Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra

Monday, March 18, 2013
Zellerbach Hall, University of California Berkeley

Sponsored by Maris & Ivan Meyerson
On Monday, March 18, at 11am, your class will attend a performance of Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra at Cal Performances’ Zellerbach Hall.

The matchless musical icon returns to Zellerbach Hall! Jazz musician Wynton Marsalis’s accomplishments are legendary: he is a master big-band leader in the tradition of Duke Ellington, a distinguished classical musician and composer, and a devoted advocate for the arts. With over 30 albums and numerous awards to his name, Marsalis’s finest instrument is his renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, “the greatest large jazz ensemble working today” (Chicago Tribune).

Using This Study Guide
You can use these materials to engage your students and enrich their Cal Performances field trip. Before attending the performance, we encourage you to:
• Copy the student Resource Sheet on pages 3 & 4 and give it to your students several days before the show.
• Discuss the information About the Performance & Artists on pages 5 & 6 with your students.
• Read to your students from A Brief History of Jazz on page 7-9, Jazz Timeline on page 10 & 11, Fundamentals of Jazz and Jazz FAQs on pages 12-15 and Traditional Jazz Instruments on page 16.
• Engage your students in two or more activities on pages 17-19.
• Reflect with your students by asking them guiding questions, found on pages 3, 5, & 7.
• Immerse students further into the subject matter and art form by using the Resource section on page 21.

At the performance:
Your class can actively participate during the performance by:
• LISTENING CAREFULLY to the melodies, harmonies and rhythms of the music
• OBSERVING how the musicians work together, sometimes playing in solos, duets, trios and as an ensemble
• THINKING ABOUT the culture, history, ideas, and emotions expressed through the music
• MARVELING at the skill of the musicians
• REFLECTING on the sounds and sights experienced at the theater.

We look forward to seeing you at SchoolTime!

Laura Abrams  
Director, Education & Community Programs  
Cal Performances

Rica Anderson  
Education Programs Administrator  
Cal Performances
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1  Theater Etiquette

Be prepared and arrive early.
Ideally you should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time and parking, and plan to be in your seats at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Be aware and remain quiet.
The theater is a “live” space—you can hear the performers easily, but they can also hear you, and you can hear other audience members, too! Even the smallest sounds, like rustling papers and whispering, can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to stay quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance without distractions. The international sign for “Quiet Please” is to silently raise your index finger to your lips.

Show appreciation by applauding.
Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation. Performers return their appreciation for your attention by bowing to the audience at the end of the show. It is always appropriate to applaud at the end of a performance, and it is customary to continue clapping until the curtain comes down or the house lights come up.

Participate by responding to the action onstage.
Sometimes during a performance, you may respond by laughing, crying or sighing. By all means, feel free to do so! Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form. For instance, an audience attending a string quartet performance will sit very quietly, while the audience at a gospel concert may be inspired to participate by clapping and shouting.

Concentrate to help the performers.
These artists use concentration to focus their energy while on stage. If the audience is focused while watching the performance, they feel supported and are able to do their best work. They can feel that you are with them!

Please note:
Backpacks and lunches are not permitted in the theater. Bags are provided for lobby storage in the event that you bring these with you. There is absolutely no food or drink permitted in the seating areas. Recording devices of any kind, including cameras, cannot be used during performances. Please remember to turn off your cell phone before the performance begins.
Guiding Questions:
• Describe some of Wynton Marsalis’ achievements.
• What are the blues?
• Describe the three building blocks of music.

What You’ll See
On Monday, March 18, your class will attend SchoolTime and experience the music of Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) in a performance called, “What is Big Band?” In celebration of JLCO’s 25th anniversary, the group will perform selections by jazz greats like Duke Ellington, John Coltrane and more.

About Wynton Marsalis
“Jazz is an art form,” trumpeter Wynton Marsalis has said, “that gives us a painless way of understanding ourselves.” The son of a jazz pianist and a brother to five siblings, three of whom are also musicians, Marsalis was born in New Orleans in 1961, and by his late teens he had earned a reputation among both jazz and classical musicians.

At 19, Marsalis left New York’s Juilliard School to join drummer Art Blakey, and two years later he became the first musician to win Grammy awards in both the classical and jazz categories. In 1987 he co-founded Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York, and, as its artistic director, he has led its resident big band, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, in concerts, clinics, workshops, and parades in every part of the world.

An internationally respected teacher and spokesman for music education, Marsalis conducts educational programs for students of all ages and hosts the popular Jazz for Young People concerts produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center. As the first jazz musician to win the Pulitzer Prize (for his 1997 piece, Blood on the Fields), Marsalis makes the case that jazz “provides a way to look in wonderment at the world around us,” helping us to “see and hear the many forms and concepts that unite us all.”

About the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, made up of 15 of today’s most talented musicians, has been
the Jazz at Lincoln Center resident orchestra for over 20 years. The JLCO performs and leads educational events in New York, across the United States and around the world. Over the years, they have also performed with many of the world’s leading symphony orchestras.

What is Jazz?
Jazz is a kind of music that came out of several African American musical traditions, particularly the blues and ragtime.

The Blues
The blues grew out of African American spirituals and work songs after the Civil War. Like spirituals, the blues began as vocal music that used African musical styles, such as call and response. As the music became more popular, musicians began playing blues songs on instruments. To have “the blues” meant to feel depressed or sad, and blues songs usually focused on personal struggles like being heartbroken, poor, or treated unfairly.

Ragtime
Ragtime was the earliest form of jazz. A type of music that used syncopation (placing an accent on a normally weak beat) and improvisation, ragtime was performed at entertainment venues and social events. While piano ragtime is more well-known, ragtime was also played on banjos, fiddles, harmonicas, drums, trumpets, and whatever other instruments were available.

Jazz Through the Years
Throughout the 20th century, various types of jazz rose to popularity. Swing was the main form of jazz in the 1930s and 1940s. A style of dance music played by big and small bands, swing music featured a strong rhythm section with a medium to fast tempo.

Bebop, a jazz style of the 1940s, focused on long melodic lines and expressive harmonic patterns that often ended on an accented upbeat. In cool jazz, musicians of the late 1940s and early 1950s tried to shift around the basic elements of jazz. They composed smoother, softer melodies and more subtle rhythms and used combinations of musical instruments that weren’t often used in previous jazz ensembles.

By the 1960s and 1970s, many different kinds of jazz were evolving. For example, progressive jazz took bebop and cool jazz techniques to a new level, and funky jazz updated blues and gospel oriented music with a shot of funk’s strong, rhythmic groove. Abstract jazz allowed musicians to be more explorative and improvisational, and jazz rock mixed elements of rock and jazz, often using electronic instruments.

In the 1980s, the softer-sounding mainstream jazz became popular, and in the 90s jazz artists borrowed from rap, hip-hop and even metal rock. Today, interest is still growing in jazz, with the help of key jazz ambassadors like Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

The Building Blocks of Music
The three most important elements in music are:
- Melody
- Harmony
- Rhythm

When you listen carefully to music, you can hear the tune or melody, the notes that provide counterpoint to the tune, called harmony, and you can feel the beat of the music, also known as rhythm.

Musical styles are defined by how these three important elements are used. These elements also provide a framework for musicians to know in what ways they can create and play music together.

How do you hear these three important “building blocks” in a jazz performance?
When a jazz ensemble performs, the rhythm is usually played by the drums. The string bass or bass guitar helps the drummer “keep time,” and also plays the low notes that sound good with the melody and harmony.

The piano and the guitar play the harmony or chord progressions. These are other notes that sound good with the melody. When these “harmony” notes are played together they are called chords, when they are played separately they are called arpeggios, or broken chords. The piano and the guitar are sometimes used to play the rhythm when there is no bass or drums.

The melody may be played by any instrument. It may also be sung. In large groups, the melody is frequently played by instruments like the trumpet, trombone, saxophone, clarinet, flute or violin.
The SchoolTime Performance
Bandleader, composer, trumpeter and music director Wynton Marsalis leads the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) in a performance titled “What is Big Band?”

JLCO is a 15-piece ensemble comprised of today’s finest jazz soloists and ensemble players, with a style described by the Chicago Tribune as “technical brilliance, stylistic authenticity and tonal sheen.”

In celebration of JLCO’s 25th anniversary, the group performs music by John Coltrane, Duke Ellington, Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis and more. The program will be announced from the stage.

About Wynton Marsalis
“Wynton Marsalis projects an amiable informality that tells people the music is meant to be as fun as it is important” (Chicago Sun-Times).

Wynton Marsalis, Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, was born in New Orleans in 1961. He began his classical training on trumpet at age 12 and soon began playing in local bands of diverse genres. He entered The Juilliard School at age 17 and joined Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Marsalis made his recording debut as a leader in 1982, and has since made more than 30 jazz and classical recordings, which have won him nine Grammy Awards. In 1983, he became the first and only artist to win both classical and jazz Grammys in the same year, then repeated this feat in 1984. Marsalis’s rich body of compositions includes Sweet Release, Jazz: Six Syncopated Movements, Jump Start, Citi Movement/Griot New York, At the Octoroon Balls, In This House, On This Morning and Big Train.

In 1997, Marsalis became the first jazz artist to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in music for his oratorio Blood on the Fields, which was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center. In 1999, he released eight new recordings in his unprecedented “Swinging into the 21st” series. He also premiered several new compositions, including the ballet Them Twos, for a June 1999 collaboration with the New York City Ballet. That same year Marsalis premiered the monumental work All Rise, commissioned and performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Morgan State University Choir along with the JLCO.
In 2007, Marsalis released *From the Plantation to the Penitentiary*, the follow-up CD to his Blue Note Records releases of *The Magic Hour* and *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson*, the companion soundtrack recording to Ken Burns’s PBS documentary of the great African-American boxer, and *Wynton Marsalis: Live at The House Of Tribes*. Marsalis also composed three symphonies that premiered in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Marsalis is an internationally respected teacher and spokesman for music education, and has received honorary doctorates from dozens of universities and colleges throughout the United States. He conducts educational programs for students of all ages and hosts the popular Jazz for Young People concerts produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has been featured in the video series “Marsalis on Music” and the radio series “Making the Music.”

Marsalis has also authored these books: *Sweet Swing Blues on the Road* in collaboration with photographer Frank Stewart, *Jazz in the Bittersweet Blues of Life* with Carl Vigeland; *To a Young Musician: Letters from the Road* with Selwyn Seyfu Hinds; and *Moving to Higher Ground: How Jazz Can Change Your Life*, co-written with Geoffrey C. Ward.

**About the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra**
The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO), composed of 15 of today’s most talented musicians, has been the Jazz at Lincoln Center resident orchestra for over 20 years. Current band members are trumpeters Ryan Kisor, Sean Jones, Marcus Printup; trombonists Chris Crenshaw, Vincent Gardner, Elliot Madon; reedists Walter Blanding, Victor Goines, Sherman Irby, Ted Nash, Joe Temperley; pianist Dan Nimmer; bassist Carlos Henriquez; and drummer Ali Jackson.

**JLCO Programming**
Featured in all aspects of Jazz at Lincoln Center’s programming, the remarkably versatile JLCO performs and leads educational events in New York, across the United States and around the world. Education is a major part of Jazz at Lincoln Center’s mission and its educational activities are coordinated with concert and JLCO tour programming. These programs include the celebrated Jazz for Young People family concert series (today’s SchoolTime performance), the Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival, the Jazz for Young People Curriculum, educational residencies, workshops and concerts for students and adults worldwide. Jazz at Lincoln Center educational programs reach over 110,000 students, teachers and general audience members. The weekly series, Jazz at Lincoln Center Radio, won a 1997 Peabody Award.

Over the last few years, the JLCO has performed with many of the world’s leading symphony orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, the Russian National Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Boston, Chicago and London Symphony Orchestras, the Orchestra Esperimentale in São Paolo, Brazil and others. In 2006, the JLCO collaborated with Ghanaian drum collective Odadaa!, led by Yacub Addy, to perform “Congo Square,” a composition Marsalis and Addy co-wrote and dedicated to Marsalis’ native New Orleans. JLCO performed Marsalis’ symphony, *Swing Symphony*, with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Berlin; with the New York Philharmonic in New York in 2010; and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Los Angeles in 2011.
About the Art Form

A Brief History of Jazz
Jazz emerged in the late 1800s in the cosmopolitan port city of New Orleans. A former colony of both France and Spain, the coastal city was home to an astounding variety of cultures and people who found common ground in music. The city swelled with opera, marching bands, ragtime piano, Latin dances, symphony orchestras, string ensembles, barbershop quartets, society dance music, sacred hymns, not-so-sacred blues, and the last vestiges of African song and dance kept alive in Congo Square. Elements of all of these styles, with particular emphasis on ragtime, the blues, and the church, converged in a new music called jazz.

“Father” of Jazz
Though the precise birth of jazz is still shrouded in mystery, musicians, patrons, and scholars affirm the impact of Crescent City cornetist Charles Buddy Bolden. Though his mythic sound was never recorded, the rhythmic lilt that propelled his band (which peaked around 1905) was appropriated by dozens of New Orleans musicians who heard him “rag” every kind of popular song, filling them with the sound of the blues and the church.

Bolden’s playing inspired New Orleans musicians, who playfully embellished familiar melodies and developed distinctive phrasing and timbres. Among these pioneers were pianist Jelly Roll Morton and cornetist King Oliver, who led their peers in a new exploration of improvisation. They expanded what were once brief moments of embellishment into longer improvisatory statements and found ways of incorporating the freedom of self-expression into their written arrangements. Generally performed by small ensembles of cornet, clarinet, trombone, tuba (or bass), guitar (or banjo) and drums, early New Orleans jazz highlighted collective improvisation—that is, by two or more members of the band.

King Oliver’s protégé Louis Armstrong, led the shift towards individual expression, and ultimately transformed early jazz from folk art to fine art.

Early Jazz
Trumpeter and vocalist Louis Armstrong was born on August 4, 1901 in the turbulent New Orleans neighborhood known as “The Battlefield.” He grew up in the brass tradition of Bolden and Oliver. When he arrived in New York in 1924, he was already emerging as a new jazz legend. Though his predecessors had tested the waters of improvisation, it was Armstrong who brought the long, improvised solo to prominence. Like a great storyteller, Louis would string together a series of related phrases, forming a single, coherent statement with a beginning, middle, and ending. He illuminated the details with his distinctive timbre, scat singing, and relaxed, swinging phrasing that has informed nearly every American musician since.

Guiding Questions:
- How did jazz evolve?
- Why did many African Americans migrate to the North in the early 1900s?
- Describe the music of the “Swing Era”.
- Name some musicians who had an impact on jazz’s development and describe their influence.
Of course, Armstrong was hardly a singular force in bringing jazz out of the Crescent City. “Storyville,” the city’s famed red light district, was forced to close during World War I, leaving many musicians in search of work. The nation’s economy was changing from rural to industrial, and jazz musicians, like many African Americans, joined the Great Migration to urban areas of the North in search of work and solace from the prevailing racism of the South. They brought the music to cities like Chicago and New York, where jazz adopted a sophisticated veneer, blending an urban sensibility with its Southern roots.

The Swing Era
During the 1920s, musicians left the small New Orleans ensemble in favor of the popular ballroom dance band format. These new big bands, as exemplified by the Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, and Don Redman Orchestras, were generally comprised of four brass, three reeds, and a rhythm section. This instrumentation offered enough tonal variety for complex orchestrations while still leaving room for improvisation. By the start of the Swing Era around 1935, most ensembles had evolved into true big bands consisting of three to four trumpets, three trombones, four to five reeds, and a rhythm section (piano, bass, drums, and guitar).

In spite of the Depression’s downward economy, or perhaps because of it, the infectious bounce of swing quickly became the pulse of young America. Clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman, helped propel the swing sound, sharing with radio listeners the exuberant feeling of jazz. Perhaps more importantly, Goodman used his popular success to challenge the segregation then common in jazz ensembles. He hired the African American pianist Teddy Wilson, and later vibraphonist Lionel Hampton, in a pioneering step towards the integration then common in jazz ensembles. Goodman brought jazz to the cutting edge of civil rights and made a strong case for a fully integrated America.

Swing eventually became the signature music of wartime America, and the near-unquenchable marketplace for swing encouraged an extraordinary volume and variety of music. Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmie Lunceford, Fletcher Henderson, Artie Shaw, Benny Carter, Glenn Miller, Claude Thornhill, Benny Goodman, and others led bands that managed to combine commercial success and artistic integrity. Together, along with guitarist Charlie Christian, trumpeter Roy Eldridge, vocalist Billie Holiday, Teddy Wilson, and tenor saxophonists Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, they created a rhythm vernacular that continues to impact the music. The heartbeat that propelled the big bands and small ensembles of the Swing Era had a simultaneously relaxed and fervent rhythmic lilt, an endless push and pull that still lies at the heart of jazz.

The Bebop Revolution
By the mid-1940s, a handful of artists longed for an outlet for more extended improvisation and dynamic group interplay. The result was bebop, a revolutionary small group art form pioneered by alto saxophonist Charlie Parker and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie that created set new standards for jazz musicianship. Musicians both shrank and reveled before the music’s intense rhythmic energy, dissonant harmonies, and serpentine melodies. Though bebop never attained the popularity of swing era jazz, the music’s rebellious spirit and unbridled virtuosity lured its own audience and cemented the idea of jazz as fine art. It is considered by many to be the turning point in jazz history, irrevocably influencing nearly every style to follow.

The Birth of the Cool
Bebop provoked a contentiousness never before seen in jazz and drew a line between the hip and the has-been. As a result, jazz entered the 1950s and 1960s as a plurality of styles. The line between hot and cool was drawn in 1949 when Miles Davis and composer Gil Evans released The Birth of the Cool, a series of lushly orchestrated arrangements. The recording, with its tonal variety and spare, thoughtful phrasing, offered relief from the fever pitch of bebop and spawned a movement known alternately as cool or West Coast jazz. While the music retained the harmonic language and technical virtuosity of bebop, cool’s soft timbres, understated style, and greater compositional element marked a return to the relaxed rhythmic language of the Basie band and the lyrical phrasing of Lester Young. Over time, cool evolved into an umbrella term, encompassing the varied (and often harmonically experimental) music of Lennie Tristano, Lee Konitz, George Russell, Dave Brubeck and others.
It didn’t take long for the hot to respond, however, this time with a firmly blues-based genre called hard bop. For some, bebop’s insistence on virtuosity and harmonic complexity had created a spiritual void; missing were the swing and soulfulness that defined jazz. Hard bop pioneers Miles Davis, trumpeter Clifford Brown, pianist Horace Silver, saxophonist Hank Mobley, and drummers Art Blakey and Max Roach attempted to reconnect audiences to the blues and the church. They infused bebop with insistent grooves, tuneful melodies, and heavy, aggressive tonalities that brought jazz back to the juke joint. The deep, earthy sound of the tenor saxophone (as exemplified by Sonny Rollins) found a new resonance and the trumpet/tenor pairing soon became the quintessential sound of modern jazz.

Despite hard bop’s strong following, jazz’s strong exploratory impulse was unrelenting. Never complacent, Miles Davis once again led the way in search of greater freedom of self-expression. He found this freedom in modal jazz, an approach to composition and improvisation based on scales rather than the long sequence of chords that characterized most jazz. Though modal jazz had been explored earlier by pianist George Russell, it gained new prominence in the hands of Davis and his collaborator, pianist Bill Evans. Their experiments were fully realized in the landmark 1959 recording *Kind of Blue*. The album’s spare blues-based moods inspired countless musicians (including Davis’s sideman saxophonist John Coltrane) to explore the creative possibilities of this scalar method.

**Beyond Bop**

The experimental impulse of jazz was not defined by bebop alone. In 1939, a young Dizzy Gillespie befriended band mate Mario Bauza, who piqued the trumpeter’s growing interest in Afro-Cuban rhythms. The two would reconvene in the mid-1940s, along with conguero Chano Pozo, bandleader Frank “Machito” Grillo, and others to create Latin jazz, a highly danceable blend of Latin rhythms, jazz harmony, and improvisation. Latin jazz would also be touched by the cool school. In the 1960s, saxophonist Stan Getz, guitarist Charlie Byrd, composer and pianist Antonio Carlos Jobim, and others brought together the subtle textures, challenging harmonies, and relaxed rhythms of cool jazz and Brazilian samba in a popular style known as bossa nova.

Perhaps the most dramatic break with the jazz tradition came with free jazz and the atonal experiments of the late 1950s and 1960s. Pioneered by alto saxophonist and composer Ornette Coleman, free jazz represented a departure from Western harmony and rhythm in search of even greater freedom of expression. While still grounded in the blues, Coleman literally freed himself from Western musical traditions in an effort to more honestly portray the sounds of human emotion. To this end, he developed his own musical theory called “harmolodics” and avoided common song forms in his compositions. Still, even in its most liberated moments, Coleman’s music retained links to Western music and the bebop legacy of Charlie Parker.

**Swing On**

As the 1960s progressed, many jazz musicians found themselves increasingly marginalized; by the end of the decade, there seemed to be a new gulf between jazz and the general public. It was this divide that inspired Miles Davis and his colleagues to experiment with the electric instruments and rhythms of rock, a movement that earned the name fusion.

Jazz endured, however fractured, and by the 1970s the record companies, radio stations, and nightclubs began to reemerge. In some ways, the overall state of jazz had remained largely unchanged since bebop: an art form of individuals, dominated by no single style. Legends like alto saxophonist Benny Carter, vocalist Betty Carter, and bassist Charles Mingus practiced their art alongside fusion leaders like bassist Jaco Pastorius, pianist Herbie Hancock, and saxophonist Wayne Shorter, and talents like pianist Keith Jarrett, bassist Dave Holland, saxophonist Joe Lovano, and trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. Like Ellington himself, jazz and its practitioners were simply “beyond category.”

Today, jazz is found wherever there is music. It can be heard in nightclubs and concert halls, on TV and radio, and in classrooms across the country and around the world. Every day musicians young and old uphold the jazz tradition and create new legacies of their own. They play with swing and the blues and the spirit of irrepressible self-expression that gave rise in New Orleans at the turn of the century. One hundred years later, we still love to listen.
A Jazz Timeline

1700s

Africans are brought to America and forced into slavery. Their musical traditions, including percussion and call-and-response, influence American music and become the roots of spirituals and eventually, blues and jazz.

1800s

Immigrants from Europe flock to America bringing musical traditions like Irish jigs, French quadrilles, Spanish flamenco, German waltzes and more. In the late 1800s African American composer Scott Joplin inspires the popularity of “ragtime,” music that combines European compositional styles with rhythmic and melodic music from the African American community.

1900s

New Orleans, a prosperous American port city, attracts settlers from different countries and cultures. The multicultural atmosphere mingles European musical styles with the blues, ragtime, marching band music and other elements. Inspired by this musical blend, African American musicians create a new style of music known as jazz.

1920s

African Americans migrate in large numbers to northern cities including Chicago and New York, spreading the popularity of jazz and the blues. The jazz craze grows as a new generation embraces the high-spirited music as part of their rebellion against tradition. During the economic growth of the 1920s, radios and record players are widely available in stores for the first time, exposing a wider population to jazz.
1930s

The Great Depression plunges the nation into poverty. As many people can’t afford to buy records or go to clubs, the radio becomes the center of entertainment. The lively dance music of “Big band swing” provides a welcome escape from the hardships of the Depression, becoming the most popular music of the 1930’s and 1940’s.

1940s

From 1939-1945 many jazz musicians are drafted to fight in World War II, making it difficult to sustain the large dance bands of earlier times. Smaller jazz groups begin playing a new style of jazz. Called “bebop,” it is characterized by fast tempos, intricate melodies and complex harmonies. African American jazz bands continue to face racial discrimination by the record industry, clubs and audiences.

1950s

Television becomes America’s main source of entertainment, causing dance halls featuring jazz to close nationwide. As the big jazz bands dissolve, quintets and quartets emerge. Elvis Presley and other performers introduce a new style of popular music – rock n’ roll. Despite this competition and shrinking audiences, jazz musicians continue to explore their art form, producing complex and powerful music and taking jazz in new directions. For example, Latin and Afro-Cuban jazz – jazz with a Latin rhythm and sound – comes to the fore at this time.

1960s

African Americans conduct nonviolent protests against segregation, sparking the civil rights movement, which impacts almost every aspect of American life, including jazz. African American jazz artists had long resented the white owned record companies and clubs that controlled their income and, to some degree, their art. Artists become more insistent about their desire to break away from these establishments and control their own music.

1960s and on

In the 1960s musical artists begin blending jazz with different musical genres. Musicians like Miles Davis mix with rock and funk, creating “fusion.” Breaking away from traditional jazz structures and rhythms, musicians also explore a free-form jazz, called “free jazz.” In 1987, Jazz’s great influence and prominence in the international music scene prompted Congress to declare it a National Treasure. Congress confirms jazz “as a rare and valuable national American treasure to which we should devote our attention, support and resources to make certain it is preserved, understood and promulgated.”
Melody is the part of the song that you hum along to. It is a succession of notes that form a complete musical statement.

Harmony is the foundation of the melody. In contrast to the melody, which is usually played one note at a time, the harmonies of a song consist of several notes (called chords) played simultaneously. Played in time (according to the prescribed rhythmic meter), these harmonies provide musicians with a road map for improvisation.

The harmonies of a piece of music help to create the mood. When you describe a song as dark and mysterious, or bright and happy, you are often responding to the harmonies. In a typical jazz band, the harmonies are played by the piano or guitar, and bass. In a large ensemble or big band, the harmonies are also played by orchestrated horns.

Rhythm is one of the identifying characteristics of jazz. In jazz, a rhythm grows out of a simple, steady beat like that of a heartbeat. This pulse creates the foundation for the music, often remains constant and is usually maintained by the bass and drums who “keep time” for the rest of the band. Sometimes a pulse is very slow (like in a ballad) and sometimes it is very fast (like in a bebop tune). Regardless of the speed (tempo), the pulse helps to anchor the music and provides a basic contrast for other, more interesting, rhythms that occur in the tune.

In some musical styles, the beat is subdivided into two equal parts. But in jazz, the beat is divided unevenly in a bouncy fashion, that implies
three, rather than two, subunits. Much of the energy in jazz lies in this irregularity of its rhythm and the deliberately unexpected accents. This is known as syncopation.

**Improvisation** is the spontaneous creation of music. When a musician improvises, he or she invents music at the moment of performance, building on the existing theme and structure of the song. Jazz generally consists of a combination of composed and improvised elements, though the proportions of one to the other may vary. In a jazz performance, the ensemble plays a chorus or succession of choruses during which an individual player has the opportunity to improvise. In collective improvisation, two or more members of a group improvise at the same time. Improvisation, both collective and otherwise, builds a relationship between the members of the ensemble, helping them to “talk” to one another. It allows musicians to be creative and share their personalities. By experimenting and developing individual styles of improvisation, musicians are able to challenge and redefine conventional standards of virtuosity.

**Blues** has many definitions; it is a type of music, a musical form, a harmonic language, an attitude towards playing music, and a collection of sounds. Mostly though, the blues is a feeling; whether happy, sad, or somewhere in between, its intention is always the same: to make you feel better, not worse, to cheer you up, not bring you down.

Born out of the religious, work, and social music of African Americans in the South during the late 1800s, the blues has since become the foundation of American popular music, including rhythm and blues, rock ‘n’ roll, country, and all periods and styles of jazz.

**Swing** is the basic rhythmic attitude of jazz. It is so important to the music that if a band can’t swing then it simply can’t play jazz well. In the words of the great Duke Ellington, “It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing.” Swing depends on strong coordination between the musicians and the style and energy with which they play. It propels the rhythm forward in a dynamic, finger-snapping way. Rhythm alone does not produce swing — it involves timbre, attack, vibrato, and intonation. The easiest way to recognize a swing feel is to listen to the drummer — try to hear the “ting-ting-ta-ting” of the cymbal. Swing also refers to a specific jazz style that evolved in the mid-1930s, known as the Swing Era, which is characterized by large ensembles that play complex arrangements meant for dancing.

**Syncopation** is the rhythmic equivalent of surprise. It is the shifting of emphasis from what we hear as strong beats to weak, i.e., accenting unexpected beats. It is essential to a strong swing feeling.
Do jazz musicians make up what they play? Improvisation is a very important part of jazz; it allows jazz musicians to put their personalities into the music and share themselves with their bandmates and their audience. Most jazz performances follow a form, which is a predetermined series of harmonies known as a chord progression. This means that while jazz soloists make up their own musical phrases, they generally follow a set of pre-existing chords and a prescribed meter. In a jazz performance, musicians often play in a format known as “head-solo-head.” The head refers to the melody, which is introduced in the beginning, followed by one or more choruses of improvisation, and concluded with a restatement of the melody, or head.

What do you listen for in jazz? Jazz is like a conversation. Musicians communicate with each other and with the audience in musical sentences. They must listen to what is being said by their fellow musicians and respond appropriately, filling the music with the depth of their personality. They may reference other jazz performances, quoting material from other songs or solos, imitate the style or phrasing of another musician, or simply explore the emotional range of the song at hand.

How do jazz musicians learn how to improvise? Just as toddlers learn to talk by listening and imitating language, jazz musicians develop a vocabulary by listening to and studying the music of previous generations of musicians. They also study the technical aspects of their instruments, ensuring that they can express themselves fluidly. Learning music theory along with melodic and rhythmic patterns expands their musical vocabulary. They incorporate all of these things into their own expressive phrases, telling an original and personal story.
What is song form?
In the same way that your schedule helps you find your way through the day, song form helps jazz musicians find their way through a piece of music. They establish the harmonic pattern, or chord progression, of the song, providing a road map for the improvising musician. Song forms come in many shapes and sizes, but the most common forms in jazz are the 12-bar blues and the 32-bar song form. Each time a musician plays through the harmonies of the form, he or she has completed a chorus, which can then be repeated over and over again.

What is a typical jazz band?
A jazz band can consist of any combination of instruments. One person can play jazz and do it beautifully; most often though, a jazz band consists of a rhythm section and one or more horns and/or a vocalist. The band can be small like a trio or quartet, or a large big band with as many as 18 musicians. The big band generally consists of three to four trumpets, three to four trombones, four to five saxophones, and a rhythm section.

What is the rhythm section?
A typical rhythm section is comprised of a piano and/or guitar, bass, drums, and various percussion instruments. It is the engine that propels the band and provides the rhythmic and harmonic foundation for the music.

The drummer keeps the time for the band, constructing and maintaining the groove in conjunction with the bass player. The drummer outlines the song form and provides a constant rhythmic commentary, accenting the cymbals or snare drum in response to the music.

The bass player provides both harmonic and rhythmic support, maintaining the groove by coordinating very closely with the drummer and outlining the chord changes with a walking bass line.

The piano player/guitarist also supports the harmonies and rhythms of the music. Unlike the bassist, who usually plays one note at a time, both pianists and guitarists can play many notes at once. They create rich harmonies that support both the melody and the soloist, and punctuate the music with rhythmic accents.
Traditional Jazz Instruments

**Acoustic Bass (Double Bass or Upright Bass):** The largest instrument of the string family, which also includes the violin and guitar. Notes are produced when the strings vibrate. The double bass was first used in symphony orchestras. In jazz, the bass anchors the low notes that go along with the melody and helps keep the tempo steady. The electric bass is also used in jazz groups that play more contemporary styles. Usually played pizzicato without a bow.

**Percussion:** Drums, tambourines, wood blocks, triangles and other instruments. The grouping of drums and cymbals used in a jazz group are called a trap set or “kit.” Percussion means to “hit things together”—even your hands become a percussion instrument when you clap. The drums cooperate with the bass to help keep the tempo steady.

**Piano (includes electronic keyboard):** The piano is a member of the percussion family. Inside a piano are many wire strings. Notes are made when the felt hammers hit the piano strings, which is why it is considered a percussion instrument. The piano can play groups of notes called chords, which blend with the low notes played by the bass and the steady rhythms produced by the drums to produce the rhythm section sound.

**Guitar:** Another member of the string family, the guitar plays chords and is featured in some jazz groups. Sometimes the guitar is the only chord-making member of the group.

**Brass Instruments:** Trumpet and trombone are members of the brass family. Brass players make sounds by blowing and buzzing their lips in a mouthpiece that looks like a small cup. A trumpet may look short, but it is actually made up of many feet of brass tube. Sound is created with the trumpet by pressing buttons to open and close different sections of the brass tube. A trombone player slides a long piece of brass tube up and down to sound different notes.

**Wind Instruments:** Saxophone and clarinet are members of the woodwind family. Woodwind players make their sounds with the help of a reed, which is a piece of cane wood strapped to the mouthpiece. Sound is produced when the player blows into the mouthpiece, which causes the reed to vibrate. To make the different notes, the woodwind player presses on keys that open and close holes on the sides of the instrument.
6 Learning Activities

Music (Grades K-12)

Creating an Original Blues Song
The Blues are the foundation of all American music. It is a creative form of musical communication. There are many forms of the Blues, but the most popular are the 12-bar blues. This form usually has a statement, the repetition of that statement, followed by a resolution or response, as seen below in the lyrics of “Backwater Blues” performed by the great Blues singer Bessie Smith.

• Print out copies of “Backwater Blues” and pass these out to your students.
• Play them Bessie Smith’s “Backwater Blues”.
• Brainstorm with the class some issues or themes that have come up in your class or school.
• Ask students to choose their own issue or theme and create blues lyrics using a similar form as “Backwater Blues.”
• In small groups, have students share their lyrics with each other.
• Reflect together on the experience of creating blues songs.
BACKWATER BLUES

WHEN IT RAINED 5 DAYS AND THE SKY TURNED DARK AS NIGHT
WHEN IT RAINED 5 DAYS AND THE SKY TURNED DARK AS NIGHT
THEN TROUBLE TAKIN’ PLACE IN THE LOW LANDS AT NIGHT

I WOKE UP THIS MORNING' CAN’T EVEN GET OUT OF MY DOOR
I WOKE UP THIS MORNING’ CAN’T EVEN GET OUT OF MY DOOR
THERE’S ENOUGH TROUBLE TO MAKE A POOR GIRL WONDER WHERE SHE WANT TO GO

THEN THEY ROW’D A LITTLE BOAT ABOUT 5 MILES ‘CROSS THE POND
THEN THEY ROW’D A LITTLE BOAT ABOUT 5 MILES ‘CROSS THE POND
I PACKED ALL MY CLOTHES SO THE MINUTE THEY ROW’D ME ALONG

WHEN IT THUNDERS AND LIGHTENIN’ AND THE WIND BEGINS TO BLOW
WHEN IT THUNDERS AND LIGHTENIN’ AND THE WIND BEGINS TO BLOW
THEN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AIN’T GOT NO PLACE TO GO

THEN I WENT AND STOOD UP ON SOME HIGH OLD LONESOME HILL
THEN I WENT AND STOOD UP ON SOME HIGH OLD LONESOME HILL
THEN LOOKED DOWN ON MY HOUSE WHERE I USED TO LIVE

BACKWATER BLUES THEN CAUSED ME TO PACK MY THINGS AND GO
BACKWATER BLUES THEN CAUSED ME TO PACK MY THINGS AND GO
CAUSE MY HOUSE FELL DOWN AND I CAN’T LIVE THERE NO MORE

HMMM..I CAN’T MOVE NO MORE
HMMM..I CAN’T MOVE NO MORE
THERE AIN’T NO PLACE FOR A POOR OLD GIRL TO GO
**Building an Ensemble**
To be successful, an orchestra requires every musician involved to work together as an ensemble.

- Have a student to tap a rhythm on a found object or percussion instrument and ask others to copy it. Another student can introduce a complementary beat.
- When the rhythm is strong, students can take turns creating variations on top of the steady rhythmic theme.
- Ask each student in the group to take a turn as soloist. (Objects found in the classroom can be turned into musical instruments.)
- Reflect together on the experience of being a soloist and an ensemble member.

**Musical Improvisation**
Introduce improvisation using a common short phrase, such as a name.

- Have students turn this spoken phrase or word this into a musical phrase based on the natural rhythm of it, or the tonal inflections someone gives it, etc.
- From there, ask students to choose more concrete musical structures, such as a piece already familiar to the students, for example, “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.”
- Encourage students to modify the melody, introduce new elements, create counterpoint, and “call and response” with another student.
- Share some of the improvised songs, then reflect together on the students’ experience.

**Visual Arts and Music (Grades K-6)**

**Visual Improvisation to Music**
Many visual artists use improvisation when creating their artwork. For example, painter Romare Bearden considered himself an improviser, creating rhythms and melodies on the canvas that felt spontaneous.

- Play selected music and provide students with a variety of art supplies.
- Create visual images in response to the music. Notice the tempo, tension, feelings, harmony and how the musical elements convey emotion or ideas.
- Try making a collaborative improvised artwork by passing a drawing or painting around the classroom.
- Reflect together afterwards: Did you decide what to paint, draw or sculpt? Was it planned? Was it spontaneous?

**Literacy, Music & Theater Arts (Grades 1-5)**

**Group Story Improvisation**

- Sit in a circle and tell a collective short story. One student begins the story and then students take turns in order around the circle adding a sentence or two.
- Give the story a beginning, middle and end and a consistent flow of voice. Try new topics.
- As students become comfortable, add a pulse to the delivery using simple percussion instruments or clapping, etc. Students can contribute their lines in rhythmic patterns.
- The short stories can be recorded, listened to, and evaluated for the flow of content, divergence from the original topic, etc.
- Reflect together afterwards: How did it feel to speak without time to prepare? Did the percussion element make the improvisation easier or more difficult?
Arrangement: The organization of a musical work for a given ensemble that determines which instruments play when, what harmonies will be used, what rhythmic groove, and where improvisation occurs.

Big band: A style of orchestral jazz that first surfaced in the 1920s and blossomed during the Swing Era (1935–1950) when it became the popular music of the day. Big bands feature three sections (brass, woodwind, and rhythm) and generally play carefully orchestrated arrangements often meant for dancing.

Blues: African American music developed in the South during the mid-1800s. Both a style, a musical form, a harmonic language, and an attitude towards playing music, the blues is the foundation of most American popular music.

Blues form: A typical blues consists of 12 measures, divided into three sections of four measures each, with a harmonic progression based on three chords. Blues forms can also be 4, 8, or 16 measures long; nearly any jazz composition can be played with a “bluesy” feeling.

Blue note: Any note that is bent or smeared, generally a half step away from the diatonic note.

Call and response: A musical conversation in which instrumentalists and/or vocalists answer one another.

Chord: Three or more notes played at the same time, creating one sound. The harmonic structure of most songs is comprised of a progression of different chords on which soloists improvise.

Chorus: The playing of a complete song form. When a musician solos, he or she may improvise several choruses in succession.

Collective improvisation: When two or more musicians improvise at the same time; also known as polyphonic improvisation.

Downbeat: The first beat of each measure.

Groove: The interaction of rhythms to form a pattern.

Jam session: An informal gathering of improvising musicians.

Riff: A short, repeated musical phrase used as a background for a soloist or to add drama to a musical climax.

Solo: When one musician improvises, usually within the structure of an existing song.

Syncopation: A rhythmic accent or emphasis on an unexpected beat.

Scat singing: A vocal technique that uses nonsense syllables to improvise on the melody.

Standard song form: Popularized in the 1920s and 1930s, the standard song form is usually 32 measures long; it can often be heard as 4 distinct sections, each 8 measures long.

Swing: The basic rhythmic attitude of jazz, it is based on the shuffle rhythm and it propels the music forward. Swing also refers to a style of jazz that first appeared during the 1930s and features big bands playing complex arrangements, usually for dancing.

Texture: The atmosphere created by the combined sounds of musical instruments and harmonies.

Timbre: The tonal quality of a voice or instrument; for example, an artist’s timbre may be described as raspy and rough, or smooth and clear.
Selected Recordings

**Louis Armstrong:** *The Complete Hot Five and Hot Seven Box Set* (4-CD set), Columbia/Legacy 63527, 1925–29; Louis Armstrong: The Big Band Recordings 1930–32 (2-CD set).


**Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers:** *Moanin’,* Blue Note Records 95324, 1958.


**Miles Davis:** *Kind of Blue,* Columbia Records, 1959; *The Best of Miles Davis and Gil Evans,* Legacy, 1957–88.

**Duke Ellington:** *Ellington at Newport, 1956* (Complete), Columbia; *The Blanton-Webster Band* (3-CD set), RCA/Bluebird Records, 1940–42.

**Ella Fitzgerald:** *Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song* (3-CD set), Verve Records, 1939–41.


**Benny Goodman & Charlie Christian:** *Flying Home,* Jazzterdays, 1939–41.

**Billie Holiday:** *The Complete Decca Recordings* (2-CD set), 1939–44.

**Charles Mingus:** *Mingus Ah Um,* Columbia Records, 1959.

**Thelonious Monk:** *The Complete Blue Note Recordings* (4-CD set), Blue Note Records, 1947–58.


**King Oliver and His Creole Jazz Band:** *The Complete Set* (2-CD set), Retrieval (Allegro), 1923.

**Original Dixieland Jazz Band:** *75th Anniversary,* Bluebird/RCA, 1917–1921.

**Charlie Parker:** *Jazz at Massey Hall,* Debut (Fantasy) 44, 1953; *Charlie Parker on Dial Complete* (4-CD set), Stateside Records, 1946–47.

**Wayne Shorter:** *The Best of Wayne Shorter,* Blue Note Records, 1953–59.

**Bessie Smith:** *The Essential Bessie Smith,* Columbia/Legacy, 1923–1933.

**The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz** (5-CD set), Sony Music Special Productions, 1995.

**Art Tatum:** *The Complete Art Tatum,* Capital Records (2-CD set), Capital Records, 1949–52.

**Sarah Vaughan:** *In the Land of Hi-Fi,* EmArcy, 1955.

**Fats Waller:** *The Very Best of Fats Waller,* RCA Records.

Recommended Readings


**Thinking in Jazz** by Paul Berliner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
The Birth of Bebop by Scott Deveaux (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).


The Golden Age of Jazz (photography) by William Gottlieb (San Francisco, Pomegranate Communications, 1995).


Children’s Books

Looking for Bird in the Big City by Robert Burleigh (San Diego: Silver/Whistle/Harcourt, 2001).


Mysterious Thelonious by Christopher Raschka (London: Orchard Paperback, 1997).


I See the Rhythm by Michele Wood (San Francisco: Children’s Book Press, 1998).

DVDs


Internet

Wynton Marsalis: http://wytonmarsalis.org/

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra: http://jalc.org/

International Association of Jazz Educators: www.iaje.org

IAJE promotes the understanding and appreciation of jazz and its heritage, and provides resources for educators.

Jazz for Young People Curriculum Online: www.jazzforyoungpeople.org

This site provides students, teachers, and the
general public with music clips, video footage, engaging biographies, and activities that explain core concepts and major figures of jazz.

NEA Jazz in the Schools:  
www.neajazzintheschools.org  
Designed primarily for high school social studies, American history, and music teachers, this web-based curriculum (and free DVD toolkit) takes students on a step by step journey through the history of jazz, integrating that story with the sweep of American social, economic, and political developments.

NPR Jazz:  www.nprjazz.org  
National Public Radio offers a range of insightful jazz programming and in-depth profiles of jazz artists past and present.

PBS Jazz, A Film by Ken Burns:  
www.pbs.org/jazz  
This site, based on the 2001 series, offers a wide array of resources, including an excellent timeline, biographies and music clips.

Jazz West.com:  
http://www.jazzwest.com/index.htm  
Local calendar, directory and more for jazz in the Bay Area.

Local Venues featuring Jazz

Cal Performances, Berkeley  
www.calperformances.org

The Jazzschool, Berkeley  
www.jazzschool.com/

SF Jazz  
www.sfjazz.org/

Yoshi's Jazz Club, Oakland & San Francisco  
www.yoshis.com
9 California State Standards

Music Grades K-12

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION
Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Music
Students read, notate, listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION
Creating, Performing, and Participating in Music
Students apply vocal and instrumental musical skills in performing a varied repertoire of music. They compose and arrange music and improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments, using digital/electronic technology when appropriate.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT
Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music
Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

Role of Music
3.1 Describe the social functions of a variety of musical forms from various cultures and time periods (e.g., folk songs, dances).

Diversity of Music
3.2 Identify different or similar uses of musical elements in music from diverse cultures.
3.4 Describe the influence of various cultures and historical events on musical forms and styles.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING
Responding to, Analyzing and Making Judgments about Works of Music
Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.
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The mission of Cal Performances is to inspire, nurture and sustain a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts. Cal Performances, the performing arts presenter of the University of California, Berkeley, fulfills this mission by presenting, producing and commissioning outstanding artists, both renowned and emerging, to serve the University and the broader public through performances and education and community programs. Cal Performances celebrates over 100 years on the UC Berkeley Campus.

Our Cal Performances in the Classroom and SchoolTime program cultivates an early appreciation for and understanding of the performing arts amongst our youngest audiences. Workshops and classroom visits prepare students for deeper engagement when they experience hour-long, daytime performances by the same world-class artists who perform as part of the main season. Cal Performances in the Classroom and SchoolTime have become an integral part of the academic year for teachers and students throughout the Bay Area.
Cal Performances in the Classroom educational materials were written, edited and designed by Laura Abrams, Rica Anderson, David McCauley and Marcus Shelby, with material adapted from Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Jazz 101 guide, and the Kennedy Center’s Cue Sheet on jazz.

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