

Big Band Jazz and 20th C. Art Music: The Historical Relationship Documented



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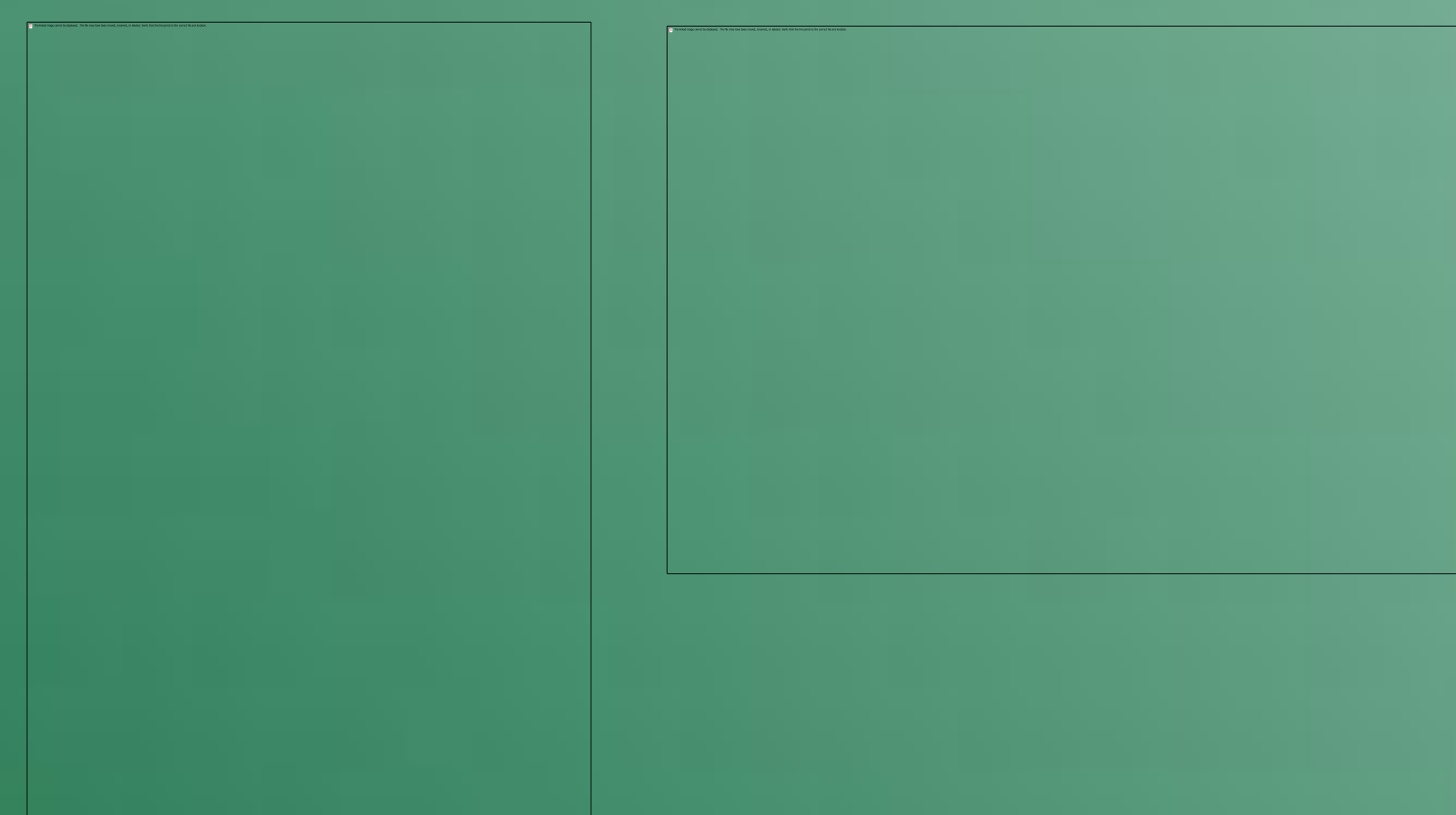
The Premise

The art music tradition (music stemming from the European Classical tradition) and the jazz tradition have had major impacts on one another throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. This project was designed to lay out history's events to show the progression of 20th century music as it relates to the big band and art music traditions. The importance of this relationship is evident in the immense popularity of jazz-art music hybrids like *Rhapsody in Blue* and also in the vast range of possibilities to be found in future musical creations.

What Inspired This Project?

Maria Schneider, a very prominent big band composer of today's day and age, has clearly made a strong effort to blend the styles of jazz and art music. In a 2008 interview with Jazz.com's Eugene Marlow, Schneider said this about her music:

"I love trying to make my big band sound like an orchestra, not like a big band, getting all these subtle colors out of the group. I don't want my group to sound like a big band because to me a big band doesn't have a lot of emotional subtlety and expression in it. It's got power and energy and it's fun and it can be beautiful, but it's not often very moving and I want my music to be very expressive and very moving."



Left to Right: Modern Big Band Maria Schneider, Maria conducts her jazz orchestra at a live concert



Left to Right: Aaron Hedenstrom plays bass clarinet with his big band, the rhythm section lays down some genre-defying jazz in the Aaron Hedenstrom Orchestra



Matt Gullickson conducts the Aaron Hedenstrom Orchestra

Practical Application: The Aaron Hedenstrom Orchestra

For another component of this project, I decided that I was going to compose an entire album of big band music of my own that crossed genre lines between jazz, art music, and hip-hop. I founded the Aaron Hedenstrom Orchestra in June 2010, when we recorded our debut album, "A Jazz Hip-Hop Symphonic Experience." This was a great way for me to put the data from this project into use and push the jazz and art music traditions forward for future generations to enjoy. Information about the Aaron Hedenstrom Orchestra can be found at:

www.aaronhedenstromorchestra.com

Data Analysis: Timeline of Events

1920s

1922: Darius Milhaud composes *Trois rag caprices*
1923: Darius Milhaud premieres *La création du monde*
1924: Gershwin premieres "Rhapsody in Blue"
1926: Duke Ellington's 10-piece band records "East St. Louis Toodle-oo" which was their first recording
1927: Ellington's 10-piece band records "Black and Tan Fantasy"
1928: Ravel tours North America and composes *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, which has a slow movement called *Blues*. American press notes Ravel's love of jazz and blues
1929: Gershwin premieres "An American in Paris"

1930s

1930: Duke Ellington's 12-piece band appears in film *Check and Double Check* and records the famous *Mood Indigo*.
1930: Gershwin writes "I Got Rhythm"
1932-1942: Ellington band enlarges to become 6 brass, 4 reeds, and rhythm section
1933-1938: Gil Evans forms his own band in southern California
-1934: Benny Goodman organized his first big band under the Columbia record label
-1934: Benny Carter writes a saxophone soli in four-part harmony for the Goodman band, setting a standard for saxophone solis in the big band idiom
-1934: Fletcher Henderson begins writing for the Goodman band
1935: Gershwin premieres opera "Porgy and Bess"
-1935: Goodman performs Mozart's Clarinet Quintet in the home of John Hammond
-1936: Goodman big band begins its television broadcast on CBS
1938: Benny Goodman commissions the work "Contrasts" by Bela Bartok

1940s

1941: Stan Kenton starts his famous *Artistry in Rhythm* group
1943: Kenton's *Artistry in Rhythm* releases a self-titled album
1945: Pete Rugolo becomes *Artistry in Rhythm*'s main arranger
1945: Dizzy Gillespie forms his own big band with a blend of bebop and dance music
1946: Ellington's band enlarges to become an 18 person ensemble
1947: Benny Goodman commissions classical composers Aaron Copland and Paul Hindemith to write clarinet concertos
1947: Benny Goodman tours with one of his last orchestras, which played bebop
1949: Kenton starts new 20-piece jazz orchestra, Progressive Jazz and plays at Carnegie Hall

1950s

1950-51: Kenton's 43-piece orchestra, the Innovations in Modern Music Orchestra (complete with extended winds and strings), tours U.S.
1957: Bernstein's debut of musical *West Side Story*
1957: Gil Evans arranges music on Miles Davis' "Birth of the Cool" after arranging for avant-garde jazz orchestra of Claude Thornhill
1957: Evans writes for Miles Davis album "Miles Ahead"
1958: Evans writes for Miles Davis album "Porgy and Bess"
1958: Evans writes large group orchestral music on his album "New Bottles, Old Wine"
1959-60: Evans writes for Miles Davis album "Sketches of Spain"

1960s

1960: Bernstein arranges "West Side Story Symphonic Dances" based on material from his musical
1961: Kenton band's albums *West Side Story* and *Adventures in Jazz* are released to receive Grammy awards
1963-4: Gil Evans releases album "The Individualism of Gil Evans" on Verve
1960-64: Bob Brookmeyer writes and plays for Gerry Mulligan's Concert Jazz Band
1965: Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra is founded (partially by Bob Brookmeyer, who arranged several pieces for the group)
1965: Bernstein debuts jazz-influenced work "Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs"
1965: Kenton starts this Los Angeles Neophonic Orchestra (23-piece concert jazz band), which played orchestral transcriptions
1969-71: Gil Evans releases album "Blues in Orbit" on Ampex

1970s

1970: Kenton starts Creative World Records and Creative World Music companies

1980s

1981: Bob Brookmeyer begins working relationship with the WDR Big Band in Cologne, Germany
1984: Wynton Marsalis become the first musician to win Grammy awards in both classical and jazz categories
1984-97: Brookmeyer writes for the Radioens Big Band in Denmark

1990s

1994: Brookmeyer begins a five-year position at the New England Conservatory
1994: Maria Schneider's Orchestra releases first album "Evanescence"
1996:1994: Maria Schneider's Orchestra releases second album "Coming About"
1996: Brookmeyer becomes conductor of the Radioens Ensemble

2000s

2000: Maria Schneider's Orchestra releases second album "The Days of Wine and Roses"
2004: Maria Schneider wins Grammy for album "Concert in the Garden"
2007: Maria Schneider's Orchestra wins Grammy for album "Sky Blue"
2009: Canadian/U.S. composer Darcy James Argue releases a groundbreaking big band album called "Secret Machines" with his big band, "Darcy James Argue's Secret Society"