Matthew D. Morrison addresses "the ways in which popular entertainment, culture, and identity have been shaped by the sonic and embodied legacy of blackface minstrelsy in and beyond the United

[7] Kalamu ya Salaam, "It Didn't Jes Grew: The Social and Aesthetic Significance of African American Music." *African American Review* 29, no. 2 (July 1, 1995), 1.

States."[8] Morrison uses the concept of "Blacksound" to analyze and engage with American music of the 19th and 20th centuries, while simultaneously challenging the current musicological standard of discourse. Blacksound as a methodology acknowledges the racial hierarchy that exists in America and, through Blacksound, Morrison's musicological contribution acknowledges that the "laws and ritual customs that legalized the enslavement of African Americans structured race relations in the South and informed racist ideologies throughout the nation from the end of Reconstruction through the end of the Civil Rights era."[9] Morrison acknowledges that it is an oversight to analyze American music without acknowledgement of the circumstances in which Americans live.

Morrison's concept of "Blacksound" is applied to popular music that represents an image of Blackness as the White audience accepts Blackness to be. Morrison acknowledges the racial structures surrounding the music made amidst a minstrel tradition, where Black people were forced to conform to White society in order to gain any recognition or money (if one was lucky enough to gain such things). The minstrel sentiments might also apply in the context of ragtime and swing, genres which were prevalent when segregation and sharecropping restricted the lives of many Black people. Performing for White audiences was a way to potentially access a better life. Being a performer gave a Black person the potential to escape the perpetual debt of sharecropping and the ability to travel, though it did not provide a safe haven from the violence of racism. While Morrison's concept is powerful and groundbreaking, it does not apply to all genres associated with the Black voice. Jazz, evidenced especially by Bebop and Post-Bop (Free Jazz and Hard Bop), is directly influenced by and follows the Spiritual and Blues traditions, which represent a music where Black people are able to express themselves fully and freely. Jazz

[8] Morrison, "Race, Blacksound, and the (Re)Making of Musicological Discourse," 782.
[9] Morrison, "Race, Blacksound, and the (Re)Making of Musicological Discourse," 786

music, especially Bebop and the genres that follow, became a platform to challenge White audiences' views of Black people, and this challenge allowed Jazz music to be utilized as a vehicle for protest during the Civil Rights movement.

Black musicians from the 19th century to the present have had to use their musical language to their advantage, understanding the platform they were and are given. In contrast to the limitations and inauthenticity of facets of Blacksound as defined by Morrison, Salaam identifies a different paradigm, that of Great Black Music. First, Salaam acknowledges that Black Americans speak two different types of English, Standard American English (SAE), and an Africanized variant of English that we now identify as "African American Vernacular English (AAVE)." Salaam takes this one step further, saying "we not only developed our own approach to the master's tongue, but we went one better: We created a nonverbal language which expressed our worldly concerns as well as our spiritual aspirations. The language we created is 'the music.' More than any other form of communication, 'the music' expresses, at the deepest levels, the realities of our existence."[10] This communicative function is the heart and soul of Great Black Music; a language which exists to express the realities of Black people where words fail. According to Salaam, "[Great Black Music] was developed as a language of communication and cultural affirmation among ourselves and specifically for ourselves."[11] This link to music as a form of communication demonstrates that entertainment is second to communication when it comes to the production of Black Music. Keeping the concepts of Blacksound and Great Black Music in mind, I will demonstrate through analysis of Post-Bebop genres how Black musicians used their music to communicate amidst the Civil Rights era.

[10] Salaam, "It Didn't Jes Grew," 2.
[11] Salaam, "It Didn't Jes Grew," 3.

Bebop and Early Civil Rights

Bebop emerged in the 1940s with the decline of the Big Band as a result of the Great Depression. Bebop music parallels the lives of Black people during the 1940s, a transitional decade between the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights movement. Fewer people were able to afford entertainment, bands began to downsize, and, as a result, music focused more on the soloist(s) than the arranger or bandleader. Minton's, a night club in Harlem, is rumored to be one of the birthplaces of Bebop. This club is where musicians like Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie rose to prominence, and established Swing-era musicians such as Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins frequently went to Minton's as well. During this transition away from the Big Band during and after the Great Depression, poet and music journalist Amiri Baraka noted that "Minton's was where these young musicians could stand up and blow their brains out all night long… Bop also carried with it a distinct element of social protest, not only in the sense that it was music that seemed antagonistically nonconformist, but also that the musicians who played it were loudly outspoken about who they thought they were."[12] Though the musicians were not on the stage explicitly making political statements, the music itself could not be contained or manipulated to fit the White perception of Blackness.

Bebop music reflected the lives of people who were surviving amidst World War II and witnessing the beginnings of the Civil Rights movement. In March 1941, the Tuskegee Airmen, a Black Air Force Squadron, was established by the U.S. Army. In 1944, the Supreme Court declared White-only political primaries unconstitutional. In April 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first Black person to play Major League Baseball. As America was reshaping its political atmosphere, Jazz was reshaping its sound, with young people at the forefront.

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[12] Amiri Baraka, *Black Music* (New York, NY: Akashic Books, 2010), 30-31. This book was published under Baraka's previous name LeRoi Jones.

With Great Black Music [GBM] and Blacksound in mind, one can begin to understand what is being communicated through these genres of music. The musicians continued, starting with the Blues, to express their experiences as Black Americans through music rather than to appease a White audience. Charlie Parker's 1946 recording of "Yardbird Suite" has the Big Band swing element, though the group is smaller than a Big Band. Bebop musicians such as Parker were increasingly able to express themselves as the focus of the music shifted towards the soloist and away from the arranger or conductor. Bebop tunes derived their harmonic structures from Swing and Blues, such as Miles Davis' 1947 composition "Donna Lee," which used the chord changes from "(Back Home Again in) Indiana." Davis' recomposition of the 1917 song put the harmony into a new context. According to Christopher Meeder, "The harmonic structure of bebop heads may have come directly from swing repertoire, but the approach to playing chords was, in Dizzy Gillespie's opinion at least, the fundamental difference between bebop and earlier styles."[13]

Another interesting example appears in the treatment of George Gershwin's 1931 Broadway composition, "I Got Rhythm." Many Big Band and Bebop songs were written over Gershwin's harmonic structure, such as Lester Young's "Lester Leaps In," Dizzy Gilesspie's "Anthropology," and Charlie Parker's "Crazeology." This repurposing, sometimes reclaiming, of the music is part of the foundation of Bebop, and part of many genres in the legacy of GBM. In this example of repurposing Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm," musicians were able to take the ragtime and swing inspired composition and truly make it Jazz by creating new melodies through improvisation and recomposition over the harmonic structure. Through the lens of Blacksound, the repurposing of these structures represents freedom from the White imaginings of what Blackness is allowed to be. Black musicians were able to be themselves freely over whatever

[13] Christopher Meeder, *Jazz: the basics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 89-90.

music they felt like playing, a sort of freedom of speech through music if we consider Salaam's definition of GBM as a form of communication. Bebop examples like those discussed above communicated freedom to musicians and audiences alike, and opened the doors for the music that would follow.

Bebop music was a powerful entity for many musicians, and established musicians would often bring in newer musicians to experience and contribute to the Bebop scene. Horace Silver and Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers are the perfect example of a group led by musicians with the goal of introducing many others into the Jazz world. The Jazz Messengers, beginning around 1954, helped musicians such as Kenny Dorham, Wayne Shorter, and Wynton Marsalis get their start in the Jazz world. Understanding this music as a means of communication, Silver and Blakey sought to have as many voices heard as possible, and to provide them with guidance. The Jazz Messengers amplified Black voices, and this example showcases the importance of Jazz music, especially amidst the Civil Rights movement. Through this repertoire, Black people were given a space where they were allowed to be themselves, free of Jim Crow and other forms of racism both covert and overt.

Post-Bop Innovations and Political Statements

Just as the Blues was able to be more direct in its expression than the Spiritual, the innovations of Bebop set the foundations upon which the musicians who followed were able to make more direct social and political statements through music. The legendary 1953 recording, *The Quintet: Jazz at Massey Hall (Live)* features Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Bud Powell and Charles Mingus. Parker, Gillespie and Powell were musicians who personified Bebop. Roach and Mingus would go on to lead their own groups later in the decade. The experience of playing

with Bebop's most daring improvisors led Roach and Mingus to be Hard Bop innovators, with albums such as Roach's *We Insist! Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite* and Mingus' *The Clown* and *Mingus Ah Um* reflecting the experimentation of Bebop and the political charge of Civil Rights. For these musicians, Jazz was not just about expressing themselves, but also a vehicle for expression on behalf of the Black community. Nat Hentoff, in the liner notes for *The Clown*, includes a Mingus quote from 1956 that expresses this sentiment: "I write or play me, the way I feel, through jazz, or whatever. Music is, or was, a language of the emotions. If someone has been escaping reality, I don't expect him to dig my music. My music is alive and it's about the living and the dead, about good and evil. It's angry, yet it's real because it knows it's angry."[14] Mingus' music took advantage of the freedom that his predecessors provided.

Mingus' music was also inspired by life. He used his music as a medium to communicate his life and the lives of Black people; he used the music to speak and to help others be heard. Mingus' debut album, *The Clown* tells the story of a clown "who tried to please people like most jazz musicians do, but whom nobody liked until he was dead."[15] Mingus presents the reality of jazz musicians during that time. Mingus understood that he didn't need to "appear" a certain way for recognition, Mingus was himself unapologetically. Using Blacksound, we can take this to understand Mingus' music, especially *The Clown*, as a rejection of boundaries. Mingus used the music to communicate his life and history, while also making his contribution to the legacy of Black American music.

Mingus' music embodied the Blues sentiment. The reality of his music is clearly seen in his composition "Fables of Faubus," written as criticism of Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus' opposition to the integration of Little Rock High School in 1957. The first version of "Fables of

[14] Nat Hentoff, Liner Notes for *The Clown* by Charles Mingus (Atlantic SD-1260, September, 1957), Vinyl.
[15] Hentoff, Liner Notes for *The Clown.*

Faubus" was published in 1959 on his second studio album, *Mingus Ah Um*, as an instrumental track, but it appeared again on *Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus* in 1960 with the original lyrics.

> Oh, Lord, don't let 'em shoot us
> Oh, Lord, don't let 'em stab us
> Oh, Lord, no more swastikas
> Oh, Lord, don't let 'em tar and feather us
> Oh, Lord, no more Ku Klux Klan
> Name me someone who's ridiculous, Dannie
> Governor Faubus
> Why is he so sick and ridiculous?
> He won't permit integrated schools
> Then he's a fool

Having lyrics in a Jazz song was not uncommon, though Mingus only used lyrics in a handful of tunes. Lyrics that were politically charged, however, were relatively new. Before "Fables of Faubus," the most famous use of lyrics in a political manner is Billie Holiday's 1954 record, "Strange Fruit," where she mourns the deaths of Black people lynched in the South. From the perspective of GBM, it is easy to understand what Holiday and Mingus were trying to communicate in "Strange Fruit" and "Fables of Faubus," respectively. These musicians understood that when they sang or played, people listened, and that their platforms could influence real change in America, their music became an important part in the fight for Civil Rights.

On the same day that Mingus left a studio session for *Mingus Ah Um*, John Coltrane entered for a session to record *Giant Steps*; the title song featured a new type of harmonic progression which would later be dubbed the "Coltrane Changes." The year 1959 was a pivotal moment for Coltrane, away from Bebop and into the Avant-Garde. *Giant Steps,* as well as his role in Miles Davis' *Kind Of Blue* album show Coltrane's flexibility and open-mindedness. On these albums Coltrane demonstrates a variety of styles in his improvisational and compositional

skills. From moving through a rapid and dense harmonic structure in "Giant Steps," to the sweet ballad of "Naima," Coltrane is able to juxtapose his style with Davis' Cool Jazz sound on *Kind of Blue* with his contributions to songs like "So What." While the 1959 recordings are not political albums, they provide the creative foundation that Coltrane would later use for more socially-oriented music, such as his composition "Alabama," which was written in response to the 16th Baptist Church bombing by the Ku Klux Klan in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963. The composition appears on his 1964 album *Live at Birdland*, a title that Baraka considered to be "symbolic."[16] In the liner notes to the record, Baraka writes, "Birdland is only America in microcosm, and we know how high the mortality rate is for artists in this instant tomb. Yet, the title tells us that John Coltrane is there *live*."[17]

Nevertheless, the song "Alabama" is one of the two tracks on *Live at Birdland* that are studio recordings, not a part of the live set (from which the album takes its name). This distinction communicates to the listener an understanding of the significance of the recordings. John Coltrane's inclusion of "Alabama" relays to the listener that Coltrane believes that it is important that the listener be aware of the song and what it stands for. Including a studio recording rather than a live performance of "Alabama" makes for a more intimate setting, allowing the listener to step into the emotional and spiritual world of Coltrane and his quartet. Baraka notes that through "Alabama," Coltrane gave us "a slow delicate introspective sadness, almost hopelessness, except for [drummer] Elvin [Jones], rising like something out of nature… a fattening thunder… storm clouds or jungle war clouds. The whole is a frightening emotional portrait of some place in these musicians' feelings."[18] What the quartet achieved in this composition is a communication of emotions. Though the composition features Coltrane at the

[16] Baraka, *Black Music*, 75.
[17] Baraka, 75.
[18] Baraka, 78.

forefront expressing deep sadness and despair, listeners can hear and experience drummer Elvin Jones' anger, as if the music served to be a form of retaliation. By including the composition "Alabama" Coltrane and his quartet were using their voices, like their colleagues and other musicians before them, to make their feelings be heard and understood, to make their contribution to developing society.

Coltrane, in his own liner notes for the 1965 album *A Love Supreme* tells the listener "During the year 1957, I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music. I feel this has been granted through His grace. ALL PRAISE TO GOD."[19] Nineteen fifty-seven was the year that John Coltrane was fired from Miles Davis' Quintet due to his heroin addiction, "he was out of control, falling asleep on the bandstand and beginning to lose control of his instrument."[20] From that point forward, Coltrane quit heroin and "began to rebuild his career with a new commitment to building his technique and applying his own ideas of jazz harmony."[21] Looking back at Coltrane's discography, one can view his musical work from 1957 to the end of his career as a reflection of his personal and spiritual growth. Coltrane's music served as an outlet for expression. By 1965, it can be understood that *A Love Supreme* is just as much a Spiritual as it is Jazz, it is music that, while religious, is rooted in life and hardship.

Returning to Morrison's concept of Blacksound, one can view Coltrane's music and musical choices as a contribution toward undoing this minstrel tradition and as a direct opposing force to racism and hatred. Coltrane was able to use his voice to communicate pain that he and his community felt with "Alabama," but is also able to remind himself and his audience of God's

[19] John Coltrane, Liner notes for *A Love Supreme* (Impulse! Records, Released January, 1965), Vinyl.
[20] Meeder, *Jazz: the basics*, 162.
[21] Meeder, 162.

Love in "A Love Supreme." Considering the racialized environment that Coltrane and his contemporaries had to endure, music was created as a means to change the lives of Black people in America. Salaam states that "the music expresses, at the deepest levels, the realities of our existence… we find ourselves using song lyrics as encoded metaphors to express the epiphanous moments in our lives."[22] In the context of the Civil Rights movement, Coltrane aims to express these realities through music. The cries heard from Coltrane's saxophone on "Alabama" are much different than the praises he puts forth on "A Love Supreme," however both are easily identifiable as musical statements with very real experience and full emotion.

While Coltrane transitioned to the Avant-Garde over time, another major tenor saxophonist of Post-Bop music, and the "Father of Free Jazz," is Ornette Coleman. Ornette Coleman released his debut album, *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, in 1959, and quickly became a polarizing figure in Jazz; critics and audiences either loved him or hated him. Coleman's early career, before becoming known as the "Father of Free Jazz," was a Blues musician, and his music was melodically structured rather than harmonically, as Jazz typically was. Baraka notes that the "form of a Coleman solo is usually determined by the total musical shape of what he is playing… all of these moved by Ornette's singularly emotional approach to jazz, in much the same way as the older, 'primitive' blues singers produced their music."[23] On the first track of Coleman's first album, *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, the listener is welcomed by the rhythmically and harmonically free melody of "Lonely Woman." The introductory song features Coleman and trumpeter Don Cherry lamenting over the consistent bass and drum rhythm section. The exclusion of a polyphonic instrument like the piano or guitar lends the two melodic instruments more improvisational freedom. What is unusual about the introductory song, and the language of

[22] Salaam, "It Didn't Jes Grew," 2.
[23] Baraka, *Black Music*, 48-49.

Free Jazz, is the lack of harmonic foundation, which allowed not only for melodic freedom, but also for structural freedom. The listener is not guided by the movement of harmony, but by rhythm and melody, forcing the listener to be fully immersed in the melodic lines of Coleman and Cherry. Here it is important to consider what Coleman is communicating by putting a track like "Lonely Woman" first rather than a track with a more traditional form such as "Chronology," which follows an AABA form like much of the genres of jazz that preceded Coleman's debut including the Bebop reclamations of Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm." What Coleman offers when putting forth "Lonely Woman" is the language of Free Jazz. Later, with "Chronology," he shows how this language can be used even in familiar forms of music.

Like Mingus, Coleman's music reflected life through the Blues sound and sentiment. With his debut album, Coleman uses Jazz as a vehicle for freedom. Coleman's Blues background allows him to think melodically, and the freedom that the musician has is representative of a world where no boundaries exist. When one thinks of Free Jazz in this manner, the link to the Spiritual and the Blues, as well as openness to new methods, is clear. Coleman's music, like the music of Coltrane, would set the foundations for albums such as Archie Shepp and Horace Parlan's *Goin' Home*, a Jazz record that specifically revisited and recontextualized Spirituals in 1977.

Jazz Exits the Mainstream: Post-Bop Priorities

Following the Depression, the visibility of Jazz music decreased in the mainstream. Big Band music was marketable and commercialized, however Bebop and the Post-Bop genres saw a decline in popularity because the music and musicians did not cater to White audiences, the music could not be manipulated to suit White aesthetics. Bebop and the genres that followed it

were music that reflected life, and like Parker said, "If you don't live it, it won't come through your horn." In the late 50s and into the 60s, venues sought a "win-win" agenda, where Jazz musicians would receive more exposure and venues would potentially receive some profit. This idea was fine on paper, but the implementation was ultimately catastrophic. For example, the 1960 Newport Jazz Festival ended in a riot. The festival's top attractions were non-Jazz acts, sometimes crossover musicians, such as Chuck Berry and Eartha Kitt. Since the non-Jazz genres were getting more attention from organizers and audiences, by 1960 the young audience was rioting because of their disappointment with the lack of support for Jazz musicians. Cecil Taylor, a Jazz pianist, noted that "the festival still presented occasional experimental groups but it often sidelined them in poorly attended afternoon sessions."[24] By 1960, Jazz fans and musicians alike had realized that the Festival directors had abandoned the genre because of its lack of profitability. Mingus claimed that "the organizers brought the disturbances on themselves because 'they confused rock 'n' roll with Jazz. They lost their identity with Jazz.'"[25]

In response, Mingus and other musicians founded their own festival at the Cliff Walk Manor Hotel. The festival organized by Mingus and his colleagues featured musicians from swing to the contemporary Avant-Garde, such as Lester Young, Roy Eldridge, Max Roach, Kenny Dorham, Abbey Lincoln, Ornette Coleman and Charles Mingus himself. The musician-run festival prioritized artistic intentions, as "a growing number of musicians and critics concluded that commercial imperatives interfered with artistic priorities"[26] at the Newport Jazz Festival. Mingus and his colleagues ran the "counter-festival" to avoid "the [Newport Jazz Festival's] overt commercialism, scale and confrontation."[27]

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[24] Iain Anderson, *This Is Our Music: Free Jazz, the Sixties, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 85
[25] Quoted in Anderson, *This Is Our Music*, 85.
[26] Anderson, 86
[27] Anderson, 87

While a number of the musicians named above played Jazz that was familiar, the juxtaposition of more established styles with the Avant-Garde music of Ornette Coleman left audiences and musicians alike with mixed emotions. Roy Eldrige, a swing trumpeter, commented on his experience of Coleman's music in an interview: "I listened to him high, I listened to him cold sober. I even played with him. I think he's jiving, baby."[28] Eldridge was not the only musician present who expressed distaste for Coleman's music. Max Roach despised the Avant-Garde sound so much that he "assaulted Coleman physically on one occasion and threatened to do so on another."[29] The important thing to realize is that Coleman's music was able to garner the attention of many and started a conversation. Coleman's music, like other forms of Jazz before it and like Black Americans of the 20th Century, sought to break free from the confinements and boundaries that people were forced to experience. From this perspective, one can view Coleman's music as a form of sonic protest. The title of his 1961 album, *This Is Our Music*, depicts this clearly. Coleman is claiming Jazz not only for himself, but for his community. Coleman is communicating to all musicians that Jazz belongs to Black America, and that Jazz is a space where Black musicians can freely express themselves regardless of what is acceptable by White audiences. Jazz is a language, and Post-Bop music was created to portray the authentic Black American experience.

When one analyzes Post-Bop through the lens of Blacksound, considering the social and political lives of Black Americans, one can understand the goal and language of Post-Bop music. The concepts of Blacksound and Great Black Music intersect when one analyzes the music beyond the sonic realm, music not created for the sake of entertainment but for the sake of communication. Post-Bop music is one of few places during the Civil Rights era where Black

[28] Anderson, *This Is Our Music*, 88.
[29] Anderson, 88.

people were able to be truly free, rather than fighting for freedom. Musicians and audiences were able to experience a world where freedom of expression was a right. Post-Bop music communicated the possibility of Black freedom, supporting and inspiring the lives of many, just as the Spirituals and Blues did for Black people during the times of Slavery and Post-Emancipation, respectively.

Conclusion

Mingus, Coltrane, and Coleman are just three examples of how Jazz musicians used their voices and musical language to combat racial injustices in America. Their music is an example of how Jazz music functioned to support the lives of Black Americans. Mingus, Coltrane, and Coleman are among many musicians who were able to use the music as a platform to have their voices heard and their experiences told. Bebop and the Post-Bop genres that followed were music by and for Black Americans. Combatting the legacy of slavery and racism in the United States, musicians realized that the music provided an opportunity to be heard and seen. Mingus and Coltrane very plainly voiced the pains and fears of life, having to navigate racist structures and the looming threat of death daily. They demonstrated how musicians were able to take a form of popular music and use it to their advantage.

Jazz music is a part of a lineage where people are placed in a society where they are seen as lesser than, with music being one of the art forms, a language as Salaam suggests, that serves to supplement the lives of Black Americans. The generational fight for freedom that starts with slavery, emancipation, and is embodied in Spirituals and the Blues, continues through Jazz, and into today's music by supplementing Black Lives Matter just as Hard Bop and Avant-Garde Jazz supplemented the Civil Rights movement. Music remains one of the few ways that Black

Americans were and are able to demonstrate true liberation. Great Black Music has and continues to communicate, without fail, the realities of Black people and, as music rooted in experience, is music that cannot be appropriated or confined to the policies of oppression. Black Music is rooted in experience, and cannot be successfully recreated unless one lives the conditions of marginalization.

Blacksound as a tool for analysis considers the racial structures in which Americans live and music is created. Blacksound can be applied to 21st-century genres, such as Hip-Hop and Rap, and R&B and Soul, to understand the content of the music. Using this method, one can analyze and understand the context in which the music is created and the opportunities that music presents. When paired with the concept of Great Black Music, these genres can be brought into the musicological discourse and understand the importance of Black music in America. Black American music speaks from the Black American experience, and presents opportunities for freedom and growth not only for Black Americans, but for all Americans for when one understands the racial hierarchies that exist and limit the lives of marginalized people, the music can be understood and used to promote positive change for all.

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