

JAZZ PEDAGOGY

THE JAZZ EDUCATOR'S HANDBOOK AND RESOURCE GUIDE

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WHY MUSIC EDUCATION? WHY JAZZ EDUCATION?

by Dr. Willie L. Hill, Jr.

Music has played such an important role in my life. It has taught me how to live, respect others, laugh, experience beauty through different sets of eyes and ears, and have an endearing love for humanity. Most important, however, music has filled my life with incredible sounds and emotions connected with those sounds, experiences that transcended words. Music has communicated with me like nothing else in my life. It was early on when I felt that music had the power to connect me to history, tradition, and my heritage. I knew that studying and experiencing an art form such as music would give me insight into my own culture and the cultures of others. Thus, it would help me be more appreciative of what the world has to offer, as well as help me become more sensitive to cultural issues. In short, I felt it would enable me to experience humanity at its best. I'm convinced that it turned on my senses and emotions and helped me reach into the depths of my soul so that I could experience inner peace and tranquility.

MUSIC EDUCATION

My experiences with music were not happenstance. I did not just suddenly listen to music with great understanding. I was taught to listen to and make music. My music teacher fueled my desire to hear more, play more, learn more. The more I learned, the more I heard and the more I understood. I wanted to share those types of experiences with others, just as my music teacher shared his passion for music with me. I decided to make music education my career.

How many special teachers do you remember from your elementary, middle, or high school days? If music is a significant part of your life today, most likely your general music, vocal, orchestra, or band teacher was a big factor in making that happen.

The thing I remember most about my band teacher was his love of music. He knew the power of music to open up our minds and spirits in his classroom—the sense of pride that it gave each of us when we finally mastered a rhythm or a difficult passage on our instruments. Most important, he knew the fun, pleasure, and enjoyment we experienced each day in that special room—the band room. He knew we would do better in school because his class made school a more exciting and worthwhile place to spend our time. He knew that belonging to the band meant we “belonged” in school, that our connection with school was a positive one. We didn't have time for getting into trouble or doing drugs. We were too busy making music before, during, and after school. Music was his passion, so it was our passion.

I'm not sure if my music teacher was even concerned that music enhanced the skills needed to learn math, science, English, and other academic subjects. However, I am convinced that he knew it would help us stay focused, concentrate, and work as a team to make the music sound great. We need more sensitive and passionate teachers like him in our classrooms to serve as role models for the students of today and tomorrow.

National Standards for Music Education

My music teacher did more than inspire us, however. He taught us the basics of performing, reading music, playing a varied repertoire, understanding theory fundamentals, and listening with understanding and discrimination. As music educators today, we have that same responsibility to teach the basics, to ensure that our students receive the highest quality musical experiences that the school curriculum can

BEBOP

1945: Charlie Parker collaborates with Dizzy Gillespie to perform what would become bebop

1947: Parker records *Scrapple From the Apple*

1949: Birdland opens

1945

Important cities in the bebop era:
New York

Characteristics

- Fast-paced tempos
- Small combos
- Complex harmonies, melodies, and rhythms
- Riffs and improvisation
- Unison lines
- Clipped phrase endings
- Greater use of dissonance
- Listening (not for dancing)
- Performed in small clubs
- Head charts



Composer
Charlie "Bird" Parker
1920–1955

Anthropology
Confirmation
Ornithology

Musicians

Dizzy Gillespie
1917–1993
Dexter Gordon
1923–1990
J. J. Johnson
1924–2001
Thelonious Monk
1917–1982
Charlie Parker
1920–1955
Oscar Peterson
b. 1925
Bud Powell
1924–1966
Max Roach
b. 1925

1949



Dizzy Gillespie
1917–1993

COOL JAZZ

1949: Miles Davis/Gil Evans
Birth of the Cool

1949

Important cities in the cool jazz era:
Los Angeles

Characteristics

- Lighter and softer sounds
- Shorter improvisations
- Slow to fast tempos
- Little vibrato
- Simpler melodies and rhythms
- Greater use of arrangements
- Use of classical instruments
(flute, clarinet, bass clarinet,
French horn)



Composer
Dave Brubeck
b. 1920

Blue Rondo à la Turk
Take Five

Musicians

Chet Baker
1929–1988
Dave Brubeck
b. 1920
Miles Davis
1926–1991
Paul Desmond
1924–1977
Bill Evans
1929–1980
Stan Getz
1927–1991
Gerry Mulligan
1927–1996
Shorty Rogers
b. 1924
Bud Shank
b. 1926