

THE TURNAROUND

The Yale Undergraduate Jazz Collective magazine

Sept. 2020 — Vol. 1, Iss. 1



Contents

3

Letter from the Editor of the Turnaround
and the President of YUJC
Jarron Long, Jason Altshuler

Appreciation

4-5

Jazz and Tik Tok
Ethan Dodd

Spotlights

6-7

Noah Baerman Interview
Bird Lives! Concert
Mind the Hang Concert Series

8

Jazz Radar
Jarron Long

Feature

9-10

Jazz Voices at Yale
*Jason Altshuler, Ethan Dodd, Olivia Martinez, Eva
Quitmann, Jarron Long, Jose Key*

Working on it
Jenny Lee

Essays

11

Jazz, Connection, and Mrs. Dalloway
Calvin Kaleel

12

Classic Jazz Jokes and Pranks
Adin Ring

13

FRISELL
Dani Zanuttini-Frank

14

Night Song
Uma Dwivedi

Reviews

15

Sun Ra's Cosmic Philosophy
Zach Gilstrap

*The Turnaround is the
Yale Undergraduate Jazz
Collective magazine,
dedicated to showcasing
the jazz community on
campus and in New Haven.*

Front and Back Cover Photo

Michael Pollack

Mural Artist

M. Deangelo (@refractualism)

Joel Ross Photo:

Jose Key



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Jarron Long



Photo: Courtesy of Jarron Long

Legendary trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie was an innovator, as demonstrated by his iconic horn, its bell bent upwards at a 45-degree angle. As the story goes, Dizzy left his trumpet on stage for an interview when a dancer tripped and fell on it. Dizzy could have lost his cool, but he didn't. When he picked up his battered trumpet to play, he found that he liked its unique tone and the way the twisted horn created a new proximity between sound and player.

It's in this spirit of innovation, in the midst of adversity, that we present this premier issue of The Turnaround. With this magazine, we hope to bring you closer to some of the creative thought and activity of our community.

In my opinion, jazz has never been merely a musical category. It has also never been easily defined. What does jazz mean? The goal of this magazine is to answer that perpetual question. To answer it with

as many voices as possible, from the perspective of both our shared community and our own personal encounters. "Informative," then, is one word we hope can be applied to these pages. But one just as important to us is "engaging." Due to COVID-19, we've all been separated from many groups and interests: jam sessions, rehearsals, concerts. This especially holds true for music, an art formed from closeness and not distance. The Turnaround is our way of bridging the gap: an outlet, a platform, and a stage, offering a different form of nearness on the page.

Though its stories may defy boundaries, this magazine contains a straightforward structure. In this issue, you will find an intriguing look at how hit songs from Tik Tok can relate to jazz. On page 8, you'll hear about some exciting updates from the YUJC and the Yale/New Haven community. Our main feature involves a compilation

of anecdotes from students about their experiences with jazz at Yale. Pages 11-14 contain a diverse selection of individual pieces, on a variety of topics, and on page 15 we conclude with a review of a 1974 Afrofuturist film featuring Sun Ra and his Arkestra.

This magazine is the culmination of various Google Docs, numerous online scheduling forms, and one too many Zoom calls. But mostly, it's a product of the great talent, enthusiasm, and expressiveness of its contributors. Innovation is a continuous process, and so we think of this issue as a trial run. On the final page, you will find a link to a brief questionnaire where we encourage you to share your thoughts on the magazine; with your feedback we will determine what shape it will take going forward. Thank you for joining in on this project and supporting all those who made it possible. We hope you enjoy.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jason Altshuler



Photo: Courtesy of Jason Altshuler

That I am writing this from home, in September, illustrates how strange a fall it is. Yale is scattered across the country and the world, and everything is different as a result: classrooms, dining halls, extracurricular bazaars, rooming groups, and more. YUJC is, of course, no exception.

Yet the one thing that remains largely unchanged this semester is the people. While activities, habits, and methods have all shifted considerably, it is still the same community of Yalies that makes up our classes and extracurriculars; the people on our Zoom calls have familiar faces, and the same individuals post in the Yale meme pages. Even as our daily routines change and change again, the community we are a part of stays the same. Luckily, YUJC is no exception in this regard as well.

The Yale Undergraduate Jazz Collective is a community, and one that will continue to grow—both in size and in maturity—even as we live in vastly different situations. Since

March, when Yale first went remote, we have almost doubled in size, experiencing a variety of remarkable moments.

We have restructured our organization, welcomed a new board, hosted a virtual jazz concert for charity, filed as a 501(c)3, published a new website (check it out at yujc.org!), prepared online programming for the fall, and more. It has become clear that despite the limitations of the pandemic, our community can flourish due to the commitment of the people who make it up.

Our hope, with this magazine and all other projects, is to extend that feeling of community to you, and to everyone at or around Yale who shares our love for jazz.

As you will discover in *The Turnaround*, YUJC hosted pianist Noah Baerman for an interview through Facebook live earlier in the month; this week, we will broadcast an online concert in honor of Charlie Parker's 100th birthday. We have many more ideas and events on the horizon as well.

Our mission is the same as always: to share jazz with all of you, however we can. It is true that the current situation poses certain challenges to this pursuit. Jazz is an active art, and one that is often centered around live music, whether you are in the audience or on the bandstand. Today, this aspect of jazz is difficult to enjoy safely.

However, the aspects of the music that make up its liveliness—the improvisation, the creativeness, the collaboration, the spontaneity—are all as relevant and, we hope, accessible as ever. We on the YUJC board will do our best to create opportunities in which these elements can be part of your lives, whether you are on-campus, off-campus, or at home; whether you are an expert, aficionado, or amateur.

I invite you to join me and the rest of the YUJC board as we continue to grow, learn, and revel in the art of jazz—in a socially distanced manner—for the foreseeable future. Please enjoy this magazine, and I hope to see you soon.

Jazz and Tik Tok:

Part 1

The revolutionary music genre and the wildly popular app have a lot more in common than you think.

STORY ETHAN DODD

GRAPHIC ELLIE NORMAN

Because of its complexity and laid-back vibe, jazz often sounds like random noise or elevator music to the uninitiated ear. But the diverse world of jazz is worth appreciating. Every issue of The Turnaround will feature a piece intended to acquaint newcomers with jazz and explore how to listen to the music. As for the already initiated, you might find this series ear-opening as you escape your jazz snobbery like I did. I hope that you might one day choose to listen to jazz and pop music out of your own volition.

This past summer, I became addicted to TikTok. Unlike the typical user, however, I went into my viewing with limited knowledge of pop music. TikTok was my remedial education in what the “youths”—my peers—have been listening to. In the past, listening to TikTok songs would have made me cover my ears. After all, I was a jazz snob. “Get this simple chord progression away from me,” I might have thought. Or, “not enough eighth notes!” But swiping through endless TikToks led me to appreciate the language of pop music and helped me start conversations with my non-jazz friends.

I hope that by pointing out some similarities between jazz and TikTok pop songs, listeners of one genre might start to understand the other and appreciate it. As I found more and more elements shared between pop and jazz, pop music felt more familiar and understandable to me. I believe this was key to me enjoying it. Once I got past its subjective foreignness, I started to view pop as music that was merely different from what I usually listen to. Soon I felt comfortable appreciating the distinctive elements of pop.

This process of aural accommodation might be likened to stepping foot in a foreign land, unsure of where to get a bite to eat and overwhelmed with too many

unfamiliar choices. But once you come upon a McDonald’s, you have established a sense of familiarity. This is the shared element. Always able to return to home base, you feel safe to step out into the unknown for longer stretches of time. Eventually you’ll start to understand and appreciate the local cuisine, so you don’t have to exclusively eat at the McDonald’s anymore.

Rather than hit you over the head with a jazz history textbook, I’ll begin this series by drawing connections between jazz and pop music, in particular, TikTok songs. For those even less “hip” than me, TikTok is a video-sharing app known for its street pranks, catchy beats, and dexterous dances. “TikTok songs” are pop songs that have been clipped to roughly 15 seconds and choreographed by users. These users invent and imitate dances, causing these songs to go viral in their TikTok form. The app has had a striking influence over its one billion young users located across the globe, which was only amplified by the boredom of COVID-19. If an influencer dances to your song on TikTok, it will go viral. It is a cultural force to be reckoned with. A jazz initiation in this day and age can start with connecting TikTok songs to jazz and showing they both deserve a listen.

By examining the musical elements of rhythm, repetition, feel, harmonic progression, call and response, and soloing, I want to share my newfound appreciation of TikTok songs with you. In this part of the series, I will start by covering the elements of repeating rhythms and feel shared between jazz and TikTok music.

As you read, I suggest you click the links and try to follow what I am hearing. You might disagree with my interpretation. That’s okay. I am not making an argument that these elements necessarily make good music. I will point out what I like in TikTok songs and argue that those who listen to this music might enjoy jazz with similar elements.

Repeating Rhythms

Much of modern hip-hop and pop draw from repeating rhythms; the repetition produces a steady rhythmic backdrop for the song to build on top of. Megan

Thee Stallion’s “[Savage](#)” not only uses a repeating beat, but seems to be related to the rhythmic ambiguity of jazz and the rhythms of Latin music. Though “Savage” falls into the genre of trap music, which is traditionally characterized by a fast and crisp drum pattern and pounding bass, it substitutes repeated jabs of piano notes in for the pounding bass. The three emphatic jabs of multiple notes in the first half of the repeating beat are syncopated, meaning they are off from the beat you’d stomp with your foot. This produces a dragging effect.

Whereas you might normally tap out two even downbeats as in “[We Will Rock You](#)” by Queen, “Savage” squeezes a three-beat pulse inside those first two beats. These jabs then produce an unevenness and rushed urgency in the first half of the beat. The beat ends with another syncopated jab played up a half step, giving some sense of resolution and forward momentum in the repeating beat. Whether it is because or in spite of this rhythmic ambiguity, the beat emboldens the assertiveness of Megan Thee as she confidently glides over it with ease. After all, she’s a savage.

The repeating beat in “Savage” grounds the song and keeps its energy up. The three piano jabs in the first half of the beat also resemble a rhythmic pattern known as a clave, which originated in West Africa, evolved across Latin America in the slave trade, and fused with jazz in the United States with the influx of immigrants from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Brazil. (If you want to learn more, the YouTube channel 12tone presents a very helpful [primer](#).)

In essence, claves consist of rhythms based around feeling pulses of three and two rather than the two common to much of pop. These rhythms repeat like a metronome and can change order and arrangement depending on the song and style.

Because they repeat in one or two bar phrases for the duration of a song, claves provide the rhythmic floor to dance and move on. The repetition they provide is much like that of a hip-hop beat that stays constant throughout a song. This repetition is a springboard for energy to build on.



[“The Girl From Ipanema”](#) features a Bossa Nova clave that feels like a perpetually regenerating wave, as does much of the Brazilian style. Supported by this rhythmic floor, João and Astrud Gilberto’s vocals and Stan Getz’s saxophone shrink and grow in dynamics and emotion. Megan’s assertive intensity builds on top of the beat in a similar vein. The essence of repetition is stability. But Megan’s clave-like beat makes this repetition seem unfamiliar to many of our pop-acclimated ears. She exploits our unfamiliarity to embolden her savageness.

Beats in jazz provide a metronomic foundation and inspire rhythmic exploration. In a different use of repeating rhythms, Ahmad Jamal’s drummer in [“Invitation”](#) plays a beat somewhere between trap and Latin rhythm while the bass maintains a repeating figure underneath. The complex precision of the drums, hitting a part of the kit on almost every part of the beat, provides an atmosphere of almost overwhelming order. On piano, Jamal goes in and out of interacting with the beat itself in a rhythmic fashion and playing over the top of it in expansive, impressionistic glissandos that wash over the hard edges of the beat. The repeating beat provides the reality for Jamal to distort and make a dream of.

The repeating rhythms of jazz also make for great samples. I recommend viewing this [video](#) where Robert Glasper discusses the influence of Ahmad Jamal and other jazz musicians on hip hop. Whether she knows it or not, Megan’s choice of rhythmic feel has connections to a long tradition in jazz.

Feel

A rhythm can be felt differently depending on how it is played relative to the

implied beat of a song. The feel comes in when someone gives the sense that they are rushing or dragging while maintaining the same tempo. Though one might be playing behind the beat, they are not slowing the tempo down. Their playing just gives the sense of dragging.

To visualize this concept, imagine one person walking fixedly with evenly spaced steps next to another person loping along. While keeping pace with the first person, the second person bobs up and down and drags his feet behind him. A heavy swing pattern, feeling as if it lags behind the beat, achieves this effect. This rhythmic flexibility expands the emotive possibilities available to listeners. Without feel, we would be playing straight all day, limiting the range of expression. People are not, and do not always want to feel, orderly and rigid, as you might associate with [marches](#).

Jazz musicians are notorious for playing around the beat to distort time and convey emotions through their feel. This rhythmic freedom is key to jazz. Swing can feel rhythmically indeterminate, as heard in Miles Davis’ vamp-based [“Footprints.”](#) When listening to this song, notice how the bass vamp remains steady in its feel, almost on top of the beat. Meanwhile, the drums speed up with smaller intervals between hits on the ride cymbal and drag when the hits have larger spaces between them. However, the beats are always in conversation with the metronomic bass vamp and implied meter.

The varying time between sections and between parts of solos feels disorderly yet adaptive, producing a constant cycle of order and chaos. (Also, as a preview to a discussion of call and response, notice

how the soloist or a member of the rhythm section may either lead the change in feel or respond to one.) Although nearly falling apart at some points when the drums get too wild and lose the underlying beat, and even dropping out momentarily, the band on [“Footprints”](#) holds it together by finding the implied time in the constant bass vamp. Rhythmic ambiguity and tension allow artists to evoke a whole range of moods not normally available to the ear. The Second Great Miles Davis Quintet does this masterfully.

Following in this tradition, [“Savage”](#) feels sassy because of its syncopated, dragging feel. Because the three piano jabs are played unevenly behind the beat, even for a clave, they seem to drag. This dragging gives a sense of inexactitude and carefreeness that conforms to Megan Thee Stallion’s savage persona. Personally, I really enjoy this apparent unevenness because it makes me feel unconstrained by time, at least for that moment. Because I am not conscious of the time, the feel absorbs me.

If you like the dragging feel of hip hop, you definitely will like jazz with a heavy swing to it, such as Hard Bop. One of my favorite examples of heavy swing feel is [“Moanin’”](#) by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Listen for the “spang-a-lang” sound in Blakey’s ride cymbal and shuffle feel. It demands a stank face—a contorted facial expression from enjoying the intensity of what you are hearing—of immense proportions.

In the second part of this series, you can look forward to reading about some of the elements of harmonic progression, soloing, and call and response shared between jazz and TikTok music.

YUJC Spotlights

Highlighting past and upcoming events hosted by the Yale Undergraduate Jazz Collective.

Noah Baerman

View on Facebook (link below)

Noah Baerman is a jazz pianist, composer, educator, author, and activist. The Collective's Dani and Adin sat down with Noah on Friday, September 11 to discuss his current work, creative philosophy, and advice for young musicians creating in quarantine. Check out the recorded interview on the YUJC facebook page to learn more about the process and inspiration behind his upcoming album, and to enjoy some anecdotal wisdom from a seasoned jazz veteran!

Over fifteen years after nearly walking away from the piano due to his struggles with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS), an incurable connective tissue disorder with which he was born, Noah will soon release his eleventh recording under his own name, the double-album Love Right. A student of Kenny Barron's while earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Jazz Studies from Rutgers University in the 1990s, he first earned national recognition for his 2003 release Patch Kit, conceived around his struggles with EDS and featuring jazz legends Ron Carter and Ben Riley.

Patch Kit raised awareness and funds for EDS and led to an invitation from Marian McPartland to be a guest on her long-running NPR program Piano Jazz in 2005. Subsequent works have included Soul Force, a tribute to the life and message of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Know Thyself, an emotionally sweeping 65 minute suite made possible by a "New Jazz Works" grant from Chamber Music America/Doris Duke Foundation.

Since 1998 he has lived with his wife, visual artist Kate Ten Eyck, in Middletown, Connecticut, where July 10, 2020 was declared "Noah Baerman Day" by the city's mayor and arts commission in recognition of his earning a 2020 Arts Advocacy award.

He teaches at several institutions including Wesleyan University, where he has directed the Jazz Ensemble since 2007, and has taught through their



Graduate Liberal Studies Program and worked with teenaged musicians through the Center for Creative Youth since 2002. In 2012 he became Artistic Director of Resonant Motion, Inc., an organization that seeks to explore and deepen connections between music and positive changes.

Through RMI he has overseen numerous educational workshops on the methodology behind socially conscious art, founded the musically diverse imprint RMI Records, and fostered and participated in interdisciplinary work.

You can find the interview on our Facebook page at [this link](#).

COPY NOAH BAERMAN PHOTO COURTESY NOAH BAERMAN

Bird Lives!

Friday, October 2nd at 8 pm EST

This August, the jazz community celebrated Charlie Parker's 100th birthday. As one of the founding members of the bebop movement, Bird was instrumental in shaping the modern jazz sound. He pioneered an incredibly technical form of improvisation which has influenced many greats after him and continues to sound contemporary to this day. Please join the Collective virtually on our [Facebook page](#) Friday, October 2 at 8 pm EST to commemorate his monumental contributions to jazz and contemporary music! For further information, make sure to check out our website at [yujc.org](#) or our [Facebook \(Yale Undergraduate Jazz Collective\)](#).

COPY CALVIN KALEEL
GRAPHIC LOURDES ROHAN

100 YEARS OF BIRD
AN HOMAGE TO CHARLIE PARKER

PRESENTED BY
YUJC

8PM EST
FRIDAY, OCT. 2ND
A VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE



Mind the Hang

Details on Facebook (link in piece)

The New Haven Jazz Underground is a grass roots, community-based organization dedicated to promoting and supporting jazz and all of its forms in New Haven, CT. Formed by New Haven trumpeter, composer, and educator Nick Di Maria, the NHJU is committed to preserving New Haven's vibrant music scene and history, while also providing employment for local musicians and support for local business and the community at large through social interaction and activism.

A message from Nick Di Maria:

Normally, in the best of times, we would be gearing up for our second annual jazz festival. However, with the state of urgency the COVID-19 pandemic has caused, we are unable to produce our festival as we normally would. This hasn't stopped our efforts to help the community. During March and April we raised money for families in need in order to buy groceries. Now we are raising money to aid the community at large with our Mind the Hang Concert Series.

The Mind the Hang Concert Series will be dedicated to getting musicians back to work, and connecting the community with social awareness by raising money for musicians and community action groups dedicated to help our fellow citizens.

In short, we plan to put on concerts and raise money for causes including Black Lives Matter, the NAACP, the New Haven Pride Center, the New Haven BOE Arts Department, and the Connecticut Food Bank.

Due to the success of Mind the Hang the NHJU will be continuing the series through the fall on the first/third week of each month.

Shows will be streamed at <http://facebook.com/nhju> and archived on the NHJU YouTube channel.

COPY NICK DI MARIA PHOTO COURTESY NICK DI MARIA

Jazz radar

A list of upcoming jazz-related events in both the Yale and larger New Haven community

COMPILED BY JARRON LONG

PHOTO ZACH GILSTRAP

Atelier Florian Sunday Jazz Brunches

Atelier Florian (located at 1166 Chapel Street) is holding Jazz Brunches on Sundays from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm, featuring live jazz with host Nick Di Maria. Sundays, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. Learn more on their [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Harvest Wine Bar & Restaurant Jazz Thursdays

Continuing in October, on Thursday nights Harvest Wine Bar & Restaurant (located at 114 Chapel Street) will feature live music from 7 to 9:30 pm, hosted by Blue Plate Entertainment. The first Thursday will feature Willie Moore and Patrick Williams. Thursdays, beginning October 1, from 7 to 9:30 pm. Find out more on [Blue Plate's Facebook page](#).

New Haven Jazz Underground's Mind the Hang

The New Haven Jazz Underground (NHJU) has been holding a series of free live-streamed performances, featuring a variety of local artists. Donations are encouraged to support the musicians. Find out more about upcoming events and where you can watch them on [NHJU's Facebook page](#).

Orchid Cafe Sunday Jazz Brunches

The Orchid Cafe at ConnCAT (located at 4 Science Park) has been holding Jazz Brunches on Sundays from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, with live music starting at 12:00 pm. Past brunches have featured music from The William Fluker All Star Jazz Band. Learn more about potential upcoming events on [Orchid Cafe's Facebook page](#).

Treasures from the Yale Film Archive

Treasures from the Yale Film Archive online is currently presenting a conversation with award-winning filmmaker and Yale alumni Nick Doob '69 and his 1979 feature documentary Street Music. See the full description and access the videos here, available through September 2020: <https://web.library.yale.edu/film/news/streetmusic>

YUJC: Noah Baerman Interview

On September 11, the YUJC had an incredible [interview](#) with Connecticut-based jazz pianist, composer, and educator Noah Baerman on Youtube and Facebook Live. Noah is a performer and committed advocate who recently won a Connecticut Artists Respond Grant for his Musician-Aid Requests series. Discussion topics included Baerman's current work, creative philosophy, and advice for young musicians creating in quarantine.

YUJC: 100 Years of Bird, An Homage to Charlie Parker

This August marked the 100th birthday of legendary jazz saxophonist Charlie Parker. YUJC will be celebrating Bird with a live streamed concert, featuring student musicians playing his compositions, in honor of his unparalleled influence on jazz music. Streaming October 2 on the [YUJC Facebook](#).



Jazz voices at Yale

Students from around the Yale jazz scene share their stories of playing, studying, and sharing the music during their time on campus.

Jason Altshuler | Ezra Stiles '22

I remember coming to the Bulldog Days jam as a prefrosh, and not really knowing what to expect from the jazz scene at Yale. I remember being blown away by how friendly and welcoming everyone was, and feeling like I really wanted to come back and be a part of that community. The playing was fun and everyone sounded great, but most of all I was just happy to be there, with people who cared about the music and enjoyed each other while playing it.

Ethan Dodd | Johnathan Edwards '22

Michael Veal's "Jazz in Transition" expanded my knowledge and appreciation of the avant-garde, smooth jazz, fusion, prog rock, etc. This course has very much influenced what I listen to, my idols, and my playing. I used to be a Brecker brother. Now I listen much more to young Herbie, Julius Hemphill, and Ornette Coleman to name a few.

Olivia Martinez | YSM '21

I loved the 1959 concert that YUJC put on last year. We learned about the historical context and had fun performing with different groups of people. It was such a thrill to play in the intimate, "jazz vibes" setting, and we really tapped into the emotion of each piece. "Lonely Woman" was a favorite of mine, because we really listened to each other and threw caution to the wind in order to express the music. What a night! I am so thankful for the friendships that I've made in the YUJC, and I look forward to more jazz events in the near future!

Eva Quittman | Morse '23

I love how collaborative and welcoming the jazz scene at Yale is. Even as a first year, I was invited by members of the Collective to play on recordings and collaborate on projects with them, and encouraged to take solos that I otherwise might not have had the confidence to take. Jazz can be a bit of a boys club, but I always felt that my contributions were valued equally to everyone else's, a level of equality to which I had not previously been accustomed.

Jose Key | Trumbull '22

In my first year, I was able to go with YJE to Dizzy's Club Coca Cola at Lincoln Center. While that was fantastic, I was able to talk one-on-one with our guest artist, Randy Becker, before the show. The way he put his jazz experience into perspective with the art-form at large was something that impacted me greatly, and has influenced not only how I play and practice, but how I see myself fit in with the world around me.

Jarron Long | Grace Hopper '23

One of my favorite moments from last year was when a bunch of my classmates and I went to see one of our frocos perform with the Yale Jazz Ensemble. It was a great performance at Sprague Hall, and afterwards we all went and waited to congratulate him. After standing in the lobby for what felt like an excessively long time, we decided to give him the full paparazzi treatment and jump out from behind a low wall outside. All crouched next to the building, we got a quite few strange looks from passersby. At a certain point, some...spirited walkers we didn't know at all stopped to hide with us. Finally, our star arrived and we all jumped out—complete strangers too—to give him a big welcome. To me, that reflects the Yale jazz scene, and music at Yale in general, in that we really do support each other's interests and talents, recognizing that it's as much about the people as it is the music.

Working on it

From my brother's saxophone to YUJC: a short account of how I got back into the swing of things at Yale.

STORY JENNY LEE
GRAPHIC JENNY LEE

When I was in 4th grade, I watched my older brother play the alto saxophone with the school jazz band for the first time. They were playing a particularly tense song: The trumpets and saxophones were taking turns going back and forth as if they were in a tug of war, while the trombones and rhythm section steadily pushed the tune forward. It was Cannonball Adderley's "Work Song."

The shock that I felt that day is quite memorable. I remember coming back home and asking my brother to teach me how to play the saxophone (which he declined). I spent hours looking up different jazz musicians and famous tunes that I needed to know. While researching and listening to the music, there was a different rush of adrenaline than I felt when I played classical music. Since then, jazz rapidly became a big part of my life and my identity. I worked hard to join the jazz band in eighth grade, where I relived my brother's performance during our after school rehearsals. I remember counting down the last seconds of my classes so I could run up to the band room and chat with the other members. I knew that jazz would be something that would always surround my life—or so I thought.

Coming into college, I was overwhelmed with new experiences, opportunities, and interests. I was introduced to different extracurricular activities, volunteer opportunities, amazing classes I had never heard of, and great professors who only enhanced these experiences. However, as new interests rushed into my life, old ones faded away.

Jazz, for me, was one of them.

I had brought my alto saxophone all the way from Brazil to the US to continue indulging this passion of mine, yet by the end of my first year I realized that I had not touched it for months. This was shocking; a part of my life that had once consumed my time was now something that easily slipped my mind. Finding my way back, slowly but surely, I looked around me to see if there were any opportunities or ways to become involved with the jazz scene at Yale. That's when I came across YUJC and its concerts.

Alone, I remember walking into the Pierson dining hall and hearing the familiar sounds of musicians warming up for the concert. As I seated myself, my heart was pounding harder than ever, as I knew that the concert was in tribute to one of my favorite saxophone players: Cannonball Adderley. When the concert began and the songs were rolling, I couldn't help but feel tremendously nostalgic. "Ah, yes!" I thought to myself. It was as if I had gone back in time to the fourth grade, staring at my brother in awe.

Throughout my sophomore year, I actively attended other concerts hosted by YUJC and kept myself updated for future events. While I was happy doing so, I knew that I wanted to be more involved with the group. I wanted to help contribute to hosting these concerts that made me so happy and surround myself with people who had the same love for jazz music as I did. Despite feeling a little intimidated after seeing all the amazing performances led by the YUJC team, I applied to be a part of the board and, fortunately, I got in.

Currently, as I take part in weekly meetings and slowly (and virtually) get to know the members, I am realizing that these are incredibly talented and knowledgeable people. While I am still in the process of familiarizing myself with the team, I can say that I am more than excited to rekindle a passion of mine that had been kept quiet for far too long.



Jazz, Connection, and Mrs. Dalloway

Unprecedented times call for unprecedented uses of Virginia Woolf. An investigation into the true meaning of the jam session.

STORY CALVIN KALEEL

GRAPHIC ELLIE NORMAN



Saturday, noon: The Davenport Common Room is alive and sparkling with enthusiasm. The sharp edge of a bassline kicks into gear and the place is swinging. Two saxophonists give and take. A lone piano sprinkles in some spice. The room sways from that indescribable feeling of call and response—that back and forth dance—of the jam session.

This is an image of times past. One day we will reach the indescribable again, but for now we are limited in our ability to play together. Yes, a jam can be done socially distant, but this “solution” forgets our horn-playing friends and artificially limits the amount of participants. I find myself yearning for the times when I could walk thirty choruses of Footprints with fifteen different soloists (and I’m not exaggerating!).

I wanted to take a second, while normalcy remains a figment of the past, to explore the jam, what it means, and why it is so important to me. To do this, we need Virginia Woolf, and we need her 1925 novel *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* centers around dinner host Clarissa Dalloway in the throes of London high society. The novel describes events over the course of 12 hours, culminating in a massive dinner party thrown by afore-mentioned Mrs. Dalloway. Focusing on themes of memory, time, and what it means to be human, the novel brilliantly weaves together the disparate and colliding threads of its characters into one tapestry. In its unique stream-of-consciousness way, it paints a picture of life’s beauty.

Why talk about Woolf’s work? “This is a piece about jam sessions, not some far-off literature critique!” you press angrily. Yet Mrs. Dalloway helps conceptualize the way I think of a jam session. It has helped me to understand why I like them so much, and why they make me feel so powerful and fulfilled. And, ultimately, it represents what I believe is the true essence of a jam session.

Woolf bestows a rather unique ability upon her character Clarissa Dalloway, the afore-mentioned dinner host: the power to connect with people, even those she has never met before. No, this is not a connection in the typical sense of the word; Dalloway is not connecting through, let’s say, LinkedIn.

(I’m a college student. I don’t know if this was apparent.) Rather, this ability to bond with others occurs in the spiritual realm: it is almost as if she can sense others’ presences, even those far away and distant. Further, this ability is most honed when she is at her best, at her dinner party. Her spirit gains energy by being around others.

To make this idea more concrete, a bleak but illustrative example: in a distinct but parallel storyline to Clarissa’s, Woolf writes about her character Septimus, a World War I veteran suffering heavily from PTSD. He is sent through therapy and various treatments, but nothing seems to work. Eventually the reader must confront the tragic event of his suicide.

Yet what follows is to me one of the most beautiful eulogies of all time. Clarissa Dalloway, who is currently at a dinner party and who has never met Septimus in her life, suddenly senses his presence and a sweeping change in the spiritual realm she inhabits. The skies change and the winds pick up and she feels his soul, even if she doesn’t really know anything about it. There is raw, unfiltered energy binding the two of them together. This is connection in the spiritual sense of the word.

While I am not Clarissa Dalloway and do not have this super-sense, I believe that Clarissa’s connection is simply an exaggeration of a phenomenon that we can all experience. In Woolf’s world, there is a thread which connects us all, and even if we might not encounter it as directly as Mrs. Dalloway, we can still feel its ethereal presence around us. It is why Clarissa throws lavish dinner parties: there she can feel this extra-planar linkage the best.

Clarissa’s dinner party is my jam session. Like the party, a jam session hosts a grouping of people with no other purpose than to make something together. In the case of Dalloway, it is merriment; in the case of a jam, it is music. A jam session achieves connection because its purpose is not wrapped up in anything but making music in the moment. Like a dinner party, it can contain any amount of people. There is a spirit of welcoming and inclusivity at the jam session which itself generates increasing connectivity.

It is in the magic of the hard swing of the

ride cymbal where I feel the heartbeat of the drummer. It is out of the bell of a trumpet where I can feel the trumpeter releasing their soul into the air. It is between the vibrations of guitar strings that I feel soothed by the low melodic presence of the guitarist.

At the jam session, your sounds and the sounds of your fellow musicians mix, not only on the physical plane but on the spiritual one as well. An electric current forms from you through the music to your bandmates, and you feel phantasmal waves of pure, wonderful energy pulsing throughout your body. It is a feeling of intoxication, except it is more real: you derive your giddiness not from substance but with people.

This connection is what I love most about a jam session, about jazz, about life. That I can break through the bubbles separating us and hold onto something shared by us. We play, we jam, we create music with each other because we can feel something, together. Whether you are complete strangers or life-long friends, sharing music can be one of the most intimate actions. Like Clarissa’s dinner parties, it is our way of relating to each other. That’s what a jam session means to me.

In an age of increasing internet “connectivity,” of Instagram Stories and Facebook posts, I have found it more difficult, ironically, to form these raw connections. And, obviously, the pandemic has prevented us from jamming. So, how can we recreate this feeling of the jam session during the time of COVID-19? Though solutions are not immediately apparent, we are musicians: creativity is our forte. Send your friends recordings and snippets of things you’re working on, and see what they can do with them. No need to make them perfect, because part of the fun of the jam lies in the spontaneity, in the moment. Organize a listening party, and share some of your favorite pieces of music. This might help your friends understand the music which has shaped you, fueling the same bonds that a jam session inspires.

Or, if you don’t feel up to any of this, then stop reading this article. Leave your screen, go outside (wearing a mask), and listen to the birds. After all, they’ve been jamming for millions of years. Perhaps you’ll find Mrs. Dalloway there too.



Classic jazz pranks

An in-depth look into various jokes, goofs, and gaffes in the history of jazz

STORY ADIN RING
GRAPHIC ELLIE NORMAN

The history of jazz music is a history of practical jokes. And while that assertion may be misleading, or even outright incorrect, the undeniable fact of the matter is that jazz musicians have pulled off some great pranks over the years. An unfortunate majority of them prey upon the humble bass player, but even I (a bassist myself) must recognize their brilliance. Here are a couple of my favorites, presented here for your enjoyment:

Sand basses

The first comes from a bandleader lost to the annals of history (or more accurately, lost to the annals of my brain and still undiscovered after a few halfhearted google searches). As the story goes, every day for a month or so this bandleader poured a cup of sand into the band's bass while its owner was looking away. The change in weight was so incremental that the bassist hardly noticed a thing. Then, when the bandleader emptied all the sand out before rehearsal one day, the newly light-as-a-feather instrument slipped out of the bassist's arms, to peals of raucous laughter. A cheap shot, certainly, and one that, to tell the truth, makes my blood run cold. And yet I must acknowledge its objective humor. Bravo.

Mingus's approach to avant-garde

Next, we have a prank from musical genius and provocateur Charles Mingus, the "Angry Man of Jazz" (depicted above). Apparently, Mingus was so fed up with the critical acclaim surrounding avant-garde jazz musicians (whom he considered technically inferior) that he invited all the New York City jazz critics to an avant-garde performance of his own. The critics filed into a concert hall with its curtains drawn, and proceeded to hear a cacophonous movement that can only be adequately described as "out." When the critics invariably praised the brave and challenging new sounds of Mingus's avant-garde orchestra, he pulled aside the curtain to reveal a dozen young children fiddling with instruments they'd never seen before in their lives. I might not agree with the message behind this prank; avant-garde jazz is a rich and varied genre that mostly deserves the respect it garners. That said, this prank is an all-time great.

A fake gig?

Last comes a joke from renowned prankster and jazz violinist, Joe Venuti. One day, Venuti called up all the jazz bass players in Hollywood (listed in the American Federation of Musicians phone book) and told all 38 of them to meet for a gig on the corner of Hollywood and Vine. There was, of course, no gig to speak of. Needless to say, the confusion and absurdity of the meeting made for quite a laugh—for some. While Venuti cackled with glee from an apartment window overlooking the ill-fated corner, bassists across the world inexplicably shuddered, with the feeling that a great shadow had passed over them. This day, which would come to be known colloquially as "the Alamo for bass players," has left in its wake a lost generation of bassists with trust issues and deep-seated insecurities. But it was worth it for the laughs, right? Right?

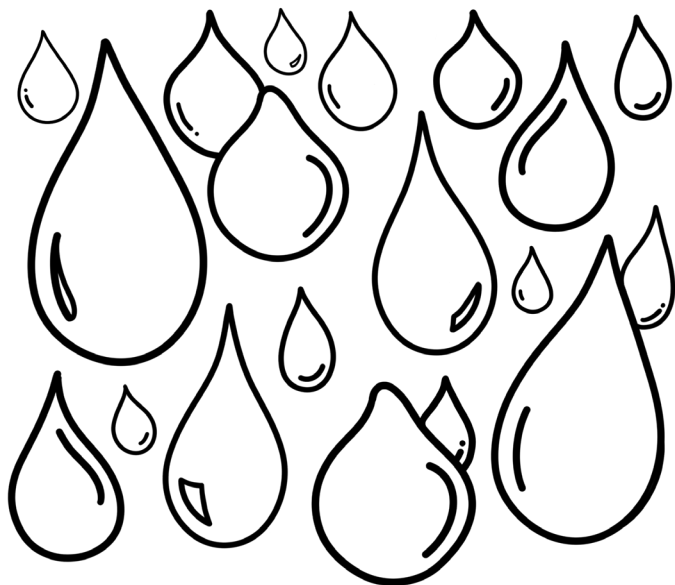
I urge you, the next time you think about pulling a jazz-related practical joke, to consider on whose shoulders the burden of these pranks has historically fallen. Please saw the drumsticks so that the heads fall off on the drummer's first hit. By all means replace the keys on a sax with salamis. Hell, I wouldn't even mind if you filled a trombone with motor oil. Just give us bass players a break, will ya? We have to deal with enough hardship as it is (audience falling asleep during our solos, endless permutations of "the bass is only useful as firewood or to store beer" jokes, etc.) without being made fools of on the bandstand. We can handle that well enough ourselves, thank you very much.

FRISELL

An exploration of eclecticism, expression, and humility through the work of a wonderfully unique guitarist.

STORY DANI ZANUTTINI-FRANK

GRAPHIC ELLIE NORMAN



I've heard Bill Frisell's playing described as "anti-technique." This could reference the striking angularity of much of what he plays, the surprising harmonizations of recognizable melodies. Perhaps it also references his willingness to play uncomplicated "cowboy chords" when the music calls for it. Frisell does not strike the listener as a bebopper.

What impresses and inspires me about Frisell's playing is what he does with his "musical toolkit." Unafraid of the simple or jarring, Frisell plays just what is necessary to get the point across. Sometimes, this involves a surprising number of notes – either far more or far fewer than we expect. His music is, in a word, crafted.

Now what is it that Frisell is crafting, really? He's undoubtedly a jazz player. He studied with Jim Hall! His music, however, is equally steeped in the traditions of folk and blues music. I sometimes listen to Wes Montgomery for the somewhat peculiar exercise of picking apart which of his phrases are blues- versus bebop-derived. The same could not be done with Frisell's playing.

Frisell's art is based in eclecticism. He takes different styles, blends them together, and creates something that is recognizably all of them at once. However, like the greatest eclectics, Frisell treats his sources with the respect they deserve. As such, when Frisell plays something folksy, it isn't a watered-down, half-ironic reference to a foreign tradition. No: it carries the entire expressive weight that the music can bear.

This musical mixture is rooted in a deep respect for different styles. Hearing him talk about the greatness of John Barry's Bond soundtracks shows this. His recordings do, too. I was in the backseat of my mom's Honda Civic, and a family friend recommended I listen to his version of "A Hard Rain's a-Gonna Fall." I'm not a huge Bob Dylan fan. I don't think I had even heard the original. My friend said

he thought Frisell "got" the song more than Dylan did. The recording moved me so much that I repeated it again and again.

What Frisell does in the recording's nearly 12 minute duration shows a willingness and ability to use timbral and harmonic tools to express the pained sorrow of Dylan's song. It starts as a quiet, distant Guitar in the Space Age with harmonies that sound far more like Ben Monder than Bob Dylan. Slowly, it establishes a groove, and after three extraterrestrial minutes the drums enter, shortly followed by a low bass note which gives me shivers.

With the backing of other instruments, Frisell's harmonies become much more diatonic. There's an open G, the fourth scale degree, which keeps ringing out, reminding the listener of the ubiquitous G-F#-D melodic motif. Whenever he plays on lower strings, the sound has an earthy character. This sound connects the listener to the lyrics' sorrow and folkish idiom in a visceral and surprising way.

As the song goes on, the guitar becomes distorted, which is the perfect sound to connect the spacey intro to the grittier middle section. While pounding drums induce a trance, Frisell's wailing lead lines fly into the stratosphere. Finally, he returns to the original theme, and ends in a wash of harmonics, once again recalling the introduction.

It is as if the hard rain has fallen, and we are fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to see the other side, though not without having been changed by what we saw. As David Foster Wallace describes "Federer moments" of awe-inspiring elegance, this to me is a "Frisell moment" of expressive brilliance.

If technique is merely the physical ability to play fast bebop-inflected lines, then Frisell's playing may deserve the anti-technique moniker. However, if technique is about mastering the use of musical tools towards expressive goals, as I have long been taught that it is, then Frisell is a master of technique.

Frisell plays his music with great conviction, sincerity, and intention, and does so through a deeply serious engagement with the music at his fingertips. His constant struggling with each and every note is but a marker of deep humility.

We need to be willing to see the face of God in the music we play if we hope to play it meaningfully. This is not an easy task. It requires the belief that there is always the possibility of a deeper expression, a more divine musical phrase. We must constantly struggle with the music we play. We must constantly search for how to express most truly, most faithfully. The only way to do so is through humility. Humility keeps our ears open to new sounds, to new ways of playing. Without humility, we lose our patience and fail to make music. We think that what we do is right, and refuse to do anything differently.

With humility, we can keep striving towards a truer art. It is this journey, the search for expression, the openness to the new sound, that is divine and worthy of gratitude. Thus is Frisell's music.



Night song

A look at the life of jazz as a nocturnal music.

STORY UMA DWIVEDI

GRAPHIC ELLIE NORMAN

We think that nightingales sing at night. That we think this is obvious—in many different languages, the bird is named for the night. In truth, nightingales sing also during the day, though we rarely notice it. The sounds of day are, after all, a crowded affair: traffic and talking, the insistent song of every other bird. It's only at night that we identify the nightingale's clear voice. Still, they sing, night or day, woodland or city. In the crush and grind of urban settings, nightingales sing ever louder, trying to overcome the background roar. Their song is at all times loud and distinctive, but even so, we rarely recognize it while the sun is still out. One does not expect to hear a nightingale singing in a city afternoon, so it goes unremarked: a music inaudible until all else has gone quiet.

"The history of modern democracy," writes Achille Mbembe in his 2019 book *Necropolitics*, "is, at bottom, a history with two faces...and even two bodies—the solar body, on the one hand, and the nocturnal body, on the other." During the rise of jazz, barely 50 years after slavery's abolition, the status of Black people as America's nocturnal body was undisguised.

In the wake of the Civil War, extractive and exploitative laws severely punished African Americans for "vagrancy" offenses, and often established a penalty of forced plantation labor. For decades, laws such as the Black Codes and the emergence of Jim Crow segregation served to suppress and condemn Black people, barring them from learning skilled trades, entering public parks, and generally engaging in what might be considered "solar life." Sharecropping, segregation, and countless other oppressive paradigms relegated African Americans—their labor, art, and lives—to America's nocturnal face.

Jazz, born as a Black art form, was for many years a nocturnal music, living its small, tender years in the dark. It was initially relegated to the underbelly of society, hidden from the light along with the rest of Black America. At first, only brothels and a

handful of bars would provide venues for jazz. Red Light districts, like New Orleans' Storyville, mothered jazz in their dim neon glow. Public outcry kept jazz out of local theaters and dance halls, far from daylight, deeming it "the Devil's music." Still, jazz sang. Jazz sang in the warm of night, in those places overlooked by law and order, sliding without much resistance into the illicit speakeasies that were set up when Prohibition began.

Regardless of public mores, white listeners flocked to jazz clubs at night in such numbers that some Black-owned clubs, like Harlem's Cotton Club, began to play for exclusively white audiences. Those who longed for all those things consigned to night—booze, sex, dancing, the ecstasy of what is shamed—found their way to jazz. Black Americans who were themselves pushed away from the light of public, mainstream society, raised jazz in the presence of sex workers and illegal alcohol, nurturing the music as it began to bloom into something so compelling and popular that the '20s and '30s were heralded by many as the Jazz Age.

Despite this popularity, jazz remained a night music, associated with vice and indulgence, gritty and opulent both. Titles related to the night remained pervasive—*Stella by Starlight*, *In the Still of the Night*, *Moonlight in Vermont*, *A Night in Tunisia*—even as time went on and jazz was increasingly accepted by the mainstream. The nocturnal space that incubated jazz provided a relative freedom from the glaring order of day. From a tradition of the blues, gospel, and work songs emerged a distinctly nocturnal way of imagining music. A music that links and slides from center to center, that swings, improvises, and ruptures rigid propriety for a new set of possibilities. This rupture is the wound of night, sheltering nocturnal peoples. A split in the skin of society, a dark hollow slick with blood. Speakeasies and jazz clubs stabbed into being as places to aggregate for the partaking of pleasure, places where Black musicians could sing and be heard.

The music made in such a place had different rules, its own erotics and pleasures. Un beholden to the strictures of Western tradition, it resisted replicability. Jazz changes in the holding, shifts in the warmth of each new set of hands, the rasp and soar of each new singer.

Its ephemerality and mutability means that jazz can't be possessed. Instead, it slips and swings, trembles before sliding into its brief but sharp orders. It collapses and rebuilds, mourns and lashes in the same breath. It is the singing of a nocturnal body, which means that lament and ecstasy live only a blade's width apart.

Nina Simone's voice rises with both anger and grief, undercut with the kind of frantic delight found in the dancing of the doomed. When Billie Holiday sings, she knows to hold happy words until they ache. No desire is straightforward, no emotion simple; under joy moves always a shadow, pain inevitably complicated by love. Duke Ellington's sentimentality pulls and chuckles, brass roils over the gentle rolling of double bass and the piano's crisp slink. In jazz, nothing is king. Instead, there is sideways, looping relation, a disinterest in the neatly apportioned.

Nocturnal music can imagine new ways of structuring and relating. Jazz, with its non-dichotomous logic, gestures to homosexuality, to clusters of connection, away from the nuclear family and towards different kinds of tenderness. Tenderness: any touch absent extraction. In the excess of the discarded and the neglect of the cut, the sex worker, the trans and queer subject, the crazy, and, most of all, those who are Black, find new possibilities of erotics, community, and song. There is love here. There is always love here, though it is most easily found when the day has quit its clamoring. There is love in this kingless land, this sideways swing, this nightingale song that reaches out for touch. One does not expect to hear a nightingale singing in a city afternoon, but if you close your eyes and feel for its music you may just find it, real and miraculous as hands clasping in the dark.

Sun Ra's Cosmic Philosophy

A review of Sun Ra's 1971 intergalactic jazz film, *Space is the Place*, an empowering manifesto for a brighter future

STORY ZACH GILSTRAP

GRAPHIC COURTESY GOOGLE IMAGES

Sonny Ray (*Space is the Place*'s main character, portrayed by Sun Ra) is draped in golden, flowy fabrics while trotting through a lush garden on what appears to be another planet. Floating jellyfish-like creatures hover around his Egyptian crown, with green-blue skies act as a backdrop. This is the introduction to a cosmically philosophical manifesto which takes the form of an 80-minute movie: Sun Ra's *Space is the Place* (1974).

Born Herman Blount in 1914, Sun Ra is one of the most enigmatic figures in jazz, and possibly in all of contemporary music. In the few interviews of him that exist, he utters lofty, intergalactic proverbs in a calming voice, like that of an ancient sage. He and his Arkestra (the large jazz band that accompanies him) toured the world, performing free jazz that can only be described as otherworldly, while dressed in multicolored outfits that referenced Ancient Egyptian cosmology.

Space is the Place was directed by John Coney and written by Joshua Smith and Sun Ra himself. The film has a very loose narrative, punctuated with various sequences of dark comedy and space exploration that often venture into the surreal territory. However esoteric the messages in the film may be, *Space is the Place* gives viewers a deep insight into the optimistic galaxy that exists in Sun Ra's brain.

My favorite scene in the film occurs right at the beginning. After the opening sequence, the story leaves its otherworldly setting and lands back on Earth and depicts Sonny Ray playing piano in a nightclub. His attire is slightly more modest than usual, but subtle jewels and galactic accessories help him retain his otherworldly presence. This club has hired him to play show tunes for the dancers, but it is clear from the very beginning that his approach to the standards is unconventional and inventive. He mixes traditional melodic lines with surprising dissonance, and classical techniques with cathartic reinvention. At one point, he is seen banging the lower notes of the piano with a closed fist.

Audience members shoot Sonny Ray side-eyes, but he continues playing. Suddenly, during the dancers' performance, all remnants of the original show tune disappear and are replaced by a mountain of dissonant fury. This musical change causes all hell to break loose in the club: -- explosions erupt in the background, gunshots blast through the air, and masses of people rush out of the building, all because of Sonny Ray's rebellious melody.

Music that is rebellious and embodies pure self-expression is an act of protest to Sun Ra, and it is precisely this type of music that can lead Black people out of oppression. One line of Sun Ra's that I loved occurs when he speaks of the importance of music in the struggle for freedom: "Yes, you're music too. You're all instruments. Everyone is supposed to be playing their part, in the vast Arkestra of the cosmos." This message of collective freedom through music is the core of both this film and, at a larger level, the ethos of Sun Ra and the intergalac-



Photo: Google Images Free Use

A COSMIC GAME During the film, Sun Ra and his Arkestra travel around California college campuses and jazz clubs to spread his philosophy of an otherworldly Black utopia.

tic lore that surrounds him.

Despite being set mostly in early '70s California, the film's atmosphere is both futuristic and intergalactic. This is due to Sun Ra's skillful worldbuilding. Sequences in California are interwoven with trips to outer space and tours through Sun Ra's big yellow spaceship. Scenes of dialogue are interspersed with clips of the Arkestra's free jazz performances. This element of juxtaposition throughout the film not only adds to its surreal atmosphere, but also to the urgent political message behind this work. Sun Ra wants Black Americans to imagine another world, vastly different from planet Earth, a world defined by oppression, exploitation, and marginalization across all borders. Sun Ra envisions a world in which Blackness is

Music that is rebellious and embodies pure self-expression is an act of protest to Sun Ra, and it is precisely this type of music that can lead Black people out of oppression.

instead synonymous with freedom and self-determination. He has lost his hope in Earth and believes a brighter future for Black people exists elsewhere in space, galaxies away.

The viewing experience of *Space is the Place* is quite disorienting—there are many scenes of violence that go without sufficient

explanation. However, all of the film's meandering serves one unified purpose: to use the art of filmmaking as a conduit for Sun Ra's philosophy for Black liberation and self-determination. To Sun Ra, the key to this liberation is through music and, in his own words, "isotope teleportation, transmolecularization, or better still, teleport[ing] the whole planet here through music."

The film boasts some dazzling moments of bewildering cinematography and classic '70s special effects. Furthermore, the soundtrack is a momentous achievement in free jazz and, at many points, serves as an excellent accompaniment to the surrealist plot.

Sun Ra's goal is to inspire Black people to dream up a new world: one free of the horrors of planet Earth and full of freedom, life, and love.

Through this film, Sun Ra presents himself as an alternative to what has existed on the planet up to that point. At the end, as Sun Ra and his Arkestra begin to leave Earth and return to the stars, Sun Ra issues a final proclamation of his values. He declares, "You just want to speak of realities, no myths. Well, I am the myth talking to you. Farewell."

Ra detests the realities that exist on Earth, propagating the oppression and exploitation of Black people and other communities of color. Instead, he wants Black people to ditch reality in favor of myth, a shift in consciousness that can inspire the necessary changes for black liberation. Believing in this myth involves imagining a world where black people can thrive and grow without the force of whiteness. It's rare that a musician transcends music and becomes a self-contained philosophical movement. However, Sun Ra does just this with *Space is the Place*. Despite a few moments that seem to be disturbing with no larger purpose, this film is stuffed full of hopeful, magnetic, and empowering ideas and sequences—supported all the way by a soundtrack that is a masterclass in jazz orchestration. I highly recommend that you give this film a watch. Go in with no expectations, suspend your disbelief, and allow Sun Ra and his Arkestra to transport you to new worlds with the power of music.



Photo: Google Images Free Use

GALACTIC TAPESTRY In addition to traditional acting scenes, *Space is the Place* also features several live performance sequences.

Credits

President

Jason Altshuler

Editor

Jarron Long

YUJC Contributors

Jason Altshuler

Ethan Dodd

Calvin Kaleel

Jenny Lee

Jarron Long

Adin Ring

Dani Zanuttini-Frank

Zachary Gilstrap

Guest Contributors

Nick Di Maria

Noah Baerman

Uma Dwivedi

Design

Zachary Gilstrap

Graphics

Jenny Lee ("Working on it")

Ellie Norman ("Jazz and TikTok",

"How to Jam in a Pandemic",

"Classic Jazz Pranks", "Frisell", "Night Song")

Lourdes Rohan (Bird Lives!)

Link to YUJC Questionnaire on *The Turnaround*:

<https://forms.gle/k8KarZ1cD7A4iWEQ6>



THE TURNAROUND

INTERESTED IN HONING
YOUR IMPROVISATION?
WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR
SWING?



The YUJC his hoping to
offer jazz lessons soon.
If you'd be interested,
fill out this form:

[https://forms.gle/
4eGruzCrN93LahQAA](https://forms.gle/4eGruzCrN93LahQAA)