THE SHAPE OF JAZZ EDUCATION TO COME: HOW JAZZ MUSICIANS DEVELOP A UNIQUE VOICE WITHIN ACADEMIA

by

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Abstract

This study examined the ways in which exceptional jazz musicians develop a unique voice within academia. The perceptions of unique musicians with respect to the current call for change in jazz education was also investigated. Ten subjects, considered ‘exceptional jazz musicians’ with a ‘unique voice’, participated in a semi-structured interview to gain insight into these issues. Results revealed a consistency in responses relating to the current status of jazz education and call for change, learning experiences in jazz, and the development of a unique voice. Results indicated that (a) the jazz discourse overstates the gravity of the call for change; (b) exceptional jazz musicians engage in additional learning experiences based on the jazz tradition; (c) a unique voice develops concurrently with learning about jazz music generally; (d) institutions provide a viable option for learning about jazz and developing an individual style if students supplement their formal education with self-directed learning.

Abstrait

Le but de cette étude est d'examiner comment les musiciens jazz exceptionnels peuvent démontrer leur voix unique au milieu académique. L'étude vise à recueillir les perceptions de dix musiciens jazz exceptionnels face aux réformes envisagées dans l'enseignement du jazz. Ces *musiciens jazz exceptionnels*, ayant chacun une *voix unique*, ont participé à une entrevue semi-structurée afin de mieux comprendre la situation. Les résultats ont révélé une uniformité dans les réponses concernant l'état actuel de l'enseignement du jazz, des réformes envisagées, de l'apprentissage du jazz et de l'évolution d'une voix unique. Les résultats ont démontré que (a) les discussions exagèrent l'importance des réformes; (b) les musiciens jazz exceptionnels perfectionnent volontairement leurs connaissances comme le veut la tradition jazz; (c) une voix unique se développe simultanément à l'étude de la musique de jazz; (d) les établissements d'enseignement procurent une option viable à l'étude du jazz et au développement d'un style individuel si les étudiants complémentent leur éducation officielle par un apprentissage indépendant.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Before the advent of university jazz programs roughly 70 years ago, formal jazz education consisted of little more than a few extracurricular ensembles or the odd credit course. However, if the recent *Down Beat* Student Music Guide ("Student Music Guide," 2009) is any indication, which includes only a partial listing of over 170 world renowned jazz programs, it appears that jazz education has solidified its place within the academic mainstream. While it would seem that the unprecedented increase in jazz degree programs is a laudable achievement (especially considering that jazz was once derided for having no educational value), the current discourse on jazz education provides a more negative analysis of the institutional study of jazz. In particular, the current call for change in jazz education is critical of the methods used in formal institutions for causing a homogenization among jazz students and a stagnation in the field generally. Still, a number of today's most prominent and innovative jazz musicians have emerged from post-secondary institutions. This chapter will introduce the study by defining the problem and the subproblems, the need for the present study, the scope of research, and the key terms and concepts.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the ways in which exceptional jazz musicians are able to develop a unique voice within academia. Given the existing curricular offerings and pedagogy of the academy, there is a widely held perception that the majority of students graduating from post-secondary institutions tend to sound homogenized.

Subproblems

This study interviewed exceptional jazz musicians recognized as having a unique voice to determine their views regarding the current call for change in jazz education. This investigation attempted to answer the following eight subproblems:

1) What is the nature of the call for change regarding the current status of jazz education at the post-secondary level as reflected in the literature?
2) Is this call for change supported by the unique voices in jazz that are emerging from post-secondary institutions?
3) What are the perceptions of unique jazz musicians in regards to the current status of jazz education in post-secondary institutions?
4) Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice? What are the characteristics of a unique voice?
5) Do the methods used in formal jazz education differ from those used in the jazz tradition as related in the literature?
6) What are the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians in post-secondary institutions? Do they vary from those of the more "homogenized" players? If so, how?
7) Do unique jazz musicians partake in any additional learning experiences outside of post-secondary institutions that "homogenized" players do not?
8) Do unique jazz musicians have any specific strategies for developing a unique voice or advice for students studying in school?

Need for the Study

The key rationale for this study is the absence of a research project of any scope that takes the unique jazz voice that has emerged from post-secondary institutions as a point of departure. Existing analyses of the current state of jazz education tend to focus on the methods used in the academy, in particular as they relate to the learning experiences of traditional jazz musicians, by examining the similarities and differences that emerge between them. Moreover, these studies are outmoded in that they investigate veteran musicians who learnt primarily outside of the school environment. While these participants are highly respected within the jazz community, and provide invaluable insights into traditional learning practices, they are far removed from the recent trends in formal jazz education and jazz music generally. Lastly, the previous research in this area does not reflect the current situation in jazz education, namely the emergence of unique

jazz voices from within the academy. Despite the fact that the current discourse is critical of the institutional study of jazz, it does not preclude the development of a unique voice as demonstrated by a number of prominent jazz musicians that have attended or graduated from post-secondary institutions.

To this end, the present study takes the unique voice that has emerged from the academy as the main site of investigation. By soliciting expert testimony from musicians in the vanguard of jazz, the researcher aims to provide not only a current account of jazz education and performance, but an alternative perspective to the studies quoted previously. It is the purpose of this study then, to expound upon several issues left lacking in the existing literature, specifically: the degree to which the current call for change in the discourse on jazz education is reflected by unique jazz musicians; whether the methods used in academia are dissimilar, and in fact in conflict with, those employed in the jazz tradition; and if so, how do unique jazz musicians negotiate the opposing demands of academia and the real world (*i.e.,* the jazz tradition). The results of this research could help elucidate these central inquiries, as well as provide recommendations for the improvement of formal jazz education, in particular as it pertains to pedagogy and institutional philosophy.

Limitations

While there are many issues surrounding jazz education that demand further study, such as the incongruence between the number of institutions offering jazz degrees and the relative paucity of students occupying jazz or jazz-related positions, the present study was delimited to the issues stated in the purpose and subproblems. Issues that were either related to, or that provided the foundational basis for the present inquiry, were addressed at length in the review of literature in Chapter 2.

This study focused exclusively on instrumental jazz performance and composition and did not investigate vocal jazz performance. Ten participants were selected for interviews on the basis of their extensive involvement and critical success in the field of jazz performance, as well as their substantial

experience with the institutional study of jazz. The sample was limited in terms of demographic variables, including: age, gender, ethnicity, education, and location. In particular, the sample was delimited to ten jazz musicians, of which at least three were female, based in the United States and Canada. The data provided by this qualitative inquiry cannot be generalized beyond the viewpoints of these particular individuals and their experiences. It is believed, however, that this data represents a commonality of thinking among unique jazz musicians as it relates to the current scholarly discourse on jazz education. In his book, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, Patton (1990) posits that this method of critical case-sampling "permits logical generalization and maximum application of information to other cases because if it's true of this one case, it's likely true of all other cases" (p. 243).

Rather than focus on just one institution or jazz studies program, this investigation looked at jazz education generally. Considering the wide diversity of jazz programs, not only would an inclusive comparison exceed the scope of this research project, but it would also present too narrow a view of the current curricula offerings. In an effort to provide a representative sample of the varied institutional philosophies, materials, curricula offerings, and pedagogical methods, the researcher included a cross-section of post-secondary institutions (*i.e.,* colleges and universities) offering jazz degree programs located in the United States and Canada. Moreover, rather than engage in a content analysis of the latter, this study focused on the overall organization and implementation of formal jazz education and attitudes thereof. Jazz programs below the tertiary level (*i.e.,* high school) were omitted from this study. Recommendations for improvement were made based on participant responses from the interviews in relation to the current call for change in jazz education

Definition of Terms

Since many of the key terms and concepts discussed in this study do not have a singular interpretation, the researcher has undertaken to provide the following definitions. Additional references are otherwise noted.

Academy, the (variously, Academe, or Academia): (1) a post-secondary institution of higher learning, usually a university or college, and the community of students and scholars therein; (2) also connotes a specific institutional philosophy, as well as the interests, attitudes, and politics of those operating within its structure.

Discourse on Jazz Education, the: the formal discussion of the issues in jazz education as related in the scholarly literature on the topic, as well as the perspectives of those involved in its dissemination (*i.e.,* scholars, musicians, educators, and students).

Exceptional Jazz Musicians: a jazz musician that has established him/herself as a leader in the field through various forms of recognition, including: industry recognized awards, distinctions, and polls, recording output, album sales, past performances, touring schedules, curriculum vitae, press, and professional affiliations.

Formal Jazz Education, (also, the Institutional Study of Jazz): (1) an institutionalized movement which began in the mid- to late 1940s focusing on teaching aspects of jazz performance, such as improvisation, composition and arranging, ear training, and theory (Kennedy, n.d.); (2) any of the pedagogical contexts, methods, or materials used in educational institutions to teach jazz music, including instructional texts, concepts or theories, courses, ensembles (namely big bands and combos), artists-in-residence, master classes, and workshops.

Homogeneity: a pejorative to describe a situation in jazz education wherein the majority of jazz graduates are alleged to have a similar conception and execution of musical style.

Jazz Tradition, the: the informal learning practices used by professional jazz musicians, and learners in general, outside of educational institutions. These learning practices were the primary means for learning about jazz music and performance prior to the advent of formal jazz education programs.

Oral/Aural Tradition: the oral/aural transmission of both socio-cultural information (attitudes, values, mores, etc.) and musical information (repertoire,

techniques, pedagogy) in certain societies, namely traditional African society (in contrast to writing and notation in Western society). Jazz music and its associated learning practices have their origins in the oral/aural tradition of Africa.

Stagnation: a pejorative to describe a situation in jazz music generally wherein there is a perceived lack of new concepts and unique voices emerging in the field. The discourse on jazz education frequently criticizes the institutional study of jazz as a central cause for this stagnation.

Unique Voice: a jazz musician that has emerged as having a highly individual and identifiable style regarding his/her instrumental timbre, musical vocabulary, repertoire, performance practice, musical concept or approach, or combination thereof.

Written Methods: pedagogical methods, usually in the form of instructional texts, developed by institutional educators, or intended to be used in institutional settings, heavily based on the theoretical principles of jazz harmony.

Summary

This study is divided into five chapters: Chapter 2 provides a detailed review of literature; Chapter 3 outlines the methodology employed in the study; Chapter 4 presents data from the interviews with unique jazz musicians; and Chapter 5 provides a summary, discussion, and recommendations for future practice.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Since the inception of formal jazz education in the United States some 70 years ago, the number of jazz education programs has grown considerably from only a select few to well over 170 nationwide ("Student Music Guide," 2009). The fact that many tertiary institutions now offer some form of jazz degree, however, belies the historical antagonism concerning its acceptance into the academy. At the heart of matter was a disagreement over suitable pedagogy; that is between traditional jazz learning practices and those used in formal education. The issue of pedagogy is still left unresolved as reflected in the current call for change in jazz education for more student individuality. While many jazz musicians, scholars, educators, and students bemoan the standardization of jazz curricula offerings and teaching methods, some of today's most prominent and unique jazz musicians received their formal training at a post-secondary institution. This chapter will be divided into five sections focusing on (a) how jazz was traditionally learnt outside of the academy; (b) its subsequent transition to academia, including any changes in techniques and materials; (c) the organization and implementation of the jazz curriculum today; (d) the current call for change in jazz education; and (e) the emergence of unique voices from post-secondary institutions.

The Jazz Tradition

In his article "The Battle for Legitimacy: 'Jazz' Versus Academia," jazz musician and composer, scholar, educator, and figurehead of the jazz education movement David Baker (1973) writes that "jazz is a Black music. The Black man gave this music—the language, the vocabulary, the essence—to the world, and every advancement and major innovation of this music has come from him" (p. 20). Although patently false, insofar as jazz represents a cross-pollination of diverse musical traditions and cultures, and that many non-black men have contributed to the development of jazz, Baker's statement does convey a central truth about the origins of jazz music: its antecedents are in the culture of Africa.

The Oral/Aural Tradition of Africa

In his seminal book on the subject *Early Jazz: It's Roots and Musical Development*, jazz scholar Gunther Schuller (1968) posits that while jazz developed from a variety of musical cultures it "represents a transplanted continuation of indigenous African musical traditions" (p. 6). He explains how native African music and early American jazz were integrated into all aspects of social life, such as birth, death, work, and play, in contrast to European "art music" which forms a separate abstracted domain. Moreover, African language and meaning are intrinsically related to musical sound and rhythm. Schuller writes:

> …language functions in conjunction with rhythm. All verbal activity, whether quotidian social life or religion and magic, is rhythmicized…it is no mere coincidence that the languages and dialects of the African Negro are in themselves a form of music, often to the extent that certain syllables possess specific intensities, durations, and even pitch levels (p. 5).

Certain African musical forms, such as hunting calls, whistled marching songs, and instrumental love serenades also serve as a form of discrete communication, and African drumming originated as a form of sign language. In addition to scat and bebop lyrics, Schuller (1968) draws several parallels between traditional African musical-verbal communicative practices and American jazz. He writes:

> In jazz a similar reciprocal relationship between language and music survives in several manifestations, such as instruments intimating words in answering the vocal lines in blues or the 'talking' technique of someone like Joe 'Tricky Sam' Nanton…Conversely, we hear the instrumentalization [*sic*] of vocal jazz in almost every note ever sung by Billie Holiday, who more or less consciously incorporated the instrumental concepts of Lester Young and others into her style… (pp. 5-6).

What is most striking about Schuller's account, however, is the absence of the written word or documentation from African society and its emphasis on

oral/aural transmission. In his article "Improvisation and the Aural Tradition in Afro-American Music," jazz saxophonist and ethnomusicologist Marian Brown (1973) traces the elements of Afro-American music to the socio-musical traditions of African culture. In particular, he postulates that "familiarly with these socio-musical activities [in African society] was transmitted on a rote basis through regular participation. Thus, without utilizing written notation, the creation and learning of music in traditional African society is primarily an aural experience" (p. 15). Furthermore, Brown sees the orality of African society as a defining element noting that "the most outstanding difference between Western and non-Western societies is the role that the eye plays in the former and the role of the ear in the latter" (p. 15). To this end, jazz pianist, composer, and educator Hal Galper ("Oral Tradition," n.d., para. 2) notes that "the roots of jazz music are firmly planted in the oral tradition of African music" (p. 1).

Aural Modeling

In a cross-cultural study of musical learning traditions, Campbell (1991) found that "the transmission of music in traditional African societies continues to utilize an aural approach based on informal and directed observation, demonstration by accomplished musicians and teachers, and imitation" (p. 166). In the same chapter detailing the learning traditions of Africa, Campbell includes a section on the "Jazz World," in which she discusses the primacy of learning through observation, listening, and imitation in the jazz tradition. She writes: "The importance of observation and listening in the development of a jazz musician cannot be overestimated. At every level, from novice to master, the ear is trained to listen closely to the course a musician follows vocally or with his instrument" (p. 179).

Consequently, aural modeling is the most often cited learning method in the jazz tradition (Poulter, 2008; Prouty, 2006; Galper, 2000; Keezer, 1996; Berliner, 1994; Carter, 1986; Williams, 1973; Galper, "Oral Tradition," n.d., para. 1). In this learning model, practitioners learn by observing, listening and imitating their idols either in person or on record. Prouty (2006) underscores the importance

of the oral tradition by pointing out that in this context learning often takes place without the benefit of an additional medium, such as musical notation or theory. This is further evidenced by the fact that many great jazz masters did not know musical theory or read music, but rather learned to play by copying their idols completely by ear (Berliner, 1994; Galper, "Oral Tradition," n.d., para. 1). The saxophonist Lester Young, for instance, modeled his light sound and slurred articulation on the playing of Frankie Trumbauer (Berliner, 1994). Similarly, the saxophonist Charlie Parker learnt by listening to recordings of Lester Young:

> [Parker] slowly committed each of the Lester Young solos to memory. He hummed and sang them to himself. Then he learned to play each in turn, note for note, experimenting with the fingering and shaping of the oral cavity until he imagined that he sounded just like Lester (Russell, 1996, p. 91).

Woideck (1996) also notes that "…being able to play repeatedly and study methodically [Lester] Young's improvised solos *on record* made an important difference for Parker [emphasis in original] (p. 12). Having received no formal training, the great jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams was raised in a musical environment where professional blues and stride musicians were frequently coming by the house. When asked about the emphasis she places on listening in her own teaching, Williams remarked: "That's the only way. You have to…Jazz does not come from books…It's all done by ear" (Handy, 1980, pp. 202-203). Other examples of jazz musicians learning through aural modeling include bassist Charlie Mingus, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, banjo player Eddie Condon, violinist Joe Venuti, and arguably the most influential jazz musician of all time Louis Armstrong (Campbell, 1991).

Shaw (1979) interviewed several notable jazz musicians, among them Bill Evans, Joe Henderson, Dave Holland, and Clark Terry, to examine the methods they used in acquiring improvisational skills. The interview results indicated that all of the improvisers went through a period of imitation and recommended listening to and playing along with jazz records to facilitate the development of improvisational skills. In a similar study Fraser (1983) enumerates five necessary

stages a jazz musician undergoes in learning to improvise, in particular: Stage 2: ear-training and observation of jazz musicians; and Stage 4: emulation of models for refinement of jazz improvisation skills. Carter (1986) goes so far as to say that:

> The first exertion into jazz pedagogy is found in the work of Buddy Bolden, Joe Oliver, "Jelly Roll" [Morton], Bunk Johnson, and other New Orleans musicians. They served as the major models of emulation for the next group of New Orleans jazz musicians (*i.e.,* [Louis] Armstrong, [Warren or Jimmy] Dobbs [*sic*], [Edward] Kid Ory)" (p. 10).

Lending quantitative credence to the aural modeling approach, Watson (2008) compared the effectiveness of aural versus notated pedagogical materials on learning jazz improvisation performance. In addition to finding that the aural instructional group demonstrated significantly greater pre- to post instruction gains than the notation group, subjects reported one of the most helpful instructional activities was exposure to a model improvised solo.

The Jazz Community as Enculturation

In the jazz tradition musical learning takes place primarily within the jazz community where musical information is passed on through a process of enculturation or socialization. That is, "the process by which a person learns to function within a particular society or group by internalizing its values and norms" (Socialization, 2009). This practice is rooted in the African tradition where music-making and musical learning are integrated into the social fabric of everyday communal life (Campbell, 1991; Brown, 1979; Schuller, 1968). Campbell (1991) explains that from birth African children are exposed to and become active participants in music-making activities such that learning occurs largely through observation and imitation similar to osmosis. For example, "they [African children] also spend many hours imitating the social behaviors of adults, much of it with the accompaniment of music that is sung, played on toy instruments, and danced. As they sing, they acquire the vocabulary of language and musical style" (p. 161).

In his seminal study on jazz improvisation, ethnomusicologist Paul F. Berliner (1994) interviewed 52 well-known jazz musicians about their learning experiences with jazz music. Several themes emerged from his research, namely the chapter entitled "Hangin' Out and Jammin': The Jazz Community as Educational System" (p. 36). In this chapter, Berliner outlines several social practices through which musicians share their knowledge, including: jam sessions, cutting contests, professional affiliations with bands, sitting in at concerts, and informal study sessions.

The jam sessions in particular provided informal musical get-togethers where jazz musicians could learn from one another through playing, socializing, demonstrations, and shoptalk. Murphy (1994) notes that "cutting sessions and later jam sessions were really the first 'organized' group-educational activities in jazz…the 'jams' provided opportunities for musicians to learn from each other" (pp. 34-35). Trumpeter Benny Bailey also recounts that at the jam sessions "everybody was in the process of learning" (Berliner, 1994, p. 42). In the opening text to his improvisational method book, *Improvising Jazz*, Jerry Coker (1987) notes that "in bygone days, the young musician acquired his skills (his 'bag,' in jazz parlance) in those two now-defunct institutions, the 'jam session' and the 'big band'…" (p. viii).

The jazz community extends into the immediate context of the home and local neighborhood where many musicians were first exposed to jazz music via records, radios, home pianos, hymnody at church services, marches, social dances, and live performances (Berliner, 1994). Dobbins (1988) concludes that "these establishments, as well as nearby restaurants, coffee houses, and the apartments or lofts of the musicians themselves, functioned as the studios, classrooms, and lecture halls of the earliest jazz education" (p. 36).

Informal Apprenticeships

Enculturation in the jazz community most often manifests in the form of informal apprenticeships between aspiring musicians and jazz masters. These apprenticeships can take many forms including informal playing sessions, lengthy

discussions, the odd comment on the bandstand, correspondence by mail, and even boarding together (Berliner, 1994). Prouty (2006) explains the importance of these apprenticeships insofar as "even if such relationships do not take on the role of formal study, [they] will usually involve some form of pedagogical interaction" (p. 318). Dobbins (1988) too cites "developing close friendships with experienced musical mentors and peers…among the most common methods of continuing the ongoing process of musical maturation" (p. 36). For example, "both Jess Stacy and Teddy Wilson said that Art Tatum had been helpful in showing them things; Dizzy Gillespie taught the young beboppers the new chords, and [Louis] Armstrong always credited King Oliver with being his mentor…" (Collier, 1994, p. 151).

As a burgeoning pianist Galper (2000) recalls his learning experiences playing professional gigs with some of his mentors. He writes: "This was the real school where I learned my craft…on the bandstand, in the heat of things, playing behind band leaders such as [Chet] Baker, Sonny Stitt and Cannonball Adderley. Treading water in the deep end, the real world of jazz" (p. 1). Galper (2000) likens these jazz apprenticeships to the African master/student relationship whereby music is transmitted orally from master to student noting that "in Western society, musical information is delivered to the student in an intellectual format, usually involving notation, theory, and analysis…In African society, the music is learned orally, through the process of the master/student relationship" (p. 2). He concludes that "the most important methodology for learning jazz distinct from the Western tradition is epitomized by the African way of imitation, copying, studying, with a master and playing in a coached group [*i.e.,* band]" (p. 2).

Self-Directed Learning

Without a standardized pedagogy or curriculum traditional jazz musicians acquired their style mostly through self-teaching (Lewis, 2008; Prouty, 2008; Berliner, 1994). The title of Paul Berliner's (1994) comprehensive biographical account, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, is in fact a reference

to the apparently unlimited ways in which jazz musicians develop and implement their own methods of learning and playing jazz. In a volume of "Critical Studies in Improvisation" dedicated to the issue jazz pedagogy, jazz musician and composer, educator and preeminent jazz scholar George Lewis (2008) notes that "jazz improvisers, routinely caricatured as unable to theorize their own practices, developed their highly influential musical directions in largely autodidact circumstances: private listening, practicing, and performing sessions, public and semipublic 'jam sessions,' home and talent show performance, and professional touring bands" (p. 1).

Prouty (2008) explains this autodidacticism enabled students to develop their own musical identity. He says: "Through 'self-teaching,' commonly held as the essential marker of the non-academic jazz tradition, performers had the power to determine their own aesthetic course, instead of relying on an institution or instructor to do so" (p. 7). Collier (1993) similarly remarks that:

> …jazz musicians, in an earlier day, had to learn for themselves. Bix Beiderbecke, studying the records of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, worked out a system of cornet fingering that remains unique; Jack Teagarden developed an unorthodox trombone technique that is almost inimitable; Rex Stewart took the half-valve effect that [Louis] Armstrong frequently employed, and made a whole system of playing out of it…self-teaching gave them something else, and that was a distinctive, individual quality that made their work instantly identifiable… (p. 152).

In his book, *Charlie Parker: His Music and Life*, Carl Woideck (1996) effectively summarizes the saxophonist's informal approach to jazz education encapsulating the methods of the jazz tradition. He writes:

> Other than his school band experience, Parker had no formal music instruction per se, but in the tried-and-true "oral tradition," the many more-experienced older musicians he encountered were potential informal teachers. Parker took what he gleaned from them, plus ideas he heard in live and recorded music, and embarked on a period of self-study… (p. 5).

Transition to Academia

Jazz's transition and subsequent acceptance into the academy did not follow a linear course from bandstand to classroom nor did it occur with any haste. Given that jazz music has existed in some incarnation since the late nineteenth century, and that attempts to formalize jazz education began as early as the 1930s, it begs the question as to why the full impact of the movement was not felt until the mid 1960s. Following a brief history of formal jazz education in the United States, this section will examine some of the reasons that beset its acceptance into institutions of higher education as related in the discourse on jazz education. Finally, a cross-section of the resulting pedagogical materials will be surveyed.

A Historical Survey of Formal Jazz Education in the United States

Along with the popularity of swing music in the late 1930s and 40s came an increasing interest in its instruction (Carter, 1986). Accordingly, the beginnings of formal jazz education in the United States are usually traced back to the 1940s with the founding of the Schillinger House of Music (established in Boston in 1945; now the Berklee College of Music) and the establishment of a 'dance music' degree at University of North Texas in Denton (which nine years later would become the first program of study offering a major in jazz). While the literature tends to emphasize Berklee and North Texas, the Westlake College of Music (which operated in Los Angeles from 1946 to 1961) also deserves mention as one of original schools to offer some form of jazz studies ("Jazz Education," Kennedy, n.d., para. 10). By 1950, several other post-secondary institutions were offering jazz courses for credit including: Los Angeles City College, Northern Arizona University, Sam Houston State University, California State Polytechnic, Lamar University, Alabama State University, and Wilberforce University (Barr, 1974).

Parallel to the initiation of university jazz studies programs was the rise of the high school 'stage band' (or large jazz ensemble), in particular the band led by Marshall Brown from Farmingdale, New York. Brown's ensemble, which

performed to much acclaim at the 1957 Newport Jazz Festival, did much to legitimize the jazz education movement by demonstrating that a high school ensemble could be taught to play jazz at a professional level and in an idiomatic manner ("Jazz Education," Kennedy, n.d., para. 11). During this period, jazz came under the radar of the music publishing industry which began to influence the wholesale growth of jazz education through the publication of musical charts (*i.e.,* complete scores and instrumental parts) specifically composed and arranged for the school market. The commercial publication of jazz music helped to address a much-needed library for the growing jazz education movement and help band directors acquire appropriate music. The 1950s also saw the organization of the first summer jazz-band camps or seminars that brought together jazz faculty from various colleges, as well as professional musicians with students for focused study sessions. Murphy (1994) notes that:

> The National Stage Band Camp at Indiana University (1959) and later the Lenox School of Jazz (1957) were landmark events. Such programs not only brought masters of performance and aspiring students together for the first time but also proved influential in the evolution of important concepts of pedagogy (p. 36).

In addition to these developments two events in particular helped to augment the respectability of jazz within academia. In 1941, jazz critic Leonard Feather, along with Marshall Stearns and Robert Goffin created the first officially sponsored course on jazz history at the New School for Social Research in New York City ("Chapter 2: Fireworks," n.d., para. 2). The lecture series, which approached the study of jazz from an academic, scholarly perspective were among the first such seminars on jazz topics (Feather, 1981). The second event occurred at the 1956 Music Educators National Conference in St. Louis where four jazz advocates (among them the great jazz pianist Dave Brubeck) stressed the value of jazz in all curricula for music students (Barr, 1974).

It was not until the 1960s, however, that the jazz education movement fully hit its stride and saw an unprecedented growth at both the secondary and undergraduate levels (Carter, 1986). By the end of the decade the number of high

school jazz ensembles had doubled to over 10,000, and the number of colleges offering one or more jazz-related courses had increased from 40 to over 300 (more than a third of which offered these courses for credit) (Murphy, 1994). During this era, post-secondary institutions also began offering undergraduate degree programs for the first time.

The pedagogical leaders within the field, such as David Baker and Jerry Coker (both from Indiana University), emerged during this period and laid the groundwork for many of the concepts and approaches that are still used in jazz education today. Moreover, a number of professional musicians, including Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Kenton, and a host of others, became increasingly involved in educational activities, particularly master classes and clinics that addressed jazz techniques relative to their instrument, composition, ensemble rehearsal techniques, and improvisation (Carter, 1986). The development of 'improvisational methods' and the creation of 'jazz theory' spurred an onslaught of pedagogical materials, such as method books, instructional texts, commercial arrangements, and play-along recordings. These will be discussed in detail in a subsequent section.

The jazz education movement itself crystallized with the creation of the recently defunct International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE; originally the National Association of Jazz Educators) in 1968 (Rose, 1987). The IAJE helped to unify and codify the movement by uniting those involved in the instruction of jazz, setting standards regarding concepts and approaches, authenticating materials, and offering general assistance to anyone interested in jazz education. The annual IAJE national convention (first held in Chicago in 1974) has served as an important forum for the discussion and presentation of ideas related to jazz pedagogy. The last 40 years has seen a steady growth in the number of undergraduate and graduate jazz programs while schools have also increased the depth and scope of their offerings ("Student Music Guide," 2009). Presently, the study of jazz music has solidified its standing within the academic mainstream both as an area of specialization in musical performance and scholarly research.

Resistance to Formal Jazz Education

Given that the full impact of formal jazz education is only now starting to be realized, some 70 years since its inception, the following section will consider some of the explanations for its delayed acceptance in academia. Initial resistance to the inclusion of jazz in the academy underscored a prevalent racism both in higher education and society at large. Examples abound of a racialized discourse describing jazz as a debased music bordering on disease or narcotics. Lewis Porter, Michael Ullman, and Edward Hazell (1993) note that "others feared their effects on mind and body. Jazz rhythms, or jungle rhythms as they were sometimes called, were held to cause various ills, including headaches and hypertension. Like Marijuana, jazz was thought to destroy one's ability to concentrate" (p. 1). In his book, *The Book of Jazz, From then Till Now: A Guide to the Entire Field*, esteemed jazz journalist Leonard Feather (1965) includes an article appearing in the 1899 edition of *The Musical Courier*, which summarizes societal attitudes towards this then emerging art form. He writes:

> A wave of vulgar, of filthy and suggestive music has inundated the land. Society has decreed that ragtime and cakewalking are the thing, and one reads with amazement and disgust of historical and aristocratic names joining in this sex dance, for the cakewalk is nothing but an African danse du ventre, a milder edition of African orgies, and the music is degenerate music. Ragtime rhythm is nothing new, but its present usage and marriage to words of veiled lasciviousness should banish it from polite society (p. 8).

This blatantly racist ideology propagated throughout educational circles, which attempted to justify the exclusion of jazz music from the traditional music curriculum on the grounds that it had no educational merit. Barr (1974) explains that during the transition years (from around 1955-65) when the jazz education movement was gaining momentum, a number of educators, led by Harry Allen Feldman (an instrumental teacher in the New York public schools) and others, were writing, outlining, and publishing their objections in the various music education journals. In particular, they raised four basic objections: (a) that jazz

was an inferior music compared to the Western classical canon; (b) that it was a passing fad and therefore a waste of educational resources; (c) that it was immoral having arisen from highly suspect moral and social circumstances vis-à-vis traditional 'American' values, and therefore unfit to teach; and (d) it represented the lowest level of aesthetic meaning – the sensual. Feldman (1964), in an article entitled "Jazz: A Place in Music Education," summed up his anxiety concerning formal jazz education by saying that:

> Training a boy to blow a horn no longer ensures that he will not blow a safe. It might blow him into delinquency, for who can deny the close relationship between jazz and delinquency…how can one justify the discussion on the college level of a subject which makes an art out of vulgarity; is monotonous, and pornographic, and often outrageously funny; and is replete with intellectual and cultural pretensions? (p. 61)

Likewise, in the aforementioned article by David Baker (1973), the author outlines several myths and miscnceptions that prevented jazz from being accepted into the academy; namely that jazz has no place in the academy since its origins lie outside the perimeters of Western art music; and "that jazz is good in proportion to how closely it approximates Western European art music" (p. 23). Baker enumerates several statements made by learned and practicing classical musicians that reflect this thinking:

1. "Charlie Parker had good ideas but his tone was bad."
2. "Ornette Coleman really played out of tune."
3. "It's impossible for Dizzy [Gillespie] to do what he does because he puffs his cheeks when he plays."
4. "Miles [Davis] is a sloppy player."
5. "The Third Stream is the best thing that ever happened to jazz. Jazz writers are finally learning to use large forms and to write for real instruments (p. 23).

He concludes: "The main fallacy in all of these statements lies in trying to impose European standards, norms, values, and criteria on an essentially non-Western art form (p. 23). Writing over 25 years apart, Dobbins (1988) similarly notes that:

> Americans who are primarily involved in music with European or symphonic roots generally feel no great need to know about jazz…Jazz musicians are still considered inferior or, at least, lowbrow. The term 'jazzer', perhaps the musical equivalent of 'nigger', is still common currency even in institutions where jazz itself has attained true respectability" (p. 31).

Opponents to formal jazz education also cited a lack of codification of techniques, organization of materials, and pedagogical skills (Barr, 1974; Baker, 1973).

From Orality to Literacy: Accounts of Improvisation versus the Score

A central controversy permeates the discourse on jazz education, which surrounds the alleged incompatibility of jazz as an oral tradition, and as an improvised music, within the primarily written culture of the musical academy. In the chapter "On Literacy and Non-Literacy" from *Music of the Common Tongue: Survival and Celebration in Afro-American Music*, music professor and outspoken critic of Western musical culture and education, Christopher Small (1994) examines how the act of literacy (*i.e.,* learning to read and write) restructures consciousness at a societal level and specifically as it pertains to music.[1] While he notes that in most of the world's musical cultures non-literacy is the norm (that is, oral/aural musical traditions and modes of learning), citing examples ranging from Balinese music to jazz, Western classical music is part of a literate tradition, which relies heavily on notation and the score.

In the following chapter, "On Improvisation," Small discusses how a Western discourse and its associated practices centered on musical literacy, has proliferated to the detriment of improvisation; and has conditioned the listening and performance expectations of the musical establishment and general public alike. He writes:

> In the western classical tradition, the art of improvisation is today to all intents and purposes dead, and resists all efforts to revive it. The

[1] For a superb study on subject of orality and literacy see Walter Ong's (2002) *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*.

> resistance, surprisingly, comes largely from performers themselves, who mostly have little idea of what improvisation is or what it entails…both performers and listeners in the classical tradition have learnt to think of music as a collection of sound-objects bequeathed to us from the past, objects that are stable over long period and subject to the test of time in assessing their quality and value; this idea is negated in improvisation… (p. 283).

To this end, Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble (2004) contend that in contemporary society:

> Improvised music has effectively been excised from the popular face of music, whether in the classical concert hall (where the most radical form of improvisation may be an extended cadenza carefully thought out by the performer prior to the performance); on the radio where, with few exceptions, the dominance of format-based programming effectively marginalizes the presentation of improvised music (itself predicated on "live" performance); or in the emporia that sell and distribute music to the general public (p. 18).

The common trope of the primacy of the score in Western musical society is propagated throughout academia, and in particular as it relates to improvisation. Several accounts describe how this ideology plays out within higher education, specifically: the infrequent instances of improvisation techniques and pedagogy; an emphasis on the major European classical works and composers; and by underplaying (or in some instances disavowing) classical music's legacy of improvisation (*e.g.,* improvised cadenzas, figured bass short hand, ornamented variations, and improvised organ pieces, such as a fantasia, etc.). Bruno Nettl (1995), for example, in his ethnomusicological study of a fictional educational institution, "Heartland U.," drawn from his own experiences as educator within in the American Midwest, recounts how the pantheon of great European composers, or "deities" (mostly from the eighteenth and nineteenth century), are engraved on the 'Music Building's façade, and "are celebrated in and surrounded by rituals such as concert, rehearsal, lesson, and practice sessions" (p. 16). Moreover, the

author presents the 'Music Building' as a microcosm of Western musical culture and societal values. He writes:

> Music Building society, to some degree perceives its musical repertory, and therelationships among its components such as works and genres, in ways derived from its own conception of human society. The inhabitants of the Music Building see themselves and their work in terms of certain values and…of the tensions among opposing principles (Nettl, 1995, p. 44).

In his article "The Decline of Improvisation in Western Art Music: An Interpretation of Change," Robin Moore (1992) addresses the peculiar disappearance of improvisation from Western art music and conservatory training in the latter half of the nineteenth and twentieth century, given its prominence as a musical skill until at least 1840. "…Only in the past hundred and fifty years," the author notes "attitudes towards improvisation in Western classical performance have changed drastically. The mandates of compositionally specified interpretation now supersede those of the instrumentalist. To many, improvisatory expression seems threatening, unfamiliar, or undeserving of interest (p. 63)." Levin (2009) concurs that improvisation has been all but excised from classical performance practice noting that "in the 20th century musicians have been trained to try piously to observe the written testament of the composer…highly skilled at reproducing music, they often have little or no training in inventing it" (pp. 143-144). Furthermore, Charlotte Mattax Moersch (2009) cites numerous accounts attesting to the major role that improvisation played in Baroque keyboard music. She writes: "…in the keyboard music of the Baroque, the performer's role rivaled that or even exceeded that of the composer. Composers often provided only a skeletal framework to be elaborated upon *ad libitum* by the performer" (p. 167).

Praise of jazz music, as far as its educational value was concerned, was relegated to its compositional features while dismissing improvisation altogether. In his overtly biased take on the then emerging jazz movement, "'Jazz' – An Educational Problem," music educator Edward J. Stringham (1926) writes that:

> …there is both good and bad jazz—that is, good or bad from a compositional standpoint…that which is well conceived and written according to ordinary esthetical and technical standards, and that which is really clever in either composition of orchestration. The other kinds of jazz are self-evident and carry within themselves their own swiftest and surest condemnation (p. 191).

A strict adherence to the score in the classical idiom also serves as a marker of power, which not only authorizes a specific canon and historicity, but also maintains a set of power relations between: (a) the musician and a given historical context; (b) the performer and composer; and (c) teacher and student. Again Small (1994) explains that:

> The limits of distortion to which performers are expected to subject the written notation are variable, being all but infinite in the Afro-American tradition but very narrow in the classical…Since about 1945 the European classical tradition has been intolerant of any liberties whatever with the composer's notations…So tied to the note has the performing musician become in the classical tradition that it might almost be possible to define classical music today by reference to this dependence (p. 232).

Conversely, "when the performer is not tied to the written notes, he or she has the power not only of interpretation…but also of original creation…The performer may not always choose to exercise the power but it is always there" (p. 234). In another fictional account of conservatory culture, this time of a token Northeastern music school, Henry Kingsbury (1988) clarifies what he calls "the contingent authority of the score" (p. 87). Articulated through the teachings of "Marcus Goldman" (a hypothetical teacher in Kingsbury's "EMC," or "Eastern Metropolitan Conservatory") Kingsbury writes:

> Students must play what is printed in the score…Part of the point here is that the score was of paramount importance, and the importance of the score was conceived by teachers and students alike as grounded in a devout respect for the creativity of the composer. However everything happened as though the score were in its essence only a touchstone in an

> ongoing negotiation of relative social authority among the person in the room, an authority manifested in musical and verbal performance (pp. 87-89).

It would be understatement to say that the fundamental difference in pedagogy and salient features between jazz and classical music led to skepticism and resistance on the part of the academy. Prouty (2008) concludes that:

> Jazz, as a predominantly improvised music, began its academic life with a fundamentally different identity within the academy, one which put it at odds with academic musical culture…thus a rejection of jazz could be seen as one manifestation of a larger rejection of improvised traditions within musical academia (p. 2).

He concludes: "In order to overcome such opposition, jazz educators employed strategies for the teaching of jazz improvisation that borrowed from the methods and perspectives common to higher education (p. 1).

Jazz Pedagogical Materials

Within this context of a shift from an oral tradition and improvised practice to a written curriculum there emerged a number of well-known jazz pedagogical materials. The wholesale growth of jazz education in the early 1970s precipitated a cottage industry dedicated to codifying jazz improvisation and pedagogical practices. Presently, there are literally thousands of texts available on jazz representing a multiplicity of approaches and range of topics, including: pedagogy (*e.g.,* rehearsal techniques, curriculum design, teaching philosophy, etc.), improvisation, composition and arranging, theory, history, and scholarship resources. What follows is a selective survey of some of the major publications in the field.

In the foreward to David Baker's (1989) *David Baker's Jazz Pedagogy: A Comprehensive Method for Teacher and Student*, the then chairman of Music Education Department of Indiana, Robert Klotman, claims that the book "provides the music education profession with a comprehensive text book on every subject of instruction as it affects the school jazz program" (p. 1). Indeed,

the text proceeds to outline several aspects related to the implementation of a jazz curriculum, including: a rationale for a jazz degree program, course syllabi, lesson plans, sample tests, and ensemble direction strategies. Another leader in the field of jazz education, Jerry Coker (1989), has published a number of books on jazz pedagogy, namely the appropriately titled *The Teaching of Jazz*; which unfolds as a complete how-to-guide for creating a jazz program from scratch. The text is divided into three parts, "Chapter 1 – Rationale," in which the author posits his philosophy of jazz education as well as a justification for its adoption in the university setting; "Chapter 2 – The Jazz Curriculum," provides a year-by-year, semester-by-semester breakdown of what courses to include in a jazz degree program; and "Chapter 3 – Teaching the Jazz Curriculum," goes into detail about teaching the courses and topics such as "The Importance of the Ear," and "Requirements for Becoming a Good Jazz Improviser." The book's appendix even includes an inventory that lists the actual materials needed to start a jazz program – *e.g.,* 'equipment and furnishings', '31 big band arrangements', '160 books on jazz (methods, history)', etc.

Apart from books that address jazz from a teaching perspective, the pedagogical literature tends to focus largely on demystifying concepts and techniques of improvisation. Again Baker (1988) and Coker (1987) are considered to have established the industry standard with their publications *Jazz Improvisation: A Comprehensive Method for All Musicians*, and *Improvising Jazz* respectively. Both volumes provide insights into the major concepts of jazz improvisation, including: scale usage, chord progressions and harmony, melodic development, developing the ear, swing feel, learning tunes, and solo construction. In addition, Baker's text offers numerous examples, exercises, and suggestions for further listening and reading; while Coker goes so far as to list "Aesthetic Criteria for the Evaluation of a Jazz Artist." Coker's (1997) *Patterns for Jazz* is another influential publication that contains over 300 examples of idiomatic jazz improvisation vocabulary. Other pattern-type books include *Patterns for Improvisation* by jazz luminary Oliver Nelson (1966), and the *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* by Nicolas Slonimsky (1947), which

was supposedly used extensively by John Coltrane. Jazz musician, educator, and camp director Jamey Aebersold is another highly influential contributor to jazz improvisation methodology. *How to Play and Improvise Jazz* is the first volume in Aebersold's (1992) widely popular series of play-a-long books and recordings. Numbering over a 120 volumes, each edition contains written out arrangements complete with melody, chord progressions, and live recording of a rhythm section accompaniment. Each volume focuses on a particular topic (*i.e.,* the blues, ii-V7-I progressions) or jazz composer (*e.g.,* Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis). Jazz fake books (*i.e.,* a compilation of popular jazz compositions containing only the melody and chord changes needed to improvise over a given selection) of varying quality began to circulate widely amongst jazz students, pedagogues, amateurs, and professional musicians alike. The most accurate and respected version in the field is *The New Real Book* series edited by Chuck Sher and Bob Bauer (1988).

George Russell's (1959) *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization for Improvisation* was a seminal publication in the field of jazz theory, in which he demonstrates the relationship between chords and scales for the purpose of improvising or writing jazz melody lines. Both Andre Jaffe's (1983) *Jazz Theory* and Mark Levine's (1995) *The Jazz Theory Book* offer a more general approach covering all aspects of basic tonal jazz theory. Following the codification of jazz theory, a logical next step was a series of books dedicated to jazz composition and arranging. These texts covered everything from arranging for small groups (Dobbins, 1986) and big bands (Wright, 1982) to jazz composition in various idioms (Goldstein, 1993). These sources used recorded and published examples of famous jazz compositions to illustrate elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, form, and often included a discography for further study of particular techniques. In the *Jazz Composer's Companion* (Goldstein, 1993), the author even includes a final section of interviews with various jazz composers, namely Bill Evans, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, and Horace Silver, revealing their creative process and compositional strategies.

Finally, only recently has jazz scholarship become a serious field of inquiry spurring a proliferation of materials including historical and biographical

accounts; as well as critical analyses of jazz and discourses related to gender, race, class and power. An exhaustive list of available jazz research and pedagogical materials was compiled by Eddie Meadows (1995) in his over 750 page tome *Jazz Research and Performance Materials: A Select Annotated Bibliography*.

The Jazz Curriculum Today

Relatively unfettered by the diatribes of academic discourse, the jazz curriculum has since developed into a more well-rounded and complete curricular offering covering a broad spectrum of courses and institutional philosophies. In his *Down Beat* article entitled "What is a Jazz Education Today," John Janowiak (2000) describes the difference between today's jazz programs, as compared to those of just five or ten years ago, as 'night and day'. He goes on to say that:

> Colleges and universities offer courses that would have been unheard of a decade ago, covering such areas as jazz studies, theory, history, composition and arranging, pedagogy and technology. And these courses are being complemented by a broader palette of performing ensembles that address different genres of jazz (p. 2).

In this section, the researcher will examine a couple of standardized jazz curriculums in the United States, including those of the MENC and NASM, as well as a number of descriptive studies which investigate curricular offerings in tertiary institutions.

Nationally Sanctioned Jazz Curriculums

Long held as a central tenet of jazz performance practice, national curriculum guidelines now are including 'improvisation' as part of their basic musical competencies. In 1994, the Music Educators' National Conference (MENC), a national organization focused on the advancement of music education (both in terms of professional development and advocating for music as core part of the curriculum), published a document entitled "The School Music Program: A New Vision." In this document the MENC sought to consolidate the music

education movement by outlining nine "National Standards for Music Education." These standards were designed to reflect the best methods for teaching music, serve as a basis for a reformation of music teacher education, and for developing a unified music curriculum. In relation to jazz education, the third standard is to be able to "improvise melodies, variations, accompaniments" ("National Standards for Music Education," 2009). Moreover, the MENC lists specific achievement standards for each age group beginning with children at age two to four and continuing through Grades 9-12, specifically:

> Musical Experiences for Two-, Three-, and Four-Year-Old Children
> Achievement Standard:
> a. improvise songs to accompany their play activities
> b. improvise instrumental accompaniments to songs, recorded selections, stories, and poems…
> Grades 9-12
> Achievement Standard, Proficient:
> a. improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts
> b. improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys
> c. improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality
> Achievement Standard, Advanced:
> d. improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts in a variety of styles
> e. improvise original melodies in a variety of styles, over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality ("The School Music Program," 2009)

In addition to the increased emphasis on improvisation in national musical standards, educators and policy makers have now started to give due consideration to jazz's oral/aural legacy when formulating curriculum guidelines. To this end, Fischer (1999) notes "through the association with institutionalized study and development, only recently has jazz music begun to balance the visual

and tactile skills with the aural expectations of the jazz performer" (p. 101). Published jointly by the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) and the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) (1996), and endorsed by renowned jazz musician and educator Wynton Marsalis, *Teaching Jazz: A Course Study* provides detailed information on creating and instituting a comprehensive course of study in jazz music. The proposed jazz curriculum is divided into eight components "that attempt to meet the challenge of teaching what is historically an oral and aural tradition" (p. 5), including: (a) ear training; (b) jazz theory; (c) rhythm; (d) jazz keyboard; (e) composition/improvisation; (f) instrumental skills; (g) jazz history; and (h) vocal skills. While it is unclear as to the intended audience for the text (at various times it is recommended to K-6 students, beginners (Level 1) to advanced level students (Level VI), general classroom teachers, and both novice and experienced teachers), the contributors provide a detailed chart outlining a sequenced learning approach and specific goals. For each component of the jazz curriculum the chart lists a series of discrete learning tasks and competencies based on six skill levels. Moreover, the text addresses some of the more nebulous aspects of jazz music that are often neglected in formal study, such as rhythmic feel or 'groove' (*i.e.,* an intuitive sense of the rhythmic pulse), aural imitation, singing recorded solos, bass lines, guide tones, vocal improvisation, and free improvisation.

In its annual handbook, The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) (2008), the national accrediting agency for music and music-related disciplines responsible for establishing national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees, provides structural guidelines for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies (as well as at the Master's and Doctorate level). The NASM states that the jazz curricula should consist of: "Study in the major area, including performance studies, ensemble participation, studies in composition, arranging, and improvisation, independent study, field experiences, and recitals" (p. 90). Moreover, the following "Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities" are unique to the jazz degree program:

a. Comprehensive capabilities in various jazz idioms, including the ability to perform, improvise, compose, arrange, and score; and knowledge of jazz history and literature, including the cultural sources and influences of jazz.
b. Ability to work as a performer and composer/arranger with a variety of jazz and studio music idioms in various settings and types of ensembles…
c. Opportunities to hear fully realized performances of the student's original compositions and/or arrangements…
d. Solo and ensemble experiences in a variety of settings…(p. 90)

Descriptive Studies of Jazz Curricula in Tertiary Institutions

A number of theses and dissertations have undertaken descriptive analyses of the curricular structure of jazz program offerings in tertiary institutions. In a study examining jazz studies curricula in 15 American colleges and universities, as well as questionnaire responses from the same population, Barr (1974) sought to structure a college curriculum for a major in Jazz or Studio Music based upon ascertained competencies needed by jazz musicians and educators. The researcher identified six general categories in the undergraduate jazz studies curriculum, including: (a) Jazz Ensemble; (b) Jazz Improvisation; (c) Rehearsal Techniques for the Jazz Ensemble; (d) Jazz Keyboard; (e) Arranging for the Jazz Ensemble; and (f) Jazz History and Literature. This core curriculum represents 38 credit hours (or 30%) of the traditional 128 credit hours in the Bachelor of Music in Performance degree. The specific order of categories reflects a priority-based sequence of course offerings based on participant responses. Barr also provides an extensive description, instructional guidelines, learning objectives, and competencies for each category.

Hennessey (1995) undertook a comparison of jazz curricula offerings at three four-year institutions: the University of North Texas, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Although primarily concerned with providing recommendations for the inclusion of jazz as a required

component in the music education curriculum, and the disproportionate comparison between North Texas and Eastman with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, the researcher's curricula analysis of the former institutions are relevant to the present study. The University of North Texas offers both undergraduate and graduate degree levels comprising the following eight areas of study in jazz: (a) Jazz Ensemble (variously called 'Jazz Lab Band', and 'Chamber Jazz Ensemble'); (b) Jazz Fundamentals; (c) Jazz Keyboard; (c) Jazz Improvisation; (d) Jazz Arranging; (e) History of Jazz; (f) Forms and Styles in Popular Music; and (g) Private Lessons. While at the time of publication, the Eastman School of Music offered a degree option at the graduate level only, an undergraduate major in jazz studies is now available as well. Both programs encompass: Jazz Theory, Improvisation, Applied Music (*i.e.,* private lessons), Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Piano, History and Analysis of Jazz Styles, Arranging Techniques. Although beyond the scope of this study, a number of prominent university jazz programs outline similar degree requirements in their undergraduate course catalogues (Berklee, 2009; Eastman School of Music, 2009; Manhattan School of Music, 2009; McGill University, 2009; New England Conservatory, 2009; The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, 2009; The Julliard School, 2009; University of Toronto, 2009)

At the graduate level, Fischer (1999) compared and reviewed curricular offerings in selected institutions in the United States offering master's degrees. Using the process of content analysis of university catalogs and graduate handbooks, the author identified 11 courses that are considered standard in a jazz curriculum reiterating those mentioned in other sources (*i.e.,* NASM, 2008; IAJE 1996; Barr, 1974). Additionally, questionnaires were distributed to the directors of jazz studies programs to gain insights into their institutional philosophies in relation to existing curricula; as well as the prioritization of course work and essential skills. When asked to estimate as a percentage ratio, the importance of performance to pedagogy as practiced by their institutions, about a third of the respondents indicated an 80%:20% emphasis on performance as opposed to pedagogy. Moreover, regarding the prioritization of course work, 'Jazz

Improvisation' and 'Combo Participation' were the ranked first 86.9% and 60.9% of the time respectively. Almost all of the institutions surveyed (96%) required jazz ensemble participation while pursuing a graduate degree. Fischer concludes that "the ensemble environment is a primary area for developing performance skills" (p. 167). Lastly, respondents cited 'technical mastery of one's instrument' (56.4%), and 'musical expressiveness' (52.2%) as "essential skills a student should have in place to succeed into the next century" (p. 158).

Similar descriptive studies have focused on the curricular structure of jazz studies programs in Canadian institutions. Through interviews with the chairs of jazz studies programs in Canadian universities, Brenan (2005) provided analogous results to those already stated by Fischer (1999) in his American counterparts. In particular, the researcher identified an emphasis on performance practice compared to pedagogy with respondents indicating a ratio of at least 70%:30% and a mode of 90%:10%. These results "clearly identify performance as the main emphasis of jazz studies" (p. 66). Respondents were also asked to prioritize a list of 18 elements that were deemed essential to the career of an aspiring musician. Data revealed that 'aural skills' (15 points) and 'musical expressiveness' (14 points) were considered to be of the highest importance followed closely by 'technical mastery' (12 points). In terms of courses, improvisation, jazz combo, and studio instruction were considered a top priority for an undergraduate jazz studies degree receiving the same weighted score of 13 points. Brenan's research produced a number of interesting conclusions; notably, in comparison to American jazz studies degrees:

> Jazz studies degrees offered in Canada are quite diverse. To be noted is the diversity of programs that fall under the same provincial jurisdiction. The lack of a NASM type organization to control the standards is evident…The diversity among the jazz studies programs is the greatest strength of Canadian jazz education. Of the programs studied, each has a different set of priorities. A variety of jazz styles and concepts is valued at each post-secondary institution. Students can receive a specialized jazz education in Canada… (pp. 119-120).

In his comprehensive dissertation, *Descriptive, Philosophical and Practical Bases for Jazz Education: A Canadian Perspective*, generative figure in music education philosophy David James Elliott (1983) enumerates three main objectives of research: (a) to formulate a philosophical position on the nature and value of jazz education as aesthetic education; (b) develop a praxis for said philosophy; and (c) to determine the nature and extent of jazz curricula in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Elliott, as did Brenan (2005) and Fischer (1999), similarly concluded that while there is a wide variety of jazz courses being offered in formal degree programs (the author lists no less than 15 titles), there is an inordinate emphasis on performance (mainly in the form of large jazz ensemble, *i.e.,* the big band) at the expense of pedagogy, both in terms of future teacher training and actual jazz instruction.

The Current Call for Change

Far from turning a blind eye (or ear for that matter) to the present situation, the respondents in Elliott's (1983) survey expressed negative sentiments regarding the current practice of jazz education in Canadian schools. Specifically, they felt curricular offerings were limited and focused too much on the large jazz ensemble to the detriment of other styles of jazz and non-performance based approaches to jazz education. Furthermore, Elliott's subjects were not alone in their criticism of the current state of jazz education as others both in and out of the academy have voiced similar concerns. With jazz now firmly entrenched within academia, the problem is no longer one of inclusion, that is social and educational acceptance, but rather one of instruction. Formal jazz education has been most frequently criticized for propagating a limited pedagogy resulting in homogenous sounding graduates. While it is impossible to ascertain in reality such a change in jazz viz homogeneity, this next section will analyze the discourse related to the phenomenon in question.

Institutional Pedagogy and Sonic Homogeneity

In his article, "The 'Finite' Art of Improvisation: Pedagogy and Power in Jazz Education," Ken Prouty (2008) provides an illuminating account of the current situation in formal jazz education. The title of the article, a reference to Paul Berliner's (1994) influential text (*Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*), suggests the migration of jazz education to the formal institution has had profound implications for the types of social relations that form among its practitioners. In particular, he posits that the institutional study of jazz has shifted the locus of power from the individual performer, who was once responsible for his/her own self-learning, to the academy, who regulates virtually every aspect of one's educational experience (*i.e.,* designated curricula, pedagogical methods, and perspectives). Prouty writes:

> At times, the ways in which jazz improvisation is practiced and conceptualized truly seem "infinite,"…with pedagogical and curricular practices negotiated between teachers and students. Yet, formal instructional systems in jazz improvisation are frequently criticized for leading to just the opposite result, limiting individual improvisational choice and having a stultifying effect on performance, and…profoundly influencing the relative power relations between students and teachers (p. 1).

While a Foucauldian analysis of the inherent power relations within institutional forms of education is not the concentration of the present study, Prouty does summarize a common mode of criticism of jazz education, namely: "…a perceived standardization of methods of improvisational pedagogy has led to a sense of stagnation amongst student jazz performers in the academy" (p. 6). In his book, *Jazz: The American Theme Song* James Lincoln Collier (1994) investigates the history and development of jazz within American society. In the chapter titled "Art and the Academy" he looks particularly at the existence of jazz within higher education and addresses the current trend towards sonic uniformity in jazz education. He writes:

> With students all over the United States being taught more or less the same harmonic principles, it is hardly surprising that their solos tend to sound much the same. It is important for us to understand that many of the most influential jazz players developed their own personal harmonic schemes, very frequently because they had little training in theory and were forced to find it their own way (p. 155).

Like Prouty (2008), Collier (1994) conjectures that the practice of 'self-teaching', through which musicians forged their own aesthetic course, has been vitiated by the rigid standards and methods employed in formal institutions. He writes:

> …self-teaching gave them [traditional jazz musicians]…a distinctive, individual quality that made their work instantly identifiable. Each musician was guided in his choice of tone, sharpness of attack, selection of notes, and all the rest of it, by his own taste—by what he wanted to hear coming out of his instrument…In academic circumstances it is otherwise. Young players are taught…to aim for a longstanding performance ideal…Most of them [jazz instructors] are well aware of the dangers of over-rigid training, of squelching the musical instincts of their student. But nonetheless, most of them feel duty-bound to give their student the same rudiments, exercise, and études that music students in any field will get. They are being told how the instrument ought to be played, how it ought to sound…while rigorous training is necessary to produce musicians who play with good intonation, clean tone, speed, and flexibility, it can inhibit development of an individual sound (pp. 152-153).

Galper concurs that "one of reasons why everybody sounds the same is because…the information has been so standardized. [In] early days, there was so much individual style because there was no information and everybody had to figure it out themselves" (Javors, 2001, p. 124).

In his book on the stagnation of jazz in general, *Is Jazz Dead: (Or Has it Moved to a New Address?)*, Stuart Nicholson (2005) agrees that "today, hundreds of thousands of students and thousands of teachers study [a] narrow repository of stylistic inspiration…which for many students has resulted in both a similarity of

concept and execution" (p. 106). Previously, David Baker (1973) cited examples of institutional criticism of jazz legends Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, and Ornette Coleman for having poor (or unorthodox) performance standards. The author explains that this sort of thinking is symptomatic of one of the greatest ills of the educational system, namely:

> …a tendency to try to pour everyone into one mold, to produce a conformist…the jazz artist starts with the techniques, materials, etc., of his predecessors, but there should always be room for him to seek his own identity. Contrast this with attitudes prevalent in many or perhaps most conservatories and music schools, where a teacher expects his students to rigidly follow his particular bent and musical philosophies (p. 25).

Situated within the debate as to whether or not the increasingly academic and codified nature of the study of jazz improvisation is promoting stylistic conformity, Murphy (2009) sought to elucidate student experiences as they learn to improvise within and outside of a university jazz curriculum (specifically the University of North Texas). A sample of student responses, along with comments made by professors, reveal a mixture of respect and disdain for institutional instruction. On the one hand:

> Some students found them [improvisation classes] confining and unhelpful. One student wrote, 'My early experience with UNT's improvisation classes left me very disenchanted with the aesthetic emphasized by the jazz program. Where is the emotional and artistic fulfillment in learning patterns and plugging them into appropriate key centers in a piece of music?' (p. 176).

While another student commented that:

> Generally musicians at this school respond to a set of emotional symbols that imply a series of harmonic professions [which] stimulate various responses according to the sort of vocabulary the performer has developed. The danger with this sort of improvisation is that it is very easy to go through the math or the motions of music without digging into the intuitive and emotional aspects of improvising' (p.179)

A professor at the school, however, expressed a different perspective that "stagnation is not brought about through the acquisition of information or repeated practice, but through the individual's inability to bring that material to a meaningful and personal level' (p. 180). To this end, Murphy is careful to point out that improvisation class (and school in general) should not be viewed as 'performance', but rather as a form of 'practice' meant to introduce general skills that can applied to a variety of musical situations. He writes:

> Requirements that seem overly prescriptive, such as memorization of patterns or transcribed solos, are intended not to produce players who are clones but to strengthen a player's memory and skill at manipulating musical material outside of class (p. 177).

The central argument of the chapter is that isolated classes, such as 'improvisation', represent only a part of a student's overall development, which includes an interplay of classes, extracurricular activities, prior experience, and ideas about culture generally. Kennedy ("Jazz Education," n.d., para.16), however, does not share Murphy's (2009) holistic vision for jazz education arguing that:

> Most undergraduate-level jazz programs are concerned more with creating generic professional musicians and educators than jazz musicians; this ideology does not necessarily hold true for programs at smaller specialized schools...but it does seem to be the aim of larger university programs, notably the University of North Texas (p. 4).

Criticisms such as these are not limited to those within the academy as a number of prominent jazz musicians have also expressed anxiety over the standardization of jazz education. Townsend (2000) quotes the late saxophonist Joe Henderson as saying that in academia "everybody is doing the same thing, you don't get that individual fingerprint like you used to among players" (p. 177); and in a 1996 interview for *Jazz Times* magazine guitarist John Scofield comments that students in jazz education programs "play the same licks because they have the same books" (p. 176). Saxophonist Lou Donaldson laments the fact that "all players are sounding alike today. They're all working out of Oliver

Nelson's book. They play mechanical sequences of changes that will fit anything" (Berliner, 1994, p. 280). The great alto saxophonist Phil Woods puts it more bluntly: "Everybody's got the same books. Everybody's playing the same tunes. Everybody's using the same wrong changes. It all sounds the same" (Javors, 2001, p. 121). Jazz trumpet player Bobby Shew, whose performance credits include stints with Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Maynard Ferguson, and Art Pepper among others, posits that technique has become the sole *raison d'être* of music education. He writes:

> …as far as 'jazz' or improvisation is concerned, which is what it's all about…I cannot believe the number of kids including my own students, who can play double high 'C's' all day, read Hank Levy's 1/8 time signatures, get through Malaguena or any other 'show stopper' and still fall flat on their face when it comes time to play a solo. Most are now using the Ornette Coleman-Freddie Hubbard 'shuck' methods or bubbling lots of fingers rapidly and call it jazz. It's really too bad that the kids become instrumentalists of the highest caliber, but most never become 'musicians' in the fullest sense of the word (Barr, 1974, p. 94).

Recounting his experiences as a Berklee student, saxophonist Branford Marsalis says that:

> Berklee has its own system of doing things, the Berklee way, the Berklee method. They basically say that when you write things that are theoretically against the Berklee method, then they're incorrect. Even if they sound great. Musically they sound great, but theoretically it's wrong, so it's wrong. Which is not the purpose of music. Music theories are just theories (Ake, 2002, p. 144).

Contrary to Murphy's (2009) view that jazz instruction provides the student with general skills that can applied in novel situations, Marsalis' comments reveal a tacit function of the music school: which is to validate or measure a student's ability to reproduce a type of theoretical knowledge, as oppose to applying a sort of practical knowledge related to the actual sounding of jazz.

The New 'Written' Tradition of Jazz

As already discussed, there is considerable debate concerning the alleged incompatibility of learning systems in the jazz tradition (*i.e.,* 'oral') and academia (*i.e.,* 'written'). Once invoked as a thinly veiled racist ideology intended to exclude jazz from higher education, the current discourse centered on oral versus written methodologies considers their impact in relation to the current call for change in jazz education. Specifically, a strong contingent of scholars have criticized the written methods and materials of academia for having vitiated the oral tradition of jazz, and essentially threatening the very nature of the music itself.

Writing over 30 years ago, Hores (1977) notes how the visual approach (in the form of chord structures, nomenclature, harmonic progressions, and chord-scale theory) dominated jazz improvisation whereas for the most part aural methods were overlooked. In his book, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde*, Bernard Gendron (2002) explains how traditionalists within in the jazz community (in this case New Orleans jazz musicians) used writing as a polemical charge against the modernists (*i.e.,* swing musicians) who were sabotaging the African-jazz tradition. He writes:

> …nothing sabotaged the African American tradition in jazz more, it was argued, than the replacement of simultaneous improvisation with the European artifact of written arrangements. West Africans, according to revivalist Ernest Borneman, prefer 'circumlocution' to 'direct naming,' 'direct statement,' and any 'form of abstraction'...Thus any attempt to commit 'the jazz idiom' to the rigidity of written language' would 'vitiate' rather than 'preserve' it (pp. 130-131).

To this end, Galper (2000) argues that in comparison to the European classical methodology practiced in academia "[the] oral tradition has unfortunately been subordinated to a romantic cliché that typifies the process as a colorful history of the idiom and a vestigial mythology rather than a useful methodology for learning to play" (p. 1). Jazz pianist and scholar, David Ake (2002) targets educators, such as the jazz education pioneer David Baker, whose influence and numerous

publications have helped establish and maintain the status quo of improvisational pedagogy. He writes:

> …Baker also laments the tacit Eurocentricism [written methods] of most conservatories. In his handbook, *Jazz Pedagogy: A Comprehensive Method for Student and Teacher*, Baker objects to the reinscription of classical ideals on jazz students. But even he reinforces these aesthetics to a large degree. The sample course syllabi he provides for prospective jazz improvisation teachers deals overwhelmingly with memorization of songs and jazz-related harmonic theory (pp. 121-122).

Nettl's (1995) observation that schools tend to focus on the jazz big band as a primary learning context further elucidates the disconnect between traditional jazz practice and the prevailing institutional philosophy. He writes:

> …the large jazz band, a miniature of the concert band, plays from scores a substantial amount of music that may lack improvisation. This kind of big-band has a very modest role in the outside world of jazz, but the school nevertheless selects it to be exemplar of jazz within its walls (p. 107).

In his dissertation, *An Appraisal of Collegiate Jazz Performance Programs in the Teaching of Jazz Music*, Keith Javors (2001) interviewed several notable jazz musicians, including Rufus Reid, Phil Woods, and David Liebman, as to issues related in the title. The researcher identified one issue that is most pressing in the pedagogical concerns of jazz studies programs: that they are visually rather than aurally-oriented. One participant, Ed Soph said that "visual learning does only one thing and that reinforces good or bad. [It] does not enforce or allow what's at the basis of improvisation, which is making choices…Visual learning dictates the use of sound…." (p. 119). He continues: "The visual aspect is bologna, because that simply reinforces the theoretical, which is like saying if you know your scales and your changes, you can play" (p. 120).

Codification of Techniques

There is further concern that an overdependence upon written sources in jazz curricula has led to a codification of techniques and canonical ways of

improvising. Ake (2002) cites the academy's treatment of John Coltrane's oeuvre (arguably the most influential contributor to jazz music) as an example of how repertoire can become circumscribed. In particular, jazz curricula emphasize a specific canon of styles and musicians that serve as the basis of a pedagogical system. The author argues that the academy tends to dismiss Coltrane's later creative output entirely while the saxophonist's "Giant Steps" and similar recordings are used as exemplary teaching models. Moreover, this version of Coltrane is elevated on a pedestal and revered as the ideal of jazz improvisation (in fact, the tune "Giant Steps" is considered a rite of passage for all students of jazz). Ironically, or not so, this period of the Coltrane's career featured some of his most formulaic improvisations. His playing on "Giant Steps" for instance, while revolutionary and a virtuosic display of technical ability, contains a pastiche of practiced patterns, motives, and idiomatic jazz vocabulary. Ake postulates that such a narrow view of jazz styles and players reinforces an easily classified and teachable improvisation method; and one that is more readily explained in the conventions of music theory.

One style of jazz in particular, the bebop movement of the 1940s and 50s developed by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell, Max Roach *et al*., has been adopted as the unequivocal *grundgestalt* of institutional jazz pedagogy. Some of the most ardent supporters of formal jazz education have taken issue with the relatively limited stylistic basis of the jazz pedagogical system. Baker (1973) goes even so far as to suggest that bebop is the *lingua franca* of jazz. For the most part, his comments are accurate: not only is almost every improvisation method on the market derived from bebop precepts and vocabulary, but pedagogical systems which depart from these models (free jazz, experimental music, pre-bebop jazz styles, such as swing and New Orleans) are either largely ignored or avoided all together (Prouty, 2002). Nicholson (2005) explains that:

> The problem with basing the educational curriculum on a bebop-styled repertoire is that the solos in this style—and it is a style that focuses almost entirely on solos—were becoming so circumscribed stylistically

> and technically it was increasingly difficult for musicians to say anything original in this idiom (p. 107).

Some notable jazz musicians have been criticized, however unfairly, as being emissaries of this narrow idiom and for endorsing a limited set of techniques. Most famously, the much maligned trumpeter Wynton Marsalis has been adopted as the poster child for institutionalized jazz education. It should also be noted that Marsalis holds considerable sway both in the jazz community and in higher education. He has garnered critical and commercial success as recording artist (both in the classical and jazz market); he holds the position of the artistic director of Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) (arguably the foremost outreach initiative for jazz education); and his values and attitudes towards jazz education are widely disseminated in the media. Unsurprisingly, the criticism of Marsalis and the academic study of jazz share many of the same characteristics. In his book, *Blue: The Murder of Jazz*, Eric Nisenson (1997) equates the popularity of Marsalis (and others) as "the clearest indication that jazz is fading as an art form;" and it represents "the increasing diminution of genuine creative vitality" (p. 13). Nisenson also attacks tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman, son of legendary saxophonist Dewey Redman, writing that "like most of his generation of jazz musicians, he lacks originality and that adventurous spirit we associate with the best jazz musicians (his father is far more idiosyncratic and innovative player)" (pp. 12-13). While Nisenson's comments are subjective, and many including the researcher hold different opinions, the fact remains that the development of canonical ways of improvising within the academy seem to be at odds with the historical practices used by traditional jazz musicians.

Unique Voices to Emerge From Academia

The current call for change in jazz education becomes even more urgent when one considers that the development of a unique voice is the sole *raison d'ètre* for both the aspiring and established jazz artist. Berliner (1994) writes: "On a grand scale of judging the overall contribution of the artist to jazz, a fundamental criterion for evaluation is originality, also a highly valued

component within the individual solo" (p. 273). Similarly, Perry (2004, February 10) notes that "over the past hundred years, jazz musicians have been striving to 'get different'. The improvisatory and individualistic nature of jazz asks its practitioners to find ways to differentiate themselves from their peers to attain a unique, recognizable sound" ("Jazz & Innovation," para. 2-3).

Although the current jazz discourse centers on homogeneity and stagnation, the blame does not fall unanimously on formal education. A jazz professor in Murphy's study (2009), for example, argues that "stagnation is not brought about through the acquisition of information or repeated practicing, but through the individual's inability to bring that material to a meaningful and personal level" (p. 180). Murphy explains that the main function of the school is to provide an efficient means for gathering and disseminating information to students, who in turn are responsible for absorbing the material and developing a personal approach. Moreover:

> One of the wondrous oddities of our current moment is that the best advice to a serious jazz player in training is not to drop out and study in New York's nightclubs but to attend one of the several conservatories where excellent jazz instruction, by accomplished jazz artists, is richly available (O'Meally, Edwards, & Griffin, 2004, p. 1).

What is most intriguing about the present situation is that amidst the swarm of controversy a number of unique jazz voices have emerged from post-secondary institutions.

Unique Voices

In a recent article in *The New York Times* entitles "Jazz is Alive and Well. In the Classroom, Anyway," Nate Chinen (2007, January 7) points out that "for almost every prominent under-40 artist, you could name an affiliated [college] program, from the pianist Brad Mehldau (the New School) to the saxophonist Miguel Zenón (Berklee)" (p. AR 19). Zenón is a prime example having attended the Berklee College of Music for his undergraduate studies and the Manhattan School of Music for his masters degree ("Miguel Zenón: Bio," 2009, para. 1). He

has since emerged as one of the most talented and unique voices of his generation garnering numerous accolades, such as Guggenheim and Macarthur Fellowship grants for composition, and *Down Beat* magazine Critics Poll in the Rising Star Alto Saxophone category four years in a row (Odell, 2008). In another example, each member of the renowned Marsalis family has attended a post-secondary musical institution – Wynton attended Juilliard ("Wynton Marsalis: Biography," n.d., para. 3), Branford ("Branford Marsalis: Bio/Timeline," 2010) and Delfeayo ("Delfeayo Marsalis: Biography," n.d., para. 2) the Berklee College of Music, and Jason ("Jason Marsalis: Biography," 2009, para. 5) attended Loyola University in New Orleans, as well as studying composition with Roger Dickerson at Southern University. Lastly, in a possible sign of the times, saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, son of legendary saxophonist John Coltrane and pianist Alice Coltrane, has achieved similar esteem as his namesake having receiving his jazz education at the California Institute of the Arts ("Ravi Coltrane," n.d., para. 2). Far from a comprehensive list, these unique voices represent only a fraction of the jazz musicians that have received their formal training in post-secondary institutions.

Summary

Almost 70 years since its inception, formal jazz education has made considerable strides. Jazz programs, once banished from academia and portrayed as unfit for serious study, have now become standard fare in most university curricula offerings. Additionally, efforts to reconcile the jazz tradition with institutional study have led to a more well-balanced curriculum encompassing a range of courses, such as improvisation, aural training, theory and history, and ensembles of various configurations (from small group to big band). In tandem with the rise of formal jazz education came a proliferation of pedagogical materials and tested approaches. Despite this progress, the current discourse castigates the institutionalization of jazz education for producing similar sounding graduates, which has resulted in a general regression in jazz music. While these criticisms have some merit, the degree to which is both unknown and difficult to prove, some of today's most acclaimed and original jazz musicians have emerged

from post-secondary institutions. While the existence of unique voices in jazz history is not a new phenomenon, it is this central paradox, the emergence of unique voices within the context of the academy, and a discourse that centers on homogeneity and stagnation that demands further investigation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Inspired by the review of literature quoted in the previous chapter, the purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the current call for change in jazz education; and to examine the ways in which exceptional jazz musicians develop a unique voice. Specifically, this research examined the following: (a) what is the nature of the call for change regarding the current status of jazz education at the post-secondary level; (b) what are the perceptions of unique jazz musicians in regards to the current call for change in jazz education; (c) what are the perceptions of unique jazz musicians in regards to the current status of jazz education in post-secondary institutions; (d) do the methods used in formal jazz education differ from those used in the jazz tradition; (e) what are the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians in tertiary institutions; (f) what are the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians outside of tertiary institutions; (g) what are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz and how important is its development; and (h) how do exceptional jazz musicians develop a unique voice.

Participants in the study included ten exceptional jazz musicians recognized as having a unique voice. Data gathered from semi-structured interviews was organized into one of three categories encompassing the purpose and subproblems, namely: (a) attitudes regarding the current state of jazz education and call for change; (b) learning experiences both in and out of the school, and; (c) the nature and development of a unique voice. Data was coded by an emergent theme and compared for similarities and differences. Prior to the study a certificate of ethical acceptability of research was obtained from McGill University Research Ethics Board II. This chapter will describe the study completed in terms of the methodology, namely a review of literature and semi-structured interviews with select participants.

Review of Literature

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken in order to gain an understanding of: (a) how jazz was taught traditionally; (b) its transition to academia, including any changes in techniques and pedagogy; (c) how the jazz

curriculum is structured today; (d) the current call for change in the discourse on jazz education; and (e) unique voices that have emerged from post-secondary institutions. Sources studied included books, journal articles, magazine articles, newspapers, dissertations, university catalogues, method books, websites, liner notes, and conference publications. The exclusive use of Canadian and American sources reflects both the birthplace of jazz music and formal jazz education; as well as the current site of discourse and practice related to institutional jazz education. In addition, the majority of the research and literature on the topic has originated in these countries.

Several themes emerged from the literature relating to a shift in learning practices following the transition of jazz education to post-secondary institutions; and its effect on future generations of jazz musicians. In particular, the current call for change in jazz education is critical of the methods used in formal institutions for causing a homogenization among jazz students and a stagnation in the field generally. For each source reviewed, the major themes were summarized and important quotes were highlighted and copied verbatim into the review of literature.

Interviews

Methodology Rationale

The researcher employed a qualitative research design consisting of semi-structured interviews. The decision to design a qualitative rather than quantitative methodology was mainly due to the fact that the nature of this inquiry does not lend itself to statistical analysis. That is, the researcher has undertaken to elucidate several correlational relationships, namely the relationship between institutional pedagogy and student homogeneity, and the relationship between learning experiences and the development of a unique voice, which cannot readily be expressed in numerical values. Patton (2002) writes:

> Some questions lend themselves to numerical answers, some don't. If you want to know how much people weigh, use a scale…If you want to know what their weight *means* to them, how it affects them, how they think

> about it, and what they do about it, you need to ask them questions, find out their experiences, and hear their stories [emphasis in original] (p. 13).

Moreover, the categories of analysis used in this study, such as 'unique voice', 'homogeneity', and 'stagnation' among others preclude quantitative analysis as they are based on a subjective discourse and value judgments as opposed to objective statements of fact. Another factor influencing the chosen methodology was that "qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail. Approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry" (Patton, 2002, p. 14).

Upon considering the various types of qualitative research methods (*i.e.,* interviews, fieldwork, and content analysis), the researcher chose to interview potential subjects. Interviews reveal information that cannot readily be observed or documented, such as: attitudes, opinions, and intentions, behaviors that took place at some previous point in time, situations that preclude the presence of an observer, and the interviewee's perspective generally (Patton, 2002). To this end, semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions were used to elicit in depth and active discussion, allow for deeper probing, clarification of comments, and to provide a contextual resonance.

Formation of Interview Questions

Based on the preliminary research questions stated in the purpose and the subproblems, as well as the themes emerging from the review of literature, a series of ten questions (see Appendix A) was generated to be used in a semi-structured interview format. The themes emerging from the review of literature included: (a) a shift in learning practices following the transition of jazz education to post-secondary institutions; (b) students in post-secondary institutions partake in similar learning experiences and learn a common repertoire of material and techniques; (c) a perception that formal jazz education has had a negative effect on jazz music generally, in particular as it relates to an alleged homogenization of students; (d) the development of a unique voice is the sole *raison d'ètre* for a jazz

musician; and (e) there is no singular definition of 'unique voice' or process for its development. In order to gain further insight into these issues, the researcher developed a series of interview questions that focused on: (a) attitudes towards the current state of jazz education; (b) biographical information relating to jazz learning experiences in and out of school; and (c) perspectives on the concept of a unique voice. They included the following:

1) What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?
2) Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in school (*i.e.,* a homogenization of students)?
3) If you could change or improve something about jazz education what would it be?
4) Can you describe your experiences studying jazz in school?
5) Can you describe your learning experiences outside of school?
6) What would you tell a jazz student to do in addition to studying in school?
7) Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice and if so, why?
8) What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?
9) How do you develop a unique voice?
10) Is there anything else you wanted to add?

Subject Selection

Following upon the definitions stated in Chapter 1, subjects identified as being 'exceptional jazz musicians' and as having a 'unique voice' were selected to participate in the study. While it was a goal of the study itself to determine the characteristics of a 'unique voice' as stated in the subproblems, the researcher provided the following definition as a point of departure: a jazz musician that has emerged as having a highly individual and identifiable style regarding his/her instrumental timbre, musical vocabulary, repertoire, performance practice, musical concept or approach, or combination thereof. Since a definition of 'unique voice' was lacking in the literature, the researcher formulated the above

definition in opposition to the concept of 'homogeneity' as related in the discourse on jazz education (Prouty, 2008; Nicholson, 2005; Townsend, 2000; Berliner, 1994; Collier, 1994). It was predicted that the results of this study would require a significant alternation in the definition of 'unique voice'.

The procedure for determining which subjects matched the definitions of 'exceptional jazz musician' and 'unique voice' involved analyzing documentation attesting to the participant's standing within the field, namely:

1) Critical success in the form of various industry recognized awards, distinctions, and polls (*e.g.,* Grammy Awards®, *Down Beat* Annual Jazz Poll, Jazz Journalist Association Awards, etc.).

Additional predetermined selection criteria included:

2) Extensive involvement in the field of jazz performance outside of the institutional environment in the form of relevant documentation (*e.g.*: recording output, album sales, performances, touring schedules, curriculum vitae, press reviews, interviews, professional affiliations, peer reputation, etc.).
3) Extensive knowledge of the institutional study of jazz and the academic environment based on experience as a student, teacher, clinician, guest artist, or performer therein.
4) Suspected potential to provide insight into the issues outlined in the purpose and sub-problems.
5) Interest in the study and willingness to participate.

Access to, and recruitment of, prospective interview subjects was established through third-party contacts or an informal solicitation letter (see Appendix B) sent to the artist's email address listed on his or her website. In cases where the artist's email address was not listed on his or her website, the letter was sent to their publicity representative or management company with the instruction to forward the letter to the attention the artist's attention.

A total of 55 musicians that met the aforementioned selection criteria were contacted to participate. Twenty musicians responded positively to participating in an interview. The researcher decided to select ten interview subjects. It was the

researcher's opinion that this amount of subjects would provide a broad cross-section of unique jazz voices while still allowing for a focused and an in-depth comparison between individual learning experiences and attitudes. In order to preserve objectivity, subjects were selected on a first come first served basis. Subjects that were not were included were thanked for their interest in the study, and told that due to thesis length specifications their testimony could not be used. While the researcher intended to conduct only ten interviews, it became necessary during the course of research to interview one additional subject as one interview was unusable due to its brevity and general incompleteness. All participants, however, were mentioned in the Acknowledgements section.

Due to the scope of this study, the interview sample was limited in terms of gender, race, nationality, and instrument. In particular, although there are a disproportionate number of male jazz musicians in the field, 3 out of 10 interview participants were female to ensure both accurate and fair representation.[2] Interview subjects were limited to jazz instrumentalists and composers (*i.e.*: saxophone, clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, bass, guitar, piano, and drum set) based in the United States and Canada. Appendix C lists the subjects participating in an interview as organized by name, gender, country of birth, primary residence, and instrument. The omission of jazz vocalists is due to the fact that jazz improvisation, a key element in distinguishing a unique voice in jazz music, is much more common among instrumentalists than vocalists.[3]

Consent Forms

Before participating in the study, subjects were asked to read and complete a research consent form (see Appendix D) that was enclosed as an email attachment in portable document format (PDF). Participant's received the consent form immediately upon agreeing to participate in the study. Depending on when

[2] There exists no empirical data on the exact number of male and female jazz musicians in the field. The researcher chose to use the annual Critic's Poll and Reader's Poll published in *Down Beat* magazine, a leader in the field, to provide a sample of the number of male and female jazz musicians in the field.

[3] The researcher chose to use the list of *Down Beat* Hall of Fame Inductees from 1952-2008 to provide a sample of the number of jazz instrumentalists and vocalists in the field.

initial contact was made with the interviewee, and their confirmed participation, participant's received the research consent form approximately one week to a month prior to the scheduled interview. The research consent form clearly outlined all aspects of participation, including: the purpose of the interview, the recording method, the use of the recordings and transcripts, the guarantee of confidentiality, and the availability of the results upon completion of the study. Since none of the research consent forms were returned, subjects were given the above information orally and their verbal consent was noted by the researcher.

Pilot Testing I (In Person)

In order to prepare for the interviews, the researcher registered in a course that provided training in ethnographic interviewing. In addition to consulting accepted texts on qualitative research methods, such as *Ethnography in the Performing Arts: A Student Guide* by Kruger (2008) and *Fieldwork* by Jackson (1988), the researcher completed a ethnographic research project that involved this style of interviewing and analysis.

A pilot test of the interview schedule was undertaken in order for the researcher to develop his interviewing skills, and to assess the scope and relevance of the questions. The first draft of the interview questions (see Appendix E) was pilot tested on two subjects: one male and one female jazz musician from Montreal that matched the aforementioned participant selection criteria.

Both pilot interviews were conducted in person on July 10, 2009, and lasted 36 and 40 minutes respectively. The pilot test used the same procedure as the actual study described below with some notable changes, namely: (a) it was conducted in person at a mutually convenient location (*i.e.,* a local restaurant); and (b) no interview script was used.

Upon meeting the pilot test subjects at the predetermined location, the researcher proceeded to outline all aspects of participation as stated in the research consent form. After the participants signed the research consent form, the researcher began the interview by starting the recording device. Following a brief

informal description of the study, the researcher proceeded to interview the subjects by reading the interview questions verbatim. Pilot interviews were recorded using SONY IC Digital Recorder ICD-PS20.

Upon completion of the pilot interview the researcher's interviewing techniques and methods of improvement were discussed. Several issues were raised regarding the technical set-up and interviewing techniques. Specifically, the researcher was advised to eliminate background noise and to have the participant speak closer to the microphone. It was also determined that the researcher should talk less and allow the interviewee to elaborate. The amount and content of the interview questions also underwent several revisions as the researcher attempted to find a combination that would elicit the most informative and focused responses. The second draft of the interview questions included ten questions; three fewer than the first draft (see Appendix F).

Pilot Testing II (Telephone)

The researcher did not plan on conducting a second pilot test. However, due to the fact that all of interviews would be conducted via telephone, a second pilot test was deemed necessary. Since the first scheduled telephone interview was unusable due to its brevity (lasting less than ten minutes) and a general lack of usable data, it was considered as the second pilot test. The second pilot test employed the same procedure as the actual study and was conducted on October 27, 2009.

Following the second pilot test the researcher and the thesis supervisor discussed several suggestions for improvement. In order to elicit more in depth and candid responses from the participants, a final revision of the interview questions involved formulating more concise questions. Upon completion of the second pilot test, the researcher also found that interviews lasting at least 20 minutes allowed sufficient time for the questions to be answered with enough breadth and detail. Lastly, in order to establish a context for the interview, an interview script, including a salutation, a brief description of the study, and a

review of the questions, was developed by the researcher to precede the final draft of the interview questions (see Appendix A).

Interview Procedure

The researcher planned to conduct the interviews either in-person or by the telephone, however, practical limitations (*i.e.,* compacted itineraries, shifting touring schedules, and geographical distance) necessitated that all of the interviews be conducted via telephone. Interviews were carried out over a three-month period from October 27, 2009 to January 20, 2010 inclusive, and ranged in length from 21 to 51 minutes. Prior to the telephone interviews, participants were sent a copy of the questions to review. Suitable interview times were arranged with each subject based upon their availability.

As the interviews would be conducted via telephone, subjects were given the option of either phoning the researcher or having the researcher phone them. Every subject preferred the latter and provided contact information prior to the interview. Upon receipt of verbal consent, the researcher began the interview by starting the recording device. Following the script outlined above, the researcher then read the salutation, described the study, and reviewed the interview questions.

While the questions were answered in varying detail, where there was a clear lack of information subjects were encouraged to elaborate upon their responses. To further clarify any interview responses, subjects were invited to express additional comments or concerns at the end of the interview. The interview concluded with the researcher thanking the participant for their participation.

Recording and Storage of Data

Interviews were recorded using an Omega Callcorder 7202874 device enabling direct recording of telephone conversations to a SONY IC Digital Recorder ICD-PS20. Audio files were automatically saved as Digital Voice Files by the software program that accompanied the digital recorder. The audio files

were subsequently converted into MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 format (Mp3) and saved in a new folder on the researcher's desktop.

Transcription and Coding of Data

The following data coding method was developed by the researcher independent of any research guide. Interviews were transcribed in their entirety by the researcher using Windows Media Player to playback the audio files and Microsoft Word 2007 to input the text (which were saved as .docx files). The resulting transcriptions were color-coded according to each interview question (*i.e*, the data relating to each question was highlighted in a different color). Data for each question was then extracted from the main interview and placed into a separate document. In this new document, one for each question, interview responses were summarized in point form and coded by an emergent theme. A master list of emergent themes was compiled for each question and divided into alternate modalities; that is positive and negative responses. Lastly, the researcher tallied the number of statements pertaining to each emergent theme on the master list so as to reveal both similarities and differences between participant responses; and to underline the most frequent modal responses. Important quotes relating to an emergent theme were highlighted and copied verbatim into the presentation of data.

Subject Identification

Subjects were given the option of being identified in the report or having their identity and responses remain anonymous. A number of participants, having expressed reservations about being identified in the report, requested to review the manuscript before consenting to having their names published in the study. Upon completion of the manuscript, the researcher sent each participant an electronic copy of the document for their revision. After reviewing the manuscript, all subjects agreed to have their names published in the study. The researcher noted their consent via electronic mail.

Subjects were also instructed not to frame their comments in such a way that they could be perceived as referring to a specific person or institution. Any reference to a specific institution was omitted and replaced with a generic label, such as ‘school’.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Data

In order to gain a better understanding of the current call for change in jazz education, research was undertaken according to the methodology described in Chapter 3. Specifically, the current study gathered data from semi-structured interviews with ten exceptional jazz musicians recognized as having a unique voice. In part using the emergent themes from the review of literature, a series of ten interview questions (Appendix A) was formulated that attempted to clarify the issues stated in the purpose and subproblems. Interviews employed open-ended questions to elicit in depth discussion and to provide a contextual vibrancy.

Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed in their entirety and relevant quotes were copied verbatim into the text. Interview data was organized into three areas relating to: (a) attitudes regarding the current state of jazz education and the current call for change; (b) learning experiences both in and out of the school; and (c) the nature and development of a unique voice. Data was further segmented by each interview question. For each question, topics analyzed reflected the frequency and breadth of the issue as emphasized by the subjects. This chapter will present the data gathered from interviews with select participants.

The Current Call for Change in Jazz Education

The impetus for the present study was the current call for change in jazz education, which is critical of the methods used in formal institutions for causing a homogenization among jazz students and a stagnation in the field generally. Noticeably absent from the literature is an alternate perspective that highlights any positive aspects of formal jazz education. In order to determine the degree to which the perceptions of unique jazz musicians, themselves products of formal jazz education, are concurrent with the current call for change, the researcher asked participants the following questions:

1) What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?

2) Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in school (*i.e.,* a homogenization of students)?
3) If you could change or improve something about jazz education what would it be?

It should also be noted that each participant underlined that their opinions were based on limited experience within jazz institutions and should not be considered all encompassing assessments of jazz education. The aggregate of responses, however, did generate a number of common themes and experiences among subjects.

The State of Jazz Education in Colleges and Universities

To provide a baseline for the subsequent inquiry, subjects were initially asked about their views regarding the current state of jazz education in post-secondary institutions. Responses revealed a fairly even distribution between positive and negative statements and emergent themes.

Success of Jazz Programs

Half of the participants cited positive results of jazz education relating to an increase in the number of jazz programs worldwide, an increase in the overall quality of jazz education, and an unprecedented number of exceptional jazz musicians emerging from post-secondary institutions. Trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, for example, related that "there are some incredible programs I've seen over the years, not just in the United States but in Europe and Sweden. They're really encouraging people to use their creativity and not just fall into the norm..." (I. Jensen, personal communication, December 31, 2009). Trumpeter Randy Brecker expressed a similar estimation of jazz education saying that:

> I think that, for a lack of a better word, [jazz education] is in a healthy state. There are many jazz programs not only in Canada and America but globally. There are really dedicated teachers, and players, and just judging from what comes out I think there are many great programs...as a result

> there are many good young players on the scene for every instrument... (R. Brecker, personal communication, December 28, 2009).

Keyboardist Adam Benjamin predicted a continued upwards trend in jazz education programs. He said:

> I guess my overall feeling is that it's [jazz education] growing quickly and I see it as a positive thing, that the jazz education world is expanding...I think this is a topic and a field that will get a lot more critical attention over the next few generations. I personally anticipate that jazz programs are going to replace classical performance programs as the primary enrolment mechanisms of music institutions over the next 50 or 100 years... (A. Benjamin, personal communication, December 21, 2009)

Several participants, including saxophonist Donny McCaslin, consistently referred to the high quality of graduates emerging from post-secondary institutions. He said:

> ...my sense is that it's [jazz education] probably in the best place that it's ever been...I think that this time in history there's probably never been as many young, talented people in the jazz realm as there are right now. In the glory days of Charlie Parker and into the '60s with Trane [John Coltrane], Sonny Rollins and Miles [Davis], there was phenomenal music happening, but I don't think there's the same amount of young gifted players as there are today, and a lot of that comes to pass through the education being so much better. It has gotten better and continued to grow, and they have these great students who are younger and younger... (D. McCaslin, personal communication, November 17, 2009).

In response to his query concerning the list of subjects included in the present study, Ben Wendel observed that:

> ...if you were to look at the players that you mentioned you're interviewing, I think we'd all agree they have unique voices on their instruments; they're great composers, they're great players, you could recognize them if you heard them on an album. It'd be interesting to look at all those players and see how many of them got degrees. If they all

> ended up getting bachelor's degrees at music schools, then you know, then there must be something that's going right (B. Wendel, personal communication, January 1, 2010).

To this end, every participant in this study has spent an extensive period studying jazz formally in school and/or has received a degree. Moreover, at least two participants have completed both undergraduate and graduate degrees in jazz.

Access to Information

Participants who responded positively to the state of jazz education attributed its success in part to the resources made available by educational institutions. Alto saxophonist Miguel Zenón recounted how a lack of jazz resources and educational opportunities in his native Puerto Rico influenced his decision to pursue a formal jazz education in the United States. He said:

> There's a lot of information that wouldn't have been available to most of these people [jazz students]. Me, for example, I'm from Puerto Rico originally. I was born and raised there, and I moved to the States specifically to receive a jazz education. I didn't have that option in Puerto Rico. A lot of the information I received while going to school that I would have never received if I would have stayed in Puerto Rico, maybe never. (M. Zenón, personal communication, December 12, 2009).

Saxophonist Eric Alexander underlined the vast amount of information available to jazz students, and praised jazz educators for demystifying the tacit language of the music. He said:

> In terms of the amount of information that students are able to acquire in a short period of time, it's really remarkable. Educators have made tremendous strides in terms of figuring out how to explain the inner workings of the bebop language, for example, how to play through chord changes, how to learn tunes, how to analyze the solos and the body of work of great players (E. Alexander, personal communication, December 30, 2009).

One participant cautioned against being inundated with too much information, in particular as it related to the development of a unique voice. That is, "…these days it's harder to develop something unique because you're deluged with hundreds and thousands of CDs, books et cetera...it wasn't that easy to access materials [in the past], so guys would try to figure things out things for themselves" (Brecker).

Trade School Approach

While some viewed this access to information as a positive aspect of formal jazz education, others raised concerns about the tendency for jazz students to use the information learned in school as a means to an end. Specifically, students approach the learning of jazz music as a finite skill (*i.e.,* like a trade) that comprises a limited body of material and can be applied to an infinite number of musical situations regardless of intention. Guitarist Mary Halvorson believes that school is a viable option for learning technique so long as it is not seen as the *raison d'être* of jazz education. She said:

> ...I think it's [school] a great place to learn technique if you can take that stuff with a grain of salt and realize that it's a means, not an end. Learning technique is a means, but for a lot of people it's like a trade school. They approach it like they're learning a formula, like if you're learning how to be a plumber or something... (M. Halvorson, personal communication, January 2, 2010).

Guitarist Julian Lage concurred that "it's [jazz education] more of a trade school approach (J. Lage, personal communication, October 29, 2009). Two participants commented that by approaching jazz education from a theoretical standpoint or by aiming to acquire a certain skill set, students may limit their ability to develop a unique voice. They said:

> ...as much as jazz education can equip a person with compositional skills and knowledge of bebop, it takes too much of the mystery out of it and causes certain players, with their intellect, to take that information and run with it... (Jensen); and

> ...schools do a good job of getting the information out there to kids and giving them a lot of language, but how do we balance studying the music with following your own voice and nurturing your own sense of creativity" (McCaslin).

Self-Entitlement versus Self-Learning

There was a perception among some participants that admission into a jazz program has left some students with a sense of entitlement regarding the ins and outs of jazz music. Ingrid Jensen said:

> ...the university setting immediately implies that the student, because they paid a certain amount of money, is entitled to the secret way [of jazz music]...it's [jazz music] already been discovered for you, because you paid, and again you have this whole sense of entitlement...it's taking the value out of such deep messages...and the value of that epic adventure that comes with really searching... (Jensen).

Moreover, whereas traditional jazz musicians determined their aesthetic course largely through self-learning, this sense of entitlement among jazz students has diminished the possibility of developing a unique voice. Miguel Zenón explained that:

> Most of the legends of this music didn't have any [formal] jazz education, so for them the creative aspect of music wasn't really tied to that. I think that my generation, and probably two generations before me had the advantage of having this information kind of handed to them, instead of having to go out and search for it. In that sense it diminished the possibilities of creating specific personalities of musicians (Zenón).

Standardized Curriculum

Participants viewed the implementation of a standardized curriculum as by-product of the university system itself saying that "because of the nature of schools, you're going to have to create certain standardized proficiencies to pass" (McCaslin), and "because they have 3000 or 4000 students they have to [create a

standard curriculum]" (Lage). The administrative policies of the institution were also seen as influencing the content of the jazz curriculum. Eric Alexander commented that:

> ...it's tricky in a university situation. It'd be hard to have teachers who said to their students: 'here's eight recordings, go figure out what's happening, that's your lesson for the semester'. That wouldn't really fly with the administration [or] pass guidelines for a course, but in reality that's what's needed (Alexander).

Ingrid Jensen concluded that "a lot of direction in schools comes from the top down and whoever is in charge. I think they would have more success if they encourage individual teachers, but again that's difficult, when you're dealing with so many students" (Jensen). Other themes relating to a standardized curriculum included: a lack of encouraging the development of a unique voice (McCaslin, Halvorson); an overemphasis on technical rather than artistic/aesthetic aspects of the music (McCaslin, Wendel, Jensen); a focus on a particular style of music (Halvorson); and that jazz education be reconceptualised as music education, that is a more holistic approach to musical learning (Lage).

Two participants speculated that the jazz curriculum has become comparable to the classical conservatory model, which is incompatible with the ethos of jazz. Specifically, "[jazz education] has become a classical way of teaching something that has soul and blues, and that's a danger for any system that's trying to put into words, books or on paper something that is really a magical and spiritual language" (Jensen). Ben Wendel posits that in an attempt to codify some form of jazz pedagogical system, jazz programs took the classical model as a starting point. The problem with this type of approach lies in the fact that:

> ...jazz is slippery art form that doesn't fit as well into that structure. The boundaries of classical music are really defined to just playing the score. But jazz is supposed to be this thing that's undefined. You can teach people [jazz] language (*i.e.,* licks that fit into ii-V-I patterns), however, it's

> impossible to convey that actual feeling and experience of that spark that is jazz... (Wendel)

School Community versus Jazz Community

In addition to having actual physical spaces for students to practice and perform, schools foster a type of jazz community by proxy where students and teachers can gather, exchange information, and learn about jazz together. Participant's responses echoed Dobbins' (1988) assessment that the studios, classrooms, and lecture halls of the institution have come to replace the clubs, restaurants, and informal gathering places of the jazz tradition. Alexander said:

> ...it's [the institutional study of jazz] not only a good way to learn about the music, it's really only one of the only ways these days because there are so few vibrant jazz scenes out there where young musician can go hear live music and apprentice with a great musician. It's hard to seek out those opportunities and forget about performance opportunities. It's not like amateur players have a whole slew of big bands and little jobbing things they can do to hone their skills. I think years ago it was different, there was more of a live music scene (Alexander).

Ben Wendel suggested that the success of jazz education programs may be due in large part to the school environment, namely: "A place where musicians meet other musicians...just that you're in a class with hundreds of other musicians, and gravitate towards the people that you have a vibe with, and that there's an environment to play every day and practice" (Wendel). Similarly, clarinettist Anat Cohen felt that "...there's something really incredible about being in an environment of school with everybody else learning, studying, and growing. I'm all for it, as far as nurturing environment..." (A. Cohen, personal communication, December 27, 2009); and Mary Halvorson said "I think it [school] can be really useful in terms of meeting people. You meet other students and people that [have common interests]" (Halvorson). Beyond meeting likeminded individuals, Cohen and Benjamin cited networking and developing lasting relationships with fellow students and teachers as positive aspects of the school community.

Although institutions can simulate a creative environment for learning jazz, participants stipulated that there is no substitute for real world playing experience. Continuing his previous statement Alexander noted that:

> The problem is with not getting enough bandstand experience, because bandstand experience is the thing that really catapults you into a more organic way of playing. You can't really figure out what your own personal strengths and weaknesses are, and how you're likely to deal with certain situations unless you're forced to deal with them in a live performance environment...There's no substitute for that. It's like match experience (Alexander).

Lage similarly referred to this issue of authenticity as it pertains to learning jazz in the academic setting. He said:

> ....I think in general I would say that the essence of jazz music is something you can only find by playing with a lot of people and exploring it. That can be in the school context, but my feeling is that sometimes jazz education in schools turns into something kind of similar to re-enacting the Civil War, where everyone wears the right hats, the outfits, all they all have the guns, the whole thing, and it looks really authentic, yet the way they arrive at that place might be a bit contrived, because it's not through experience as much as studying books, and things like that (Lage).

While Lage acknowledges the potential of jazz education, he warned against the use of institutional resources as the sole means of learning the jazz tradition.

Professional Faculty

Some respondents determined a central component of successful jazz programs to be the quality of the faculty; particularly having teachers that had extensive professional experience as jazz performers. Adam Benjamin said that "…I don't think there's any formula for a winning program, other than just having faculty that are good teachers as well as good players, and are really dedicated to the job…I think that every school comes down to the faculty itself..." (Benjamin); and another participant added:

> ...jazz degree [programs] are going to have more luck when they have faculty like that...that knows their stuff in terms of actually being out there in the field of battle...the actual spark and spontaneity factor, not the technical aspect, not the scales, not the theory, but what jazz really is... (Wendel)

Studying with these types of professional musicians was seen as the most effective means of learning the spirit of jazz and developing a unique voice. A few examples of these statements are:

> There will always be the books, transcribing, scales and the theory, but in terms of getting that feeling across, I really think it's all about the faculty...I think that the schools that will tend to produce more singular artists with unique voices, will be schools that have faculty that are actual musicians that play and tour live on a regular basis... (Wendel);
>
> ...I think it [a unique voice] depends upon the teacher. There are teachers that can really teach the language and encourage students to get a certain amount of technique under their belts, and then move on and help them shape it... (Jensen); and
>
> That's [a unique voice] more a byproduct of the faculty versus the actual technical, by-the-book training. I don't think that's the reason it occurs, I think it comes from the people that are teaching it... (Benjamin)

Student Homogenization

Following this general inquiry, subjects were asked whether or not they had noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in school; specifically that they tend to sound similar. Participants gave three types of responses pertaining to: (a) whether or not they had observed this trend; if so (b) what are some possible explanations for its occurrence; and (c) alternate perspectives considering the impact of homogeneity on jazz education as per the discourse. Again, subjects were cautious to point out that their opinions were based on a limited sample of jazz students; and that the phenomenon in question is not something that could be proved in reality.

Sonic Uniformity

While 8 out of 10 participants said that they had noticed a trend that students sound similar, they often qualified their answers with an alternate perspective that will be discussed later in this section. To this end, the following examples have been extracted from longer answers, and should not be considered definitive accounts of the participants' views on the issue. Asked whether or not they had noticed a homogenization among students, subjects responded that:

> I think there's a certain amount of validity to that... (McCaslin);
>
> I think I do. Going to school you're basically hearing the culmination of a guitar player who's extremely studious, who's worked really hard, who's studied a diverse body of information, and there's a certain sound to any player that does all those things... (Lage);
>
> Well they [jazz students] do, because like I said they're absorbing a lot of information, and then they kind of spew it out in a pedantic way, rather than as a product of how they feel based on listening (Alexander);
>
> ...I suppose it's true...that there is a certain sameness with the many of the graduates... (Brecker);
>
> ...there were a few students that were very creative, but a lot of it was cookie cutter, formulaic stuff. For example, there were several guitar players who sounded exactly like Pat Matheny or Wes Montgomery… (Halvorson);
>
> ...There were people definitely that when I heard them I was like 'why is that person only playing like Freddie Hubbard'... (Jensen);
>
> [Jazz education] kind of became this mass product in a way...the schools have sort of become these factories for musicians...where you get a lot of people kind of sounding the same or playing the same way (Zenón); and
>
> Yeah I've seen it...there are plenty [of similar sounding students]. You can hear the tenor players that sound like Mark Turner and Chris Potter, or more old school players, as though that's a means to an end (Wendel).

Explanations for Student Homogenization

Participants cited a number of causes for the current situation in jazz education, mainly: a standard curriculum, a trade school approach, and group polarization within institutions. Two participants saw the occurrence of a uniform sound as a result of a standardized curriculum (*i.e.,* the same body of information taught in the same way). They said:

> I wouldn't necessarily put it as them sounding the same, I would say they all have the same amount of information and they're learning in the same way...if you have one player or one style of teaching at a university or a college, then you get a lot of people kind of sounding the same or playing the same way, and developing the same information" (Zenón); and
>
> ...certainly schools that have a very particular curriculum will create commonalities in their students just in how they think of music. Even a powerful professor, someone that's powerful in kind of a cult of personality type way, can create little micro themes and micro followings of students that come out of schools and share things with one another... (Benjamin).

Attending school to attain a certain level of proficiency or acquire a specific skill set (*i.e.,* a trade approach) was also seen as a contributing factor to student homogenization (Lage, Wendel, Alexander).

Related to the idea of a standardized curriculum, participants described a social phenomenon occurring in schools similar to group polarization; which is a "group-produced enhancement of members' pre-existing tendencies; and refers to a strengthening of the members' average tendency, not to a split within the group" (Myers, 1987, p. 337)." Lage posits that "when a student comes to school they quickly become one of many. They don't see the incentive to maintain their own identity because the only way they are going to survive is to blend in. Hence you get a sound where everyone sounds similar" (Lage); and Alexander noted:

> ...one of the things that happens if you get a group of young players isolated in a university setting, is that the information that's being exchanged and thrown around there is the same information that goes to

> everybody, and people start processing it in the same way. That's why you get a lot of the sameness (Alexander).

Recounting his own experience in formal jazz education Miguel Zenón said:

> ...with younger players when something becomes fashionable, a style of music or certain players, everybody kind of goes that route...When I went to school there were certain players that everybody liked and wanted to sound like, and everybody was listening to the same stuff...sometimes a school becomes a microcosm of a scene. (Zenón)

Other possible factors contributing to student homogenization included: a lack of a basic musical foundation (Cohen, Zenón); not approaching the development of a unique voice as a starting point (Lage); a lack of real world performing experience (Jensen); the impressionability of young students (Cohen, Halvorson); and a sense of entitlement among students as opposed to self-learning (Jensen).

Alternate Perspectives

Although the majority of participants agreed that there is a noticeable similarly among jazz students, an equivalent number (eight subjects) expressed attitudes to the contrary. Two participants suggested that the discourse on jazz education overstates both the gravity and currency of the issue saying that "I've heard that same thing for years. I heard that when I was a student so that's not new to me" (McCaslin); and:

> I think it's primarily a myth. I wonder whether there's a greater homogeneity among young musicians graduating from school now as opposed to in earlier years when school wasn't such a common thing…I doubt if young musicians sound more like each other now than they did in 1920, 1950, or 1970...It's just a matter of degree. While some schools earn their factory reputation for turning out a lot of people with similar skill sets, I think that there's enough different types of schools, and enough students that are having different experiences at various schools, that there's not a general large scale problem with homogeneity (Benjamin).

Benjamin also postulated that this phenomenon, to the degree that exists, is not exclusive to jazz education and may occur with other types of music programs as well (*i.e.,* classical music programs). Additionally, the emergence of exceptional musicians and unique voices from post-secondary institutions points to the viability of formal jazz education (McCaslin, Wendel, Brecker).

Other participants made the distinction between a 'unique voice' and an 'innovator'. Comparatively, an 'innovator' is an artist that develops a wholly new approach to the art form, whereas a 'unique voice' is an artist that has developed a clearly identifiable style by virtue of one or more traits. Halvorson explained the difference "...in terms of stylists and structalists. A stylist is someone who perfected a tradition or maybe did something [unique] using that tradition, and a structuralist starts something entirely new" (Halvorson). Moreover, Alexander discussed the likelihood of being innovator versus developing a unique voice. He said:

> That's [a unique voice] something entirely different from being an innovator. You've got young musicians, forget about saying they want to have their own voice, they think they're going to innovate something right away. They have these grandiose, misplaced dreams where they think they're just going to come up with something brand new. I mean that works about one 1/1000 of a percent of the time. It's probably not going to work for most people (Alexander).

Another assessment of the issue is that it may take a long to develop a unique voice; well beyond the brief four-year period spent in school. A unique voice represents the culmination of diverse life experiences and many years of dedicated and deliberate practice. For example, "when you're in school you're so young; you haven't really formed a whole lot of ideas…" (Halvorson); and

> ....a lot of players can't get all of that stuff together right away. Instead of one year to get through the material, they take four, and get it together later in life...they end up being the ones with the voice... I think honestly a lot of students should just [slow down] and take way more time than they

> do to get their products out on the market, and decide who they are (Jensen).

Cohen summarized by saying: “When you get out of school, what do you know really? It takes years to find your voice. It’s not fair to say that all students sound the same because sometimes it takes 50 years to find your own voice” (Cohen).

Although participants unanimously agreed that the development of a unique voice was of high importance (which will be discussed later), half espoused a view that the lack of a unique voice is not necessarily a pejorative evaluation of jazz education or its students. Firstly, whereas the jazz discourse propagates a positive/negative dichotomy relating to possessing a unique voice, Lage said that “it’s [sounding similar] not a bad thing at all...it’s not good or bad... (Lage). Halvorson similarly felt that “maybe some people just want to be able to play bebop really well, and there’s nothing wrong with that if that’s what they want to do (Halvorson). Another interpretation is that in reiterating a specific canon, students are actually demonstrating their connection to the jazz tradition; that is: “...it’s preferable to sound like a very good imitation of a master musician, than to sound like somebody who has no relation to what’s gone on before, who’s just spewing out notes. There’s no comparison...” (Alexander). Brecker argued that at a certain point supreme musicianship transcends the fact that some musicians may not have a unique voice. He said:

> ....personally I think that a lot of the expertise outweighs the fact that some players have not found their own voice. The fact that they’ve studied so hard and have so much technique, and feeling on their own instruments, for me transcends the fact that you’ve heard of somebody like them before...as an older player, and one that’s been around for a while, I still enjoy listening to players who’s style you can kind of identify as coming out of other people’s playing... (Brecker).

Finally, two participants questioned both role of the institution in facilitating the development of a unique voice. Specifically, the responsibility of the institution should be limited to providing its students with the basic techniques to be used to develop their own voice. Halvorson said: “...you’re learning

techniques, some sort of a tradition, and if you can see past it, you take that knowledge and use it in your own way. But nobody can teach you that, you have to come up with that on your own" (Halvorson). Furthermore, while "…teachers can assist with that [developing a unique voice], and provide you with skills and facilities to develop, for the most part that work has to be done [by the student], no one else can do it for you..." (Benjamin).

Suggestions for Improvement

As a summation to the first part of the investigation, subjects were asked whether they would change or improve something about jazz education, and if so what would it be. Responses for this question were quite varied consisting of 12 different suggestions with little consensus among participants (only one suggestion received more than two mentions). The majority of suggestions made by the participants related to the current curriculum, style of pedagogy, and the institutional structure of jazz education. They were: (a) putting more of an emphasis on rhythm (McCaslin, Benjamin); (b) putting less of an emphasis on big bands compared with small groups and improvisation (Brecker); (c) learning specific skills, such as learning a large repertoire of songs, keyboard skills, and sound production (Alexander); (d) hiring more professional musicians as teachers (Wendel); (e) encouraging the development of a unique voice (Brecker, Benjamin); (f) having different specializations within jazz degree programs (*i.e.,* performance and non-performance specializations, or different styles of jazz, such as Bebop, Free Jazz, or the Swing era) (Halvorson, Jensen); and (g) encouraging more interaction between students of all levels (Lage, Zenón).

Four subjects expressed a need for more real world performance opportunities in jazz education. In particular, public performance was seen as an irreplaceable aspect of learning the jazz tradition. They said:

> There's no substitute for playing, none. You can practice all you want, but you're better off playing with other people. To me, a successful school would be something like that... (Jensen);

> You could be going to school and listening to all the right records and reading all the books and transcribing or whatever, but music is made on the bandstand... (Zenón);
> ...What I would change about the schools is give people more opportunities to play, because there's nothing like learning on the stage and just doing...The practical side is very, very crucial (Cohen); and
> I don't feel [students] get a lot of opportunities to interact with everyday people and I think that's the foundation of jazz...if you're stuck in the practice room I think you miss some valuable opportunities...What I wish I saw more of is environments that involve the public a little bit more...the real world experience. I think that's something a school could provide... (Lage)

Learning Experiences

The second section of this investigation examined the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians both in and out of school. Specifically, subjects were asked the following questions:

1) Can you describe your learning experiences in school?
2) Can you describe your learning experiences outside of school?
3) What would you tell a jazz student to do in addition to studying in school?

The results of this data were used to determine whether the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians vary from the more homogenized players; and if so, how they might contribute to the development of a unique voice.

Learning Experiences in School

Although participants represented a wide range of educational backgrounds (*i.e.,* institutions attended, amount of years spent in school, degrees earned, years since graduation, etc.), responses revealed several common themes, including: studying with a specific teacher, the impact of the school community, and educational stewardship.

Private Teachers

Private instruction with a specific teacher was the most frequently cited learning experience in school among 70% of subjects. The names of the teachers quoted by the participants have not been edited since the comments made are positive in nature; and the teachers in question are well known and respected as jazz performers/educators in the community. The following examples do not represent an exhaustive list of teachers, but rather a cross-section of names that were referred to most often.

Both Alexander and Brecker studied privately with the preeminent jazz educator David Baker. Alexander credits Baker for having "broken down and demystified many of the concepts of modern jazz so you can absorb them and figure out how to use them" (Alexander). He goes on to say that during his studies with Baker, he amassed a tremendous amount of information that he is still using presently. Brecker said that studying with Baker was "probably the only real training I got as far as improvisation is concerned...That was about it as far as formularizing any kinds of approaches to improvisation..." (Brecker). He discussed some of the educator's approaches: "He gave me certain licks to practice, and we studied different approaches, thematic approaches, motivic development, intervallic approaches, dissecting the melody intervallically, playing off intervals only contained in the melody..." (Brecker).

Three participants named the saxophonist and educator George Garzone saying that: "The things that stood out the most [in school] were playing with other people, and great players, and great teachers as well, like George Garzone..." (Jensen); and "...some of the teachers were great, like Jane Ira Bloom, Rory Stuart and George Garzone...all those people were really encouraging..." (Halvorson). In addition to Garzone, McCaslin mentions a number of other teachers who imparted a wealth of practical knowledge. He says:

> ...I had some particularly strong teachers. Herb Pomeroy, who played with Charlie Parker, was a great teacher. In Herb's band, he talked a lot about the Ellington band, so I felt like I learned a lot about rehearsing...Also, I studied with Joe Viola, who was one of the great saxophone teachers. He

> gave me some other things to work on that weren't necessarily part of the school curriculum, but they were part of my private lessons with him, so I really learned a lot from that. Also, George Garzone and Billy Pierce, I learned from both of them. With Billy Pierce I was in the Art Blakey ensemble, I learned a lot in that group, playing that music...and I was in a couple of Gary Burton's classes. I ended up playing with his band, joining his group sometime in my senior year of college, so it was a really good environment and a great experience (McCaslin).

Other participants similarly recalled the benefits of studying with a teacher that had extensive experience as a professional jazz musician. Alexander, for example, explained that:

> ...you had jazz professionals, who were performing by night and teaching by day. They'd sit in [your] combo and try to explain what you may be doing right or wrong, how to fix it, and they'd play along with you, it's very inspiring...(Alexander).

Ben Wendel said:

> ...Mike [Cain] plays with Jack DeJohnette, and all of these heavy dudes that come from the quote unquote jazz tree; and Ralph [Alessi] plays with Steve Coleman, Ravi Coltrane, so they had sort of a quote unquote real world view to impart upon us... (Wendel).

School Community

Six participants recalled the community atmosphere of school as a seminal educational experience. Speaking on the school experience Jensen said that "... school was more of a hanging experience, hooking up with other people who were on similar wavelengths" (Jensen). Recounting what was most valuable about their time in school, Benjamin and Cohen said: "... it's networking and community and having the opportunity to create an artistic vision together" (Benjamin); and "...it was the atmosphere, the school experience…everybody is in it together, everybody has to wake up early and go to class, everybody is exchanging [ideas]...You take classes and interact with a very inspiring teachers, and with

students...” (Cohen). Participants also mentioned interacting with peers who were superior players as a significant element of the school community. They said:

> ...one thing that was really helpful was there was a lot of really talented people at the school when I was there, so my interaction with my peers led to a lot of self-discovery and learning a lot of things about music, and listening to other people play, and being around other people who are on a real high level, that really helped a lot (McCaslin);
>
> ... the thing that stood out the most was the playing with other people that were great players...I would get that feeling of playing with these people that were much better than me. It’s a result of being around them that made me grow... (Jensen);
>
> ...being surrounded by musicians who were really just excellent and talented and dedicated...I think the really irreplaceable thing about it was the particular people I went to school with... (Benjamin);
>
> I was lucky in that three and a half year period [in college], there were a lot of really good players around that I could ask questions (Brecker);
>
> ...the thing that really helped me the most was that most of the students were much better than me. By being around them, hanging with them, playing sessions, talking to them about music, helped me to raise my level. I think that the whole community thing is very important. It was for me, just going to school, and being a part of a community. People that are all kind of moving towards this goal... (Zenón); and
>
> ...If you’re fortunate enough to actually play with people that are better than you and older than you, that’s sort of the ultimate gift...if you can get together and play with people who are better and older than you... (Wendel).

Educational Stewardship

Aside from learning basic musical skills, such as technique, harmony, theory and aural skills, a number of participants described an experience in school whereby they were able to construct their own program of study. This form of

educational stewardship allowed participants to pursue individual musical interests and explore new fields outside of jazz. Enrolled in the standard undergraduate musical curriculum during his first year of college, Lage felt limited in terms the course offerings available to him. After consulting the administration about the situation, Lage was admitted into the 'Artist Diploma' program in which he could choose his own courses. He explained:

> I went to school as a regular student when I was eighteen, and the first semester they pick all your classes...but I felt like I had no time to do the music that I wanted. I was becoming a great student, but my own path was a little bit clouded...I did the Artist Diploma program [instead]...and I said I want guitar with this teacher every week, twice a week, I want classical composition with this lady, and I want classical piano with this person...basically I had this laboratory at school for two years to try anything out, and that allowed me the space [to experiment]. It was perfect... (Lage).

Cohen described a similar experience:

> ...after being at school a semester I took a major called professional music where they [the administration] allow you to take different classes [apart from jazz]. You can take film scoring, composition, audio engineering, you can make your own curriculum...So I did a little bit of film scoring, some composition, and there were some ensembles, improvisation classes, history, and there are certain things you have to take, but it was really fascinating, I was studying things that I was interested in... (Cohen)

This sense of empowerment resonated with Benjamin's experience in graduate school "where there was less structure, a less rigorous curriculum, and more time and space open for me to explore what I was interested in musically" (Benjamin).

Additional learning experiences in school included: specific courses or materials (McCaslin); playing in ensembles (McCaslin, Alexander, Brecker, Cohen); having non-jazz related learning experiences (Halvorson, Jensen, Cohen); learning technique or fundamental musical skills (Halvorson, Wendel, Benjamin);

and one participant found the standardized curriculum of school potentially confining (Halvorson).

Learning Experiences Outside of School

While this question was left intentionally vague, that is, it could refer to any type of learning experience outside of the school setting, occurring at any point in the participant's life, responses revealed a striking similarity among four emerging themes. They were: (a) apprenticeships or mentoring with professional jazz musicians; (b) private study of jazz music; (c) professional experience; and (d) interaction with peers.

Apprenticeships

Four participants discussed how apprenticeships with professional musicians were particularly helpful to their development. Again, specific names have been left in the text due to the reasons outlined above. Recalling these formative experiences McCaslin said that:

> A lot of that is on the bandstand, playing with people. Starting with my father's band, I started playing saxophone when I was twelve. I was regularly sitting in with my father, but when I was about 14 or 16 I really I started playing with him consistently, and that was just a whole lot [of learning] on the bandstand. Also, as I already mentioned I ended up playing in Gary Burton's band sometime in my senior year of college, so I learned a lot on that gig. I subsequently moved to New York, and I played with various groups. A couple of things stand out: my relationship with Danilo Perez, he's a great teacher and a peer of mine...I feel I've learned a lot from him, he's been a huge influence on my development. I learned a lot from David Binney...also, with Dave Douglas who I'm currently playing with, and with the Charles Mingus Big Band...on the bandstand, off the bandstand, kind of both (McCaslin).

Lage also had the opportunity to perform regularly with consummate jazz vibraphonist Gary Burton. He said: "...I was in Gary Burton's band pretty

consistently from the time I was maybe 15 until I was 17...I was on the road with a true jazz legend for several years before I went to school for jazz education" (Lage). While Lage acknowledges the value of his formal jazz training, he explained how this practical experience was much more valuable; specifically in terms of gaining a greater musical understanding and the ability to discern what information taught in school was necessary to a professional musician. During his collegiate years Brecker played regularly with the legendary jazz pianist, composer, and theorist George Russell, who is considered to be one of the forefathers of jazz theory (*i.e.,* his seminal publication *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization for Improvisation*). Brecker also recounted that "growing up in Philadelphia there was a lot of good players that let me play and sit in when I was younger...that was also a big influence..." (Brecker). During a one-year sabbatical from school, Wendel remembered frequenting a jazz club called the World Stage in South Central Los Angeles founded by renowned jazz drummer Billy Higgins. Wendel spoke about having the opportunity to play alongside Higgins and the impact it had on his own development. He said:

> … in that year off I would go down to a club called The World Stage where Billy Higgins [played]. I got to hang out with him, and then I started playing with him...it was like a quintet or a sextet, and Billy would kind of lead us, but then we'd end up doing lots of sessions with Billy, where we'd just hang out at his house and play...I would credit him with being one of those outside experiences that just completely transformed me, in terms of just music, seeing someone of that level, to get to play with an artist like that, and again feeling what it felt like to play with someone like that...It was a great experience because he was the kind of teacher and mentor that showed you by example, though the music. You didn't talk about it that much, there wasn't a lot of analysis going on, you were playing with him, and I seeing how it [the music] works. That was an eye opener, to have that experience and to realize that the real feeling of being an artist and playing music... (Wendel).

Professional Experience

Apart from apprenticeships, four other participants commented on the value of practical experience. For Alexander, playing regularly with local organ trios in Chicago was a central element to his jazz training. He said: "I was very fortunate when I got out of school and moved to Chicago that I started working with local organ trios and singers three or four nights a week. I got real practical experience right away...That was the key" (Alexander). While in still school, Benjamin and Zenón had begun playing professionally. They said: "Professional experience for me was huge. I was working a pretty good amount, I think all the through the time I was going to school" (Benjamin); and

> Zenón: I was going to school and at the same time I was going to sessions every night. I eventually started playing gigs with different people and combining the stuff I was getting at school [with bandstand experience].
>
> Interviewer: So you were getting valuable experience on the bandstand?
>
> Zenón: I'd say a lot more so, just by playing around, and playing sessions.

Both musicians also spoke about the practical considerations that accompany a professional career relating that: "I was still going to school, but I was also trying to get gigs, and I was competing with my heroes. It was more like a professional, you become a professional overnight, basically" (Zenón); and

> I just started to tour my freshman year at college. I booked my first tour for an ensemble and that was a huge learning experience. [I learned] how you get gigs, how you get to them, and how do you make sure they're not 1000 miles apart, or on back to back days, and how do you try not to lose your shirt just to go and play these gigs, and what do you play when you're in front of people you don't know, and all these type of elements (Benjamin).

Private Study of Jazz

After apprenticeships and professional experience, the most frequently cited learning experience outside of school (seven participants) was the private study of jazz, namely: practicing, transcribing, listening to recordings, attending

live performances, performing in public, studying with private teachers, reading about jazz music, and various other methods. Alexander explained:

> ...aside from school it's the real world playing situations, and the self motivated, personal, and very private study of the music. There's nobody that becomes a quality player that doesn't spend that private time where they're just sitting with their instrument trying to figure out how to make this stuff work. Listening, figuring it out themselves, finding out what works for them, what doesn't work, if you don't go through that process, forget it... (Alexander).

Halvorson similarly recounted "just figuring stuff out slowly on my own...I had some great teachers, but a lot of the stuff for me, you need to kind of teach yourself, come up with your own exercises, come up with your own ideas..." (Halvorson). Following several years of intense studying in school, Jensen retreated into isolation for a few months to fully absorb the material and information she amassed in school. She said: "I came out of school and just disappeared into Copenhagen, Denmark, into my aunt's house for three months and transcribed and practiced. I digested all that material..." (Jensen). Brecker too brought up the compressed time frame of college remarking that "I didn't get it all in one four year swoop in college...other than that what I did was listen, transcribe, and play along with records... asked each other [peers] as musicians a lot questions and we transcribed a lot" (Brecker). As already mentioned by the previous two subjects, Wendel spent a considerable amount of time listening to recordings and transcribing other musicians on record. In particular, for an entire semester he was unable to play or practice due to personal reasons. Rather than abandon his studies, Wendel turned to transcription as a means of maintaining and developing his jazz skills. He said:

> I had a whole semester where I didn't play. Instead what I did was study a ton of musicians. I just transcribed solos by ear and just checked out different players and saw what is the deal, what defines certain players. In that way I was able see a lot about, not just [musical] ideas, but shapes too... I'm a total believer in transcribing (Wendel).

Other private study strategies included: listening back and analyzing recordings of practice/playing sessions (Brecker); studying with private teachers outside of school (Jensen), approaching music from a holistic perspective, that is learning fundamental music skills and listening to a broad range of types of music (Lage, Brecker); and studying the history of the music (McCaslin)

Interacting with Peers

While the majority of participants (seven) had spent a significant period of time interacting with peers outside of school, most referenced this fact only in passing. Interacting with peers extends to all forms of informal socializing, such as playing sessions, networking and meeting new people, talking about music with other musicians, approaching established musicians, or just 'hanging out'. For example, Ingrid Jensen said that "there wasn't a gig I went to that I didn't approach the musicians, or try to get backstage to say hello and ask them some questions...that was a big part of my growing up as a jazz musician" (Jensen); while for Halvorson "it was just meeting musicians and playing with people. When I was at school I would go out and hear music every night and meet people" (Halvorson). Also recall the various apprenticeships described above (*e.g.,* Wendel with Billy Higgins, Brecker with George Russell, and Lage and McCaslin with Gary Burton *et al.*), which often involved playing sessions, discussion about music, demonstration of skills or information, developing relationships, and other forms of informal pedagogical interaction.

Other formative experiences outside of school included: critical reflection, that is deliberately evaluating the value and use of information, methods, and materials (Lage, Alexander, Brecker, Jensen, Wendel); teaching experience (Lage); having a wide range of interests outside of jazz and music generally (Lage, Brecker, Jensen, Halvorson); and mastering the technical aspects of one's instrument (Halvorson).

Advice for Jazz Students

By asking participants what they would advise students to do in addition to studying in school, the researcher intended to compile a list of practical suggestions and focused advice for current students. Participants, however, essentially reiterated (and in some cases repeated verbatim) their learning experiences both in and out of school. Particularly, they advised students to: (a) engage in the private study of jazz (Alexander, Halvorson, Jensen, Wendel); (b) gain real world playing experience (Wendel, Benjamin, Brecker); (c) take more time to develop (Jensen, Benjamin); (d) try their hand at composition (Brecker); (e) approach or interact with professional musicians or superior players in general (Jensen, Wendel); (f) use the material and information learnt in school in conjunction with other forms of study (Alexander); and (g) immerse oneself in the music (Alexander).

Seven participants did elaborate on one recommendation in particular, namely a holistic approach to the study of jazz and life generally. In addition to studying jazz in school, students should amass a wide range of musical and extra-musical experiences, hobbies, and interests. McCaslin explained:

> …some people need to obsess and be completely involved in it [the study of jazz] and not have room for something else, but if they're able to have room for something else, I think anything that's interesting...you know, playing sports, doing yoga, studying philosophy...I think broadening [one's worldview] is good (McCaslin).

Jensen concurred that:

> I think there has to be some life experience, which is why I encourage a lot of students that are really burning to try to do things outside of school, before they go to college. To go to Europe for a year, or do something outside of going directly into school, take a year off and work and practice (Jensen).

Wendel and Zenón made particular reference to the potentially insulating environment of school saying that students should do "anything to counterbalance the academic environment, because it's a bubble...it can really get insular, and

you'll start to lose perspective. Anything that will take you outside of school and give you some kind of real life information will be good…" (Wendel); and:

> I think the whole thing about school is great, but what's really important to me is that you don't forget that there's something outside of school, there's a whole real thing going on outside of school. School is almost like a preparation to go out there and deal with the real stuff... a lot of people forget about that when they're going to school... (Zenón).

Two participants suggested not limiting oneself in terms of musical interests (*i.e.,* listening to or playing jazz exclusively). On this issue Cohen noted: "I would say keep your mind open;" and she continues: "...that don't think that the music you make is better than other music that exists, because music is music...the fact that you choose to play one music when other people play jazz from the '30s doesn't make you any hipper" (Cohen). To this end, Halvorson said:

> ...go hear as much music as possible, go check out stuff outside of your own [interests]…if you're interested in bebop, maybe go check out some free improv, if you're interested in bebop maybe also make a point to go check out some world music. I find that useful because there are things from [another music] that may interest you, even if you hate it. Maybe there will be one little element that you like you can hone in on and take something from that…That and checking out lots of different kinds of music is important, or just trying to be open minded.

The Unique Voice

The final section of this inquiry sought to elucidate several issues regarding the concept of a 'unique voice' in jazz. Specifically subjects were asked the following three questions:

1) Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice, and if so, why?
2) What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?
3) How do you develop a unique voice?

The results of this data were used to determine to what extent the views of unique jazz musicians were consistent with the discourse on jazz education; and to provide specific strategies for developing a unique voice.

The Importance of a Unique Voice

While some offered alternate perspectives, which will be discussed below, participants unanimously agreed that the development of a unique voice is of prime importance for a jazz musician. In particular, participants reasoned that: a unique voice is a conduit of self-expression (McCaslin); everyone inherently possesses a unique voice, *i.e.,* a musical personality that must be nurtured (Lage, Cohen); it is the goal of art or creative activity to develop something original (Halvorson, Wendel, Benjamin); it is stimulating to hear something novel (Brecker, Wendel); and there is little value in strict imitation (Jensen, Cohen, Wendel). Examples of statements made to this effect included:

> I guess for me I feel it's important because it's sort of my way to self expression, and music doesn't have much meaning for me if I'm copying somebody else, or regurgitating what they've done. I don't feel as much of a connection to it. For me it's deeper when I feel like I'm [developing my own voice]... (McCaslin).
>
> I think it's essential, I think it's the only reason to do it…to answer your question about the value of having a unique voice in jazz, I don't think there's any particular way to go [other than developing a unique voice]. You can go the Civil War re-enactment route, where you play proficiently, that's fine, but my belief, my truest belief is that everyone has a voice… (Lage);
>
> I think it's tremendously important… (Alexander);
>
> I think it's important...it's always very refreshing when you do hear something new that's just coming out left field (Brecker);
>
> For me, it's the most important thing. I figure why do something creative if you're not going to try to say something new. Not that you have to

sound absolutely like nobody else ever, but to trying to do something new, for me is really important... (Halvorson);

Well, it's kind of it [the goal of jazz]...for example, if I hear a saxophone player, and I go 'okay that person really likes Joe Lovano, now they sound like Micheal Brecker, there they are trying to sound like Seamus Blake'. If I wanted to hear those guys, I'm going to put their records on...so in that sense I think it's crucial... (Jensen);

Of course it's the most important thing… (Zenón).

It's very important. It's not an easy task but it's very important…For example if another person starts giving you quotes by Young and Einstein, you would say 'okay, I heard all this stuff, who are you. I could have read all of this before, why are you telling me all these things I already know'...It's personality, you cannot take someone's unique personality out of the music, otherwise it's just notes. (Cohen);

…Well, I just assumed that it's the ultimate goal of being an artist...and I think the reason that's the goal is that art is supposed to inspire you and the people around you, and be something you pass on to the next generation...So what's going to inspire? Is it going to be your unique voice and your unique music that people can check out and go, 'wow', or is it going to be that guy who sounds exactly like [another player who came before]…I think that's the whole idea of art, that you're trying to create something unique as a way to inspire and add on and push society forward (Wendel); and

I mean I'm someone that really believes the most important thing and the most salient aspect of jazz is each musician getting to have their own unique voice, and developing their own unique voice…I think it would be difficult to overstate the importance of it...without the end goal of having a unique voice and expressing that unique voice, I'd say that the whole thing is somewhat meaningless... (Benjamin).

While the participants in this study placed a premium on the development of a unique voice, they were accepting of those who held differing views on the topic. They said:

> Which is kind of why I'm saying it's not for me [playing in a certain style], but I don't have a problem with people who don't value having a unique voice as much (Halvorson);
>
> There are some people that like [to play in a certain style], and I respect that. Not everybody wants to be unique. Not everybody wants to invent or be a band leader. Some people want to play [in a certain style of] jazz or in a Broadway show to pay for their house, and have a family. Not everybody is trying to be different (Cohen); and
>
> …I think every artist has to make their own decision about what that [art and a unique voice] means to them. It certainly doesn't mean to me that everybody has to be doing something cutting edge, or that everybody has to be doing something that's never been done before, or that everybody has to be synthesizing everything that came previously… (Benjamin)

Continuing his previous comment, Brecker goes on to say that while developing a unique voice is important it is not the singular purpose of a being jazz musician. He said:

> I think it's important but it's not the end all. The level of some players' [musicianship] is so high that, once again, it transcends the fact that you can kind of pinpoint their influences...they're not trying to do anything revolutionary, they just love [a certain style of playing], and don't even want to recreate it...but they sound so fresh because they're at the top of their game, which transcends the fact that it's [a certain style] been around for many years (Brecker).

Characteristics of Unique Voice

In order to refine the definition of unique voice stated in Chapter 1, that is "a jazz musician that has emerged as having a highly individual and identifiable style regarding his/her instrumental timbre, musical vocabulary, repertoire,

performance practice, musical concept or approach, or combination thereof;" participants were asked: what are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz? While it was predicated that that the results of this question would require a significant alternation in the definition of 'unique voice', subjects responses were, for the most part, congruent with the original definition. In general, they defined a 'unique voice' in terms of musical qualities and stylistic elements. Participants did specify two additional characteristics, specifically: (a) that a unique voice represents the aggregate of one's influences and experiences; and (b) a number of intangible qualities, such as 'feeling', 'expression', 'sincerity', and an 'original or recognizable quality'. There was no consensus among the various other definitions of unique voice, which included: an indefinable quality (Halvorson); one's unique personality (Cohen, Wendel); one's physical and mental makeup (Alexander); in the moment expression (Jensen); and transcending skills or information (Jensen, Benjamin). It should also be noted that in comparison to the other questions during the interview, responses pertaining to the characteristics of a unique voice were substantially abbreviated. This may be due to fact that the concept is nebulous and therefore difficult to define; or that is not as critical a concept as portrayed in the discourse on jazz education.

Musical Qualities or Stylistic Elements

Eight participants described a unique voice in terms of musical qualities or stylistic elements, that is: "What makes a voice is a person's affinity for a certain set of qualities (Lage)," and the way in which they execute them. For example, participants stated that: "I feel like a lot of people have unique voices, and I guess what speaks to me is a combination of rhythm and harmony (McCaslin); "The thing we all look for are just musical things: intonation, time, the way they develop their solos (Brecker); "It can be anything, like somebody's attack...anything somebody's doing different" (Halvorson); "...I think sound is a big one [distinguishing feature]...I think that's [unique voice] is a very apt way to describe it, because it's really their [unique jazz musicians] sound that you can recognize right away" (Wendel); and

> All the things that make up the music are part of someone's unique voice. Everyone has their own rhythm that they like, and if you give someone an eighth note line, five people are going to play it slightly differently rhythmically, and the sound that they produce on their instrument, the volume that they feel comfortable playing at, and the types of harmonic language that they use, some people play really quickly through changes, and other people play the slower pace, and it's all valid... (Alexander).

Two participants referred to composition as a means of expressing these unique musical qualities saying that "sometimes the music is unique, not because the way a person plays, but in the way they write their compositions" (Cohen); and "the sound of their compositions is another big one [distinguishing feature]" (Wendel).

Three participants suggested that by assimilating and synthesizing a particular selection of musical influences or other factors (*e.g.,* ideas or materials, life experiences, etc.), certain musicians are able to develop a unique voice. That is: "it's [a unique voice] a composite of many different elements" (Wendel);

> It's just the way people put it all together, like Mark Turner for example, he's got such a great command of the language and not just a great vocabulary, but also how he's combined his influences and sort of come out on the other end with his own thing... (McCaslin); and
>
> ...it's a combination of everything they've done. Players go through this process of development where they kind of started by trying to imitate or emulate somebody, and then they developed into their own person (Zenón).

Intangible Qualities

A number of subjects discussed the makeup of a unique voice in terms of certain intangible qualities, such as "feeling, expression, virtuosity, and originality" (Brecker). Benjamin agreed that "it's more just a matter of feeling than anything else. Just the feeling that you are expressing something that is

inside you, rather than assimilating a skill or imitating the style of what came previously" (Benjamin).

Two participants made a distinction between 'unique' and 'honest' insofar as the sincere expression of one's personality via music will distinguish them from other players (by virtue of the fact that everyone is inherently different). They said:

> What really grabs me is when I hear a player being who they are, and how honest they're being…but then again if they play like someone else I lose interest, because it's kind of dishonest, and not really coming from a place of deep life experience and deep searching and yearning…so less trying to sound like someone else and more honest (Jensen); and
>
> ...it doesn't have to be unique and different [one's music], it just has to be sincere. I think everyone we listen to, the musicians that you really recognize who they are, is because they're content with who they are, they're not trying to sound like somebody else... (Cohen).

Finally, rather than denote a specific trait, some participants expressed that certain musicians possess an overall recognizable quality, that is: "Everyone's got a fingerprint...an immediately recognizable sound" (Wendel); "If I hear somebody who had a unique voice I can recognize them right away…" (Halvorson); and "When you put on a record of [Thelonious] Monk, you know it's Monk, or if it's [Brad] Mehldau you hear it's Mehldau. You know the sound of these people, you just listen and you know who they are..." (Cohen).

Developing a Unique Voice

To determine how unique jazz musicians develop a unique voice, participants were asked: How do you develop a unique voice? The results of this data had several implications, namely: to describe how unique jazz musicians negotiate the opposing demands of school (*i.e.,* a finite curriculum) and the real world (*i.e.,* developing a unique voice); provide recommendations for the improvement of formal jazz education

vis-a-vis the current call for change; and offer suggestions for current jazz students intent on developing a unique voice. Participants related a myriad of strategies for developing a unique numbering 19 in total. The most frequently cited responses were: conscious versus unconscious approaches (8 subjects); a specific strategy (5 subjects); private study of jazz (6 subjects); and a combination of influences and life experiences (4 subjects).

Conscious versus Unconscious

Eight subjects described a conscious or unconscious approach to developing a unique voice. Whereas some were conscious not to focus too narrowly on a specific musician or style, and objectively evaluate whether or not they were sounding similar to their idols, others explained that a unique voice is something that occurs naturally during the course of one's development. Alexander, for example, felt that although a unique voice is something that develops naturally, "there comes a certain point where some people have to say to themselves, 'I'm stuck imitating this one person, I need to break away from that...'" (Alexander). He explained that if a student has been "obsessed with Joe Henderson for the past ten years, only transcribed his solos and tried to play like him, then they find themselves in a little bit of a box...When people get to that point, they need to do some reassessing... (Alexander). Similarly Halvorson noted that: "…the thing that helped me the most was realizing that I didn't want to sound like those people [my idols]...and this is a little more conscious maybe, but [being a guitar player] not taking that much influence from guitar players..." (Halvorson). Jensen adds:

> It [my unique voice] happened as a result of not wanting to sound like my idols. More than anything it happened as a result of me saying 'I'm sounding too much like Kenny Wheeler right now, I have to put him aside. As much as I'd love to play exactly like him it's not cool. Let me go in a completely opposite direction and work on someone else' (Jensen).

Wendel summarized the previous statements by saying that: "You have to be conscious of finding that fine line between trying new things and keeping an eye

on not completely falling into just sounding like them [other players]" (Wendel). Related to this idea of conscious development, some participants described a process of critical self-reflection; in which they assess their current level and evaluate personal likes and dislikes. They said:

> ...you're always going to have deficiencies, but you have to realize what these deficiencies are and work on them. [You also have to determine] what you like, what you're not that attracted to and channel that into your own music and your [voice] (Zenón); and
>
> ...just trying to constantly be aware, doing your best to be aware of 'what do I sound like', trying to be self-aware and self-critical but not to a point where you completely shut down' (Wendel).

Conversely, four participants explained that a unique voice is something that develops unconsciously. That is to say, everyone inherently possesses a unique voice that must be coaxed to surface; as opposed to something that is developed in a conscious deliberate manner. Lage said:

> … I believe that everybody who touches jazz or any kind of music is unique...there's something about that them aesthetically knows what they want, even if it's unconscious...Martha Graham had a great quote that 'everyone's born with a unique voice, and if you don't exercise it and you don't allow it to grow and figure it out for yourself you kind of waste this lifetime...' (Lage).

Moreover, he warned that one's consciousness, or ego, can actually impede the development of a unique voice saying that:

> ...sometimes people forsake these unconscious choices at the expense of being a scholar of jazz [being too analytical]...I think it's funny when people say developing your own voice, because sometimes we only succeed in getting in the way of our voice. We don't have to develop it; we just have to not shoot it down (Lage).

Other statements expressing this viewpoint were: "...everybody is an individual...so this obsession with, 'I've got to find my own voice' is really misplaced. People need to realize they already have their own voice...once you get

that together [technical skills] your individuality will start to come out." (Alexander); "...people who have come up with something truly unique probably didn't think about it consciously...part of it is something they're born with…or it was just stuff that came naturally…" (Brecker); and "…there's no formula for that, it just has to happen naturally. There's no way you could actually try to do that... (Zenón).

Specific Strategy

Five participants spoke of a specific strategy in developing their own voice, such as:

> ...while I was at school I had to play my scales in intervals, and the wider the intervals got the more excited I got. I felt that this is something I really like, the way it sounds and feels, the texture, and I don't hear a lot of people doing it. So I just nurtured that and took that concept and practiced it a bunch of different ways and slowly but surely it started to come out in my playing (McCaslin);
>
> ...what makes my voice the way it is right now I think is that I have a keen interest for ethnomusicology in a way that I like finding similarities between very diverse music [and using them in my own playing] (Lage);
>
> ...I really like the sound of the upright bass, the attack of it, so I started trying to get that sound on guitar...I think sometimes you can get unique things if you're taking influence from different instruments (Halvorson); and
>
> ...I'm a total believer in transcribing and taking ideas, but without literally copying them. For instance if a sax player does something specific, maybe it's not even a line or shape, but they just do something conceptually that I think is really interesting, I'll try to do that concept (Wendel).

Private Study of Jazz

Consistent with the data relating to learning experiences outside of school, six subjects found the private study of jazz to be a determining factor in the

development of a unique voice. Participants discussed a number of private study activities, including: transcription, aural modeling and listening to jazz (Alexander), mastering technique and the jazz language (Lage, Alexander, Jensen), as well as other methods. More significantly, participants described a bottom-up approach that involved first learning the basics of the jazz language, studying the history of the music, and spending time with the music generally. Alexander said:

> ...unless you sit down and have sort of a private process of trying to figure it out for yourself...you're really missing the boat in terms of developing sort of a personal approach...It's like learning a language the way children do and the way babies do. You just listen, and imitate, and eventually we all have our individuality that usually will come out in the end... (Alexander).

Jensen added "that [a unique voice] also comes from really spending time with the music…spending time learning and analyzing the music from a very intellectual, scholastic side of things... you have to get inside and spend some time with it… (Jensen). Jensen also explained the importance of learning the history of jazz: "…learning the history really helped me in school to figure out who I was in relation to all the different characters on the trumpet and on other instruments as well..." (Jensen). Zenón agreed that:

> ...for me the path [to a unique voice] had to do with understanding the history of the music...Trying to take that basic approach to learning the music from the bottom up...You have to understand the history and the tradition to understand the language. For me it took a long time of studying and listening and transcribing just to be to understand the basics of the language. You've got to move forward, but you've got to start from the beginning (Zenón).

He suggested that "the guys who have a bigger chance of developing into a stronger personality are the guys who are going farther back [to study the history]..." (Zenón).

Two participants made a reference to the notion of authenticity, insofar as certain players seem detached from the history and tradition. They said: "...there is a way to sound more authentic, but I think you first have to learn the origins [of the music]...what it means to be authentic..." (Cohen); and "...[some] people don't sound like they're really part of the game, they don't sound like native speakers…kind of superficial...there's a certain thread of authenticity that runs through all the master musicians" (Alexander).

Combination of Influences

Finally, four participants described the development of a unique voice simply as the result of synthesizing a variety of musical and extra-musical experiences or influences. They said:

> ...That's what I think [that a unique voice is a combination of your influences]. I hate to make it sound too simple...but if you can have a wide variety of influences, and really be thorough in your study, I think eventually your voice, or your personal approach to the music, is going to emerge (Alexander);
>
> ...we both [my brother and I] have a love of jazz, with bebop particularly, and at the same time I was falling in love with Coltrane, and with R&B and funk music, so by combining those influences we created something unique... (Brecker);
>
> ... you keep finding things and putting them in your shopping cart. You add things in here and there...and I guess a combination of all these things is basically what I am (Zenón); and
>
> ...I don't think about it in terms of having a unique sound...all of my experiences I mentioned to you about playing in Israel, playing classical music, playing in all types of bands, big bands, Latin music, Brazilian ensembles, all of these became a part of who I am and gave me more vocabulary. I just call upon all these influences when I play so I feel free to just be myself (Cohen).

Other strategies included: (a) a personal conviction to not sound similar to other players (McCaslin, Lage, Halvorson, Zenón); (b) self-expression (Wendel); (c) being open-minded (Cohen); (d) playing with a regular band (Jensen); (e) putting oneself in different musical situations (Cohen); (f) having interests outside of jazz or music generally (Jensen); (g) having teachers who encouraged the development of a unique voce (Halvorson); (h) a balance between learning the tradition or curriculum and pursuing one's personal interests (McCaslin, Lage); and (i) simply a matter of coincidence or certain circumstances (Benjamin).

Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations for the Future

Purpose

Motivated by the issues associated with the current call for change in jazz education, the purpose of this study was to examine the ways in which exceptional jazz musicians are able to develop a unique voice within academia. Given the existing curricular offerings and pedagogy of the academy, there is a widely held perception that the majority of students graduating from post-secondary institutions tend to sound homogenized. The study gathered qualitative data from 'exceptional jazz musicians' recognized as having a 'unique voice' to learn about their learning experiences and opinions relating to formal jazz education. The following eight subproblems served to define the investigation:

1) What is the nature of the call for change regarding the current status of jazz education at the post-secondary level as reflected in the literature?
2) Is this call for change supported by the unique voices in jazz that are emerging from post-secondary institutions?
3) What are the perceptions of unique jazz musicians in regards to the current status of jazz education in post-secondary institutions?
4) Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice? What are the characteristics of a unique voice?
5) Do the methods used in formal jazz education differ from those used in the jazz tradition as related in the literature?
6) What are the learning experiences of unique jazz musicians in post-secondary institutions? Do they vary from those of the more "homogenized" players? If so, how?
7) Do unique jazz musicians partake in any additional learning experiences outside of post-secondary institutions that "homogenized" players do not?
8) Do unique jazz musicians have any specific strategies for developing a unique voice or advice for students studying in school?

Methodology

A comprehensive review of literature was undertaken in order to gain a better understanding of the issues related to the institutional study of jazz. Sources studied included books, journal articles, magazine articles, newspapers, dissertations, university catalogues, method books, websites, liner notes, and conference publications.

Research consisted of gathering qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with select participants. Based on the preliminary research questions stated in the purpose and the subproblems, as well as the themes emerging from the review of literature, a series of ten questions (see Appendix A) was developed to be used in a semi-structured interview format. Interview questions focused on learning experiences and opinions regarding the formal study of jazz. Interviews employed open-ended questions to elicit in depth and active discussion, allow for deeper probing and clarification of comments, and to provide a contextual resonance.

According to the predetermined selection criteria, ten subjects were selected to participate in the study on a first come first served basis. One additional subject was interviewed since one interview was usable due to its brevity and general incompleteness. While this study was limited in terms of gender, race, nationality, and instrument, 3 out of the 10 interview subjects were female to ensure both accurate and fair representation. Jazz vocalists were not included in this study.

Suitable times were arranged with each subject based on their availability. Interviews were conducted exclusively via telephone and took place over a three month period from October 27, 2009 to January 20, 2010 inclusive.

Interviews were recorded using an Omega Callcorder 7202874 device enabling direct recording of telephone conversations to a SONY IC Digital Recorder ICD-PS20. The resulting audio files were transcribed in their entirety and color coded according to each interview question. Data was organized according to emerging themes, and then compared for similarities and differences.

Important quotes relating to an emergent theme were highlighted and copied verbatim into the presentation of data.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

The summary and discussion of findings are organized by the eight subproblems defining the primary research question. For each subproblem, data from the review of literature has been presented alongside the results of the interviews in order to highlight similarities and differences between the consecutive stages of research.

Nature and Call for Change in Jazz Education

The review of literature identified two areas outlining the nature and call for change in jazz education focusing on: (a) the limited curricular offerings and pedagogy of jazz institutions; and (b) a tendency for jazz graduates to sound homogenized. Themes predominating the literature included:

1) Jazz institutions implement a standardized curriculum focusing on large ensemble (*i.e.,* big band), and an accepted canon of styles and musicians (mainly bebop and its derivatives).
2) A standardized curriculum promotes stylistic uniformity among jazz students, in that all students partake in similar learning experiences and learn the same body of material.
3) The written methods of the academy, upon which the jazz curriculum is based, are seen as being incompatible with the oral methods of the jazz tradition.
4) Oral pedagogical methods are used infrequently within jazz institutions in comparison to written forms.
5) An emphasis on written methods has led to a codification of techniques and canonical ways of improvising.
6) Institutions focus on teaching technical and theoretical aspects of jazz as opposed to aesthetic and practical aspects. Institutions also focus on creating generic professional musicians rather than unique voices.

7) There is a perception amongst jazz scholars, educators, and professional musicians that students graduating from post-secondary institutions tend to sound homogenized; that is, they have a similarity of concept and execution.
8) The institutional study of jazz has reduced the possibilities for self-learning and educational stewardship on behalf of jazz students, which is integral to developing a unique voice.
9) It is the responsibility of the educational institution to provide only general skills and knowledge as it represents only one part of the student's overall learning experience in jazz.

Perceptions of Unique Jazz Musicians in Regards to the Current Call for Change

The review of literature described the attitudes of jazz scholars, educators, and professional musicians regarding the current call for change in jazz education. Several authors criticized the implementation of a standardized jazz curriculum, which focuses on a specific canon of musicians, styles, and pedagogical methods. They are: bebop and its derivatives (Nicholson, 2005; Prouty, 2002; Baker 1963); cult figures like John Coltrane (Ake, 2002); large ensemble or big band (Nettl, 1995; Elliott, 1983); and written methods at the expense of traditional oral methods (Ake, 2002; Javors, 2001; Galper, 2000). In a study completed by Murphy (2009), students and professors were interviewed about their learning experiences within jazz institutions. The results of the study revealed that students viewed the jazz curriculum (namely improvisation class) as "confining" (p. 176) and lacking "emotional and artistic fulfillment" (p. 176).

While these scholastic requirements are intended to strengthen a player's memory and skill, and to be used in conjunction with other forms and venues of learning (Murphy, 2009), Nicholson (2005) suggests that drawing on a limited repository of stylistic inspiration has for many students resulted in a similarity of concept and execution. Prouty summarizes a common mode of criticism of jazz education, namely that "a perceived standardization of methods of improvisational pedagogy has led to a sense of stagnation amongst student jazz

performers in the academy" (p. 6). A number of prominent jazz musicians have expressed similar concerns, including: Lou Donaldson (Berliner, 1994), Phil Woods (Javors, 2001), Branford Marsalis (Ake, 2002), Joe Henderson, and John Scofield (Townsend, 2000). Finally, Prouty (2008), Javors (2001), and Collier (1994) suggest that the standardization of jazz education has reduced the possibilities of self-learning. That is to say, traditional jazz musicians determined their own aesthetic course through self-teaching rather than relying on an institution or curriculum to do so.

In the current study, eight participants noticed a tendency for jazz students to sound homogenized. Among the causes cited for this trend were a standardized curriculum, student attitudes, and the institutional setting. Regarding the standardized curriculum, seven participants attributed student homogenization to the fact that jazz students are taught the same body of information in a similar fashion. While schools do emphasize a specific canon, student homogenization is brought on more by a standard curricular structure as opposed to its content. Additionally, the jazz curriculum was seen by two participants as replicating the classical model. Specifically, it is oriented towards technical proficiency rather than aesthetic expression; and musical accuracy rather than a unique interpretation.

Another factor influencing student homogenization was the attitude of jazz students towards formal education. In particular, they attend school in order to gain a finite skill set and musical knowledge (*i.e.,* a trade), which can be applied in a variety of musical situations (rather than develop a unique voice). Secondly, two participants remarked that jazz students have a sense of entitlement as to the inner workings of the jazz tradition. Instead of engaging in a process of self-learning, students expect to have this information given to them automatically by virtue of their enrollment in a jazz program.

Finally, the institutional learning environment was seen as promoting a social phenomenon known as group polarization; which is a "group produced enhancement of members pre-existing tendencies" (Myers, 1987, p. 337). Three participants observed that those involved in school communities tend to circulate

the same information and views about jazz, which in turn leads to the development of a uniform sound.

Participants provided several alternate perspectives vis-a-vis the call for change in jazz education. Five participants suspected that the discourse on jazz education overstates both the gravity and currency of the issue. They said: (a) homogenization has always existed among students to the same degree; (b) it is just as likely an outcome with students who learn in school as with those who did not (*i.e.,* prior to the advent of formal jazz education); (c) it is a 'myth' and not as prevalent as described in the discourse; (d) it may be symptomatic of formal music education generally (or all arts for that matter) and not exclusive to jazz education; and (e) the emergence of unique voices from post-secondary institutions points to an opposite conclusion. Two other participants made the distinction between a 'unique voice' and an 'innovator' where the latter is extremely rare. Two more participants felt that is unfair to evaluate jazz graduates given that it takes a lifetime to develop a unique approach. Subjects also questioned the responsibility of the institution in the development of a unique voice. Specifically, the role of the institution should be limited to providing basic knowledge and techniques to its students – *i.e,* the tools with which they fashion their own voice.

Perceptions of Unique Jazz Musicians in Regards to the Current State of Jazz Education

In opposition to previous research, which presents a unilateral assessment of jazz education (*i.e.,* the call for change), participants in the current study expressed both positive and negative estimations of the institutional study of jazz. Five participants discussed the positive results of jazz education relating to an increase in the number of jazz programs worldwide, an increase in the overall quality of jazz education, and an unprecedented number of exceptional jazz musicians emerging from post-secondary institutions. For example, every participant in this study spent an extensive period studying jazz formally in school and/or has received a degree.

Much of the success of jazz education was attributed to the resources and environment supplied by the institution itself, namely: an access to information, the school community, and instruction by professional faculty. Without the benefit of institutional resources, learners may have to search for information (that may be unavailable due to geographical or cultural limitations), in a piece meal fashion. Alternatively, institutions assemble a vast amount of information in one place, such as books, audio recordings, and professional faculty, which is made available to its students. This access to information allows for a more efficient and organized approach to learning about jazz. Moreover, jazz educators have demystified the jazz language by analyzing elements such as chord changes, song structures; as well as solo transcriptions, and developing strategies for improvising jazz.

Six participants also commented on how institutions provide physical spaces for students to perform and practice jazz; and foster a type of community environment where students, educators, and professional musicians can congregate, network, and exchange information with likeminded individuals. Participant's responses echoed Dobbins' (1988) assessment that the studios, classrooms, and lecture halls of the institution have come to replace the clubs, restaurants, and informal gathering places of the jazz tradition. Given that these live venues are evaporating at a rapid rate, schools provide a viable option for learning about the music and interact with other musicians.

One of the positive aspects of formal jazz education was the opportunity to study with faculty that had extensive professional experience as jazz performers. Professional faculty was seen as the most effective means of learning the authentic spirit of jazz, and a determining factor in the development of a unique voice, insofar as they were able to contextualize the more theoretical jazz knowledge within a real world perspective. Learning from professional musicians in school is reminiscent of apprenticeships between aspiring musicians and seasoned professionals in the jazz tradition (Prouty, 2006; Galper, 2000; Berliner, 1994; Dobbins, 1988).

In support of previous research, eight participants expressed a negative appraisal of jazz education relating to a homogenization of students. As discussed previously, participants cited a standardized curriculum, a trade school approach, a sense of entitlement among students, and the institutional setting as reasons for this trend. Although the implementation of a standardized curriculum was seen as promoting stylistic uniformity, it was deemed a necessary and unavoidable circumstance of institutional study. Due to the amount and variety of students in school, and to the institutional procedures for evaluation and advancement (*e.g.,* audition requirements, tests, specific competencies, course content, the awarding of degrees, etc.) institutions must implement some sort of standard structure. Participants also related a negative aspect of the school community pertaining to a lack of on-the-bandstand type training. That is to say, while schools can provide facilities and opportunities for students to perform and practice, five participants stipulated that there is no substitute for real world playing experience, which is lacking from jazz education.

The Importance of Developing a Unique Voice and Characteristics Thereof

While criticisms of jazz education abound, literature outlining the consequences of a homogenization of students and the importance of a unique voice is scant. Some writers argue that the development of a unique voice is a singular goal for both amateur and professional jazz musicians alike. Berliner (1994) writes: "On a grand scale of judging the overall contribution of the artist to jazz, a fundamental criterion for evaluation is originality, also a highly valued component within the individual solo" (p. 273). Others have speculated that an alleged homogenization of jazz students is representative of a greater stagnation in the field generally. Nisenson (1997) points to the popularity of Wynton Marsalis, Joshua Redman, *et al.,* themselves products of jazz education, as "the clearest indication that jazz is fading as an art form" and "the increasing diminution of genuine creative vitality" (p. 13).

In order to gain a better understanding of the importance of a unique voice, which was lacking in the literature, participants were asked about their

views on this issue. Each participant unanimously agreed that the development of a unique voice was of prime importance for a jazz musician. They said: "it's essential" (Lage); "it's tremendously important" (Alexander); "it's the most important thing" (Halvorson); "it's kind of it [the goal of jazz]" (Jensen); "it's the most important thing" (Zenón); "it's very important" (Cohen); "it's the ultimate goal of being an artist" (Wendel); and "it's the most important thing and the most salient aspect of jazz" (Benjamin). Participants offered a number of justifications for these comments, namely: a unique voice is a conduit of self-expression; everyone inherently possesses a unique voice, *i.e.,* a musical personality that must be nurtured; it is the goal of art or creative activity to develop something original; it is inspiring to hear something novel; and there is little value in strict imitation. In comparison to the review of literature, which sees a unique voice as a measure of a jazz musician's artistic contribution and essential to the future of jazz as an art form, participants in this study expressed personal reasons for developing a unique voice as opposed to wholesale imperatives for jazz education or jazz music generally. Qualifying their earlier statements, participants remarked that each musician will have a different conception of a unique voice (to various extremes). Moreover, while others may not value it as highly as they do, this is not a negative criticism. Additionally, while there was a premium placed on the development of a unique voice, it was not seen as the sole goal of being a jazz musician.

It is interesting to note that the category of 'unique voice' seems to be primarily a Western construct. As discussed above, the literature on jazz performance and education originating from North America values the development of a unique voice. Conversely, the literature on African culture, in which the jazz tradition and art form are rooted, espouse a communal philosophy whereby group members contribute equally to a specific goal, musical or otherwise (Campbell, 1991; Brown, 1979; Schuller, 1968).

Other than the passing reference to the styles of certain players, such as John Coltrane's "sheets of sound" approach (Gitler, 1987), the 'talking' technique of Joe 'Tricky Sam' Nanton (Schuller, 1968), or Lester Young's light sound and slurred articulation modeled on the playing of Frankie Trumbauer (Berliner,

1994), the review of literature did not describe the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz. Moreover, while the literature cites numerous examples of unique voices (it does specify what qualifies them as unique (Odell, 2008; Nate Chinen, 2007, January 7). Since a definition of 'unique voice' was lacking in the literature, the researcher formulated the following definition: a jazz musician that has emerged as having a highly individual and identifiable style regarding his/her instrumental timbre, musical vocabulary, repertoire, performance practice, musical concept or approach, or combination thereof.

Consistent with this definition, eight participants described a unique voice in terms of musical qualities and stylistic elements, including: intonation, sound quality, articulation (*i.e.,* attack), rhythmic conception, time feel, solo development, harmonic language, and a specific concept, approach, or technique. There was little consensus among other definitions of a unique voice, which were decidedly more abstract. In particular, three participants suggested that a unique voice represents the synthesis of one's musical influences and experiences; and six participants referred to several intangible qualities, such as 'feeling', 'expression', 'sincerity', and an 'indefinable or original' quality.

The Jazz Tradition versus Institutional Pedagogy

The review of literature described a shift in learning practices following the transition of jazz education from the bandstand (*i.e.,* the real world environment of the jazz tradition) to the academic institution. Themes predominating the literature included:

1) The learning methods of the jazz tradition have their basis in the socio-musical traditions of African culture. Specifically, in African society music is transmitted orally/aurally, and learnt through a process of demonstration, observation, and imitation.
2) The learning methods employed in the jazz tradition include: aural modeling, apprenticeships with experienced musicians, enculturation within the jazz community, public performance, and self-directed learning.

3) The first post-secondary jazz programs in United States were established in the 1940s. It was only in the 1960s, however, did the movement experience significant growth both in terms of the number of jazz programs and the development of a formal pedagogy.
4) Resistance to formal jazz education underscored a racialized discourse propagated in higher education and society at large. Opponents described jazz as morally suspect, musically inferior (vis-à-vis classical music), and lacking codification of techniques, organization of materials, and pedagogical skills.
5) "In order to overcome such opposition, jazz educators employed strategies for the teaching of jazz improvisation that borrowed from the methods and perspectives common to higher education" (Prouty, 2008, p. 1)".
6) This led to a shift away from oral/aural traditions (from African culture) towards more visual/written based pedagogy (from European classical music), namely: performing big band arrangements, an emphasis on jazz composition and arranging instead of improvisation, the creation of jazz theory, and the proliferation of pedagogical texts that demystify virtually every aspect of jazz.
7) There is a central controversy permeating the discourse on jazz education relating to an alleged incompatibility of jazz as an oral tradition, and as an improvised music, within the primarily written-score based culture of academia.
8) Specifically, the shift to a written curriculum has led to a standardization of educational content, pedagogy, and techniques.
9) There is a perception amongst jazz scholars, educators, and professional musicians that this standardization has led to a homogeneity of jazz graduates.

Learning Experiences of Unique Jazz Musicians in Post-Secondary Institutions

Recounting their formative experiences in school, participants expressed a consensus relating to private lessons, the school community, and educational

stewardship. Private instruction with a specific teacher was the most frequently cited learning experience in school (seven participants). These lessons entailed formalizing approaches to improvisation (*e.g.,* motivic development, patterns, melodic and harmonic devices, etc.) and demystifying concepts or techniques. What was most beneficial, however, was having the opportunity to gain practical knowledge from someone who had real world experience in the field of jazz. In this sense, private instruction was similar to apprenticeships with experienced musicians in the jazz tradition. These apprenticeships can take many forms, including: informal playing sessions, lengthy discussions, the odd comment on the bandstand, or simply developing close friendships with these musical mentors (Galper, 2000; Dobbins, 1998; Collier, 1994; Berliner, 1994). Prouty (2006) writes: "…even if such relationships do not take on the role of formal study, [they] will usually involve some form of pedagogical interaction" (p. 318).

Six participants discussed the positive learning environment of the school community where likeminded individuals interact musically and socially. For example, community members (*i.e.,* peers, teachers, jazz professionals) socialize, form relationships, network, exchange information, develop an artistic vision, attend performances, and perform with superior players. As stated in the previous chapter, the school community has become a type of jazz community by proxy. The review of literature described a process of enculturation or socialization in the jazz community where traditional jazz musicians learn through various forms of social and musical interaction, such as jam sessions, informal study sessions (*i.e.,* listening to music and discussing concepts), performing in clubs, restaurants, bars, etc., sitting in with bands, playing with superior better musicians, networking with peers, and procuring relationships with professional musicians (Berliner, 1994; Murphy, 1994; Dobbins, 1988; Coker, 1987).

Whereas participants were required to take the basic prerequisite courses in school, such as instrumental technique, theory, history, and ear training, they described an overall experience of educational stewardship. Specifically, participants either constructed their own curriculum with the approval of the school's administration, appropriated the information learned in school for their

own ends, or chose to focus on their own musical interests within the jazz curriculum. These experiences resonate with the practice of self-directed learning in the jazz tradition as discussed above (Prouty, 2008; Javors, 2001; Collier, 1994). While traditional jazz musicians were unhampered by a confining institutional structure, the participants in this study have adopted the practice of self-learning in order to negotiate the conflicting demands of the academic system (*i.e.,* a standardized curriculum and pedagogy) and developing a unique approach. Additional learning experiences included playing in ensembles, having non-jazz related learning experiences, and learning technique or fundamental musical skills.

Since the researcher did not interview 'homogenized players' about their learning experiences, the following examples have been extrapolated from the jazz curricula related in the review of literature. In particular, the review of literature identified several areas of study in jazz curricula, mainly: (a) jazz improvisation; (b) jazz composition; (c) jazz arranging; (d) jazz history and literature; (e) ear training; (f) jazz theory; (g) jazz ensemble participation; and (h) jazz keyboard (NASM, 2008; Janowick, 2000; IAJE and MENC, 1996; Hennessey, 1995; Barr, 1974). In line with this research, a number of prominent university jazz programs outline similar degree requirements in their undergraduate course catalogues (Berklee, 2009; Eastman School of Music, 2009; Manhattan School of Music. 2009; McGill University, 2009; New England Conservatory, 2009; The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, 2009; The Julliard School, 2009; University of Toronto, 2009). A number of descriptive studies found a similar emphasis on performance as a teaching methodology at the expense of actual instruction (*i.e.,* using jazz ensembles such as big band and combo to communicate jazz concepts implicitly). While it was beyond the scope of this study to investigate whether or not the learning experiences of 'homogenized players' are limited to these discrete course offerings, it is clear that unique voices gained more from the community environment of school, the professional faculty, and their own stewardship than from specific courses.

Learning Experiences of Unique Jazz Musicians Outside of Post-Secondary Institutions

As a supplement to their learning experiences in school, participants engaged in a number of external learning activities, including: apprenticeships or mentoring with professional jazz musicians, private study of jazz music, professional experience, and interaction with peers. Four participants discussed apprenticeships or mentoring with specific teachers, which included: sitting in with professional bands performing regularly in public venues, going on tour, exchanging information, and socializing with professional musicians. Participants agreed that these apprenticeships had a significant positive influence on their development in terms of gaining professional experience, practical knowledge, familiarity with the real world demands of being a jazz musician, a greater musical understanding, the ability to weed out irrelevant information, and a sense of being a jazz artist. Four more participants were similarly influenced by performing regularly in professional settings, such as clubs and restaurants, in concert, and on tour.

The most frequently cited learning experience outside of school was the private study of jazz (seven participants); that is variously: extensive instrumental practice, transcription, aural modeling and listening to jazz, attending live performances, performing regularly, studying with private teachers, learning the history of the music, and other methods. Participants described the private study of jazz as a lifelong process and personal/reflective endeavour that is integral to any aspiring jazz musician.

An equivalent number of participants spent a significant period of time interacting with peers outside of school. This extended to all forms of social and musical interaction, such as: 'hanging out' (*i.e.,* socializing in general), networking and meeting people, developing relationships, participating in playing sessions, attending live performances, discussing music, and approaching professional musicians. Other formative experiences outside of school included critical reflection and having a wide range of interests in additions to jazz and music generally.

The review of literature did not identify any non-institutional learning experiences of jazz students. Consequently, it cannot be verified whether more 'homogenized players' partake in any additional learning experiences outside of the school setting; and if they do, how it might affect the development of a unique voice or lack thereof.

Strategies for Developing a Unique Voice & Advice for Jazz Students

The review of literature did not discuss any specific strategies for developing a unique voice other than making inferences based on the unique voices to emerge from the jazz tradition. That is to say, the numerous examples of unique voices that learnt as part of the jazz tradition point to the efficacy of its pedagogical methods (*e.g.,* aural modeling, apprenticeships with experienced musicians, enculturation within the jazz community, public performance, and self-directed learning). The lack of specific strategies, suggests that a unique voice is something that develops incidentally in the course of learning about jazz in general.

To verify this hypothesis, the researcher asked participants how they went about developing their unique voice. They related four main strategies, namely: (a) conscious and unconscious approaches; (b) a specific strategy or technique; (c) private study of jazz; (d) and a combination of influences and life experiences. While four subjects were conscious not to imitate an idol or focus too narrowly on a particular idiom, four others explained how a unique voice is something that emerges naturally during the course of one's development. Five participants spoke of a particular musical approach, such as taking influence from other genres of music, attempting different instrumental techniques, or exploring new melodic/harmonic concepts. Consistent with the data relating to learning experiences outside of school, six subjects found the private study of jazz to be a determining factor in the development of a unique voice. In addition to these private study strategies, participants described a bottom-up approach that involved first learning the basics of the jazz language, studying the history of the music, and immersing themselves in jazz. Finally, four participants described the

development of a unique voice simply as the synthesis of a variety of musical and extra-musical experiences or influences.

As a conclusion to this part of the inquiry, participants were asked what advice they had for jazz students currently studying in school (*i.e.,* potentially 'homogenized players'). While essentially rearticulating the benefits of their learning experiences, participants provided one additional recommendation, namely: a holistic approach to the study of jazz and life. In particular, they suggested that students should explore many types of music and subjects, have hobbies and interests outside of music, and have different life experiences generally. This strategy was seen as a way to counterbalance both the insular academic environment (which is detached to some extent from the 'real world'); and the standard curriculum (which focuses exclusively on certain styles and figures). These responses confirm the researcher's earlier hypothesis that a unique voice develops incidentally during the course of learning about jazz generally rather than as a separate entity.

Recommendations for the Future

A better understanding of the concept, importance, and development of a unique voice is necessary for jazz education and jazz music generally. The results of this study required that the following amendments be made to the definition of a unique voice: a jazz musician that has combined diverse musical and extra-musical influences to produce a highly individual style. This style is reflected in a number of musical elements, such as instrumental timbre, musical vocabulary, repertoire, performance practice, or approach; and intangible qualities, such as 'feeling', 'expression', and 'sincerity'. A distinction must be made between an 'innovator' and a 'unique voice' insofar as an innovator represents a completely novel approach, and a 'unique voice' may refer to a single trait regardless of scale. Given that 'innovators' are extremely rare, it is necessary to re-evaluate current standards for gauging a musician's unique contribution to the field. Additionally, certain individuals will have a greater predisposition to developing a unique voice due to internal factors, such as talent, and external factors, such as

the amount and quality of practice. While much research has been done on these topics, namely talent and expertise (Ericsson, K.A., 1996), and the practice strategies of professional musicians (Hallam, S. (1997), little has been related to the fields of jazz performance or education and requires further investigation.

Although the review of literature speculates that a homogenization of students has led to a stagnation in the field of jazz, the emergence of unique voices from post-secondary institutions, as well as the amount of new music being created, supports an alternate conclusion. In particular, the sense of urgency surrounding the development of a unique voice should be moderated. Moreover, the current call for change is predicated on the view that the development of a unique voice is the singular goal for all jazz musicians. Participants not only disagreed with this assessment, but related that the decision to pursue a unique voice is a personal choice and may not be the case for all jazz musicians or students. In their own estimation, however, participants unanimously agreed that the development of a unique voice is of prime importance. To this end, the development of a unique voice should be considered of high importance particularly for those aspiring to be exceptional jazz musicians.

Another distinction must be made between 'developing a unique voice' and 'possessing a unique voice'. Participants explained that the development of a unique voice represents a lifelong process well beyond the scope of the average four-year college term. While participants agreed that a homogenization among jazz students exists to a certain extent, it is necessary to reserve judgment until they have fully developed as musicians.

The role of jazz institutions needs to be clearly defined with respect to developing a unique voice and as a precipitator of student homogenization. The institutional structure, standardized curriculum, and pedagogy were perceived to be a central cause of student homogenization. However, this is an unavoidable circumstance of formal education. Specifically, it is impossible to cater to the individual needs of a large and diverse student body given the limited resources of the institution (*i.e.,* faculty, physical spaces, time, and materials); and the institutional implements for evaluation and advancement (see above). It is

therefore recommended that the responsibility of formal jazz institutions be limited to providing students with the resources (*i.e.,* access to information, physical spaces to practice, instruction with professional faculty, and a community environment); as well as the basic skills and knowledge needed to develop their own voice. It should be the responsibility of jazz students to appropriate this information to unique ends.

Unique jazz musicians engage in a number of learning experiences outside of school that have their basis in the jazz tradition. In order to increase the likelihood that jazz students will develop a unique voice, they should supplement their learning experiences in school with: apprenticeships or mentoring with professional jazz musicians, private study of jazz music, professional experience, and interaction with peers. Institutions may also consider incorporating some of these pedagogical methods into their curriculum to facilitate the development of unique voice. Finally, jazz students must assume responsibility for their own education. While institutions can provide technical skills and general knowledge, students must ultimately engage in a lifelong process of self-directed learning if they aspire to develop a unique voice.

Appendix A

Interview Questions: Final Draft

Opening Statement

Hi (participant's name). It's Jonathan Goldman calling. How are you? Thanks for participating in my thesis research. Before we begin I wanted to give you some background information about my topic. The aim of my project is to investigate how some jazz musicians are able to develop a unique voice coming out of school, while it's being said that most jazz students tend to sound the same. Along these lines, I have some questions about the state of jazz education, your learning experiences both in and out of school, and the concept of a unique voice.

Interview Questions

1. What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?

2. Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in school (*i.e.,* a homogenization of students)?

3. Can you describe your experiences studying jazz in school?

4. Can you describe your learning experiences outside of school?

5. What would you tell a jazz student to do in addition to studying in school?

6. Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice, and if so, why?

7. What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?

8. How do you develop a unique voice?

9. If you could change or improve something about jazz education what would it be?

10. Is there anything else you wanted to add?

Appendix B

Participant Solicitation Letter

Dear (participant's name),

My name is Jonathan Goldman; I am a graduate student in the music education program at McGill University where I am currently conducting research for my thesis on jazz education and pedagogy.

Part of the project involves interviewing jazz musicians about their learning experiences both in and out of school, their thoughts on the current state of jazz education, and the development of a unique voice in jazz.

I would like to know if you would be interested in participating in a phone interview. It would last no longer than an hour and would take place at your convenience.

I have included a sample of the interview questions below should you be interested in participating.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Goldman, encl. sample interview questions
47 Donnacona
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
H9B 2V1

Sample Questions:

1. What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?

2. Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in university or college?

3. Can you describe your experiences studying jazz in school? In addition to school?

4. What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?

5. How do you develop a unique voice?

Appendix C

Interview Participants

Participant's Name	*Instrument*	*Gender*	*Country of Birth*	*Primary Residence*
Alexander, Eric	Saxophone	Male	United States	United States
Benjamin, Adam	Piano/Keyboard	Male	United States	United States
Brecker, Randy	Trumpet	Male	United States	United States
Cohen, Anat	Clarinet/Saxophone	Female	Israel	United States
Halvorson, Mary	Guitar	Female	United States	United States
Jensen, Ingrid	Trumpet	Female	Canada	United States
Lage, Julian	Guitar	Male	United States	United States
McCaslin, Donny	Saxophone	Male	United States	United States
Wendel, Ben	Saxophone	Male	Canada	United States
Zenón, Miguel	Saxophone	Male	Puerto Rico	United States

Appendix D

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM
McGill University

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which jazz musicians develop a unique voice within academia (*i.e.,* college & university). The goal of this research project is to record expert testimony of unique jazz voices that have emerged from formal institutions.

Your participation in the study will entail an oral interview, either in person or by phone, lasting approximately one hour, which will be tape-recorded. The method, time, and location of the interview will be at your convenience. In this interview you will be asked to provide biographical data (*e.g.,* experiences studying jazz formally in school) and personal opinion. There are no more than minimal risks and no direct benefits in participating.

Portions of the interview will be transcribed, coded, and reproduced in the master's thesis, presentations, and publications. You have the option of being identified in the report or having your identity and responses remain anonymous. In case of the latter your identity and responses will be coded under an unrelated alias (*e.g.,* Subject #1). No other person or organization, other than the researcher and the participant, will have access to the interview data, which will be kept under locked conditions.

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any point. Your signature below serves to signify that you understand the above information and agree to participate in this study. You will be offered a copy of this consent form.

Any questions or concerns should be addressed to:

Jonathan Goldman, M.A candidate, Music Education, Schulich School of Music
Tel.: (514) 683-4523
Email: jonathan.goldman-posluns@mail.mcgill.ca
Supervisor: Lisa Lorenzino; Tel.: (514) 398-4535 ext.: 0693; email: lisa.lorenzino@mcgill.ca

_____

I agree to be identified in the report and permit the use of direct quotes
____ YES ____ NO

I agree to be tape-recorded and that the audio tapes may be used as described above
____ YES ____ NO

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Participant's printed name _____

Appendix E

Interview Questions: First Draft

Interview Questions

1. What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?

2. Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in formal institutions, such as university or college?

3. Can you describe your experiences studying jazz in school?

4. Can you describe your learning experiences outside of school?

5. Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice and if so, why?

6. What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?

7. How do you develop a unique voice?

8. In what ways does studying jazz formally in schools differ from how jazz was traditionally learnt by jazz greats (*e.g.,* Charlie Parker, Lester Young)?

9. Has formal jazz education been able to adapt the jazz tradition to the academic environment?

10. How successful do you feel schools have been in teaching jazz music?

11. If you could change or improve something about jazz education what would it be?

12. What advice do you have for jazz students studying in school?

13. Is there anything else you want to add?

Appendix F

Interview Questions: Second Draft

Interview Questions

1. What is your overall feeling about the state of jazz education in colleges and universities?

2. Have you noticed any recurring trends among jazz students who learn primarily in school (*i.e.,* a homogenization of students)?

3. Can you describe your experiences studying jazz in school?

4. Can you describe your learning experiences outside of school?

5. What would you tell a jazz student to do in addition to studying in school?

6. Is it important for a jazz musician to develop a unique voice, and if so, why?

7. What are the characteristics of a unique voice in jazz?

8. How do you develop a unique voice?

9. If you could change or improve something about jazz education what would it be?

10. Is there anything else you wanted to add?

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