

basically a commercial thing." Bless Hubbard for his honesty, but the fact that musicians like him could make albums they didn't even like, just for money, fueled the critics who cried, "You're selling out!"

Finally, fusion has been controversial among musicians because its second generation, unlike the first, were not proven jazz musicians. Davis, Hancock, Shorter, Corea, and Joe Zawinul were not only established jazz players, but leading masters of the art, whereas Kenny G (actually Gorelick), Jeff Lorber, and any number of younger players came up within a self-contained fusion world. They never "proved themselves" in mainstream jazz bands, at least not well-known ones; thus they lack credibility within the jazz world. Of course, outside the jazz world, this issue of credibility counts for naught. People buy the records because they like them. But when Kenny G earns huge amounts of money and, say, the burning saxophonist Kenny Garrett does not (though he's doing well by jazz standards), musicians grumble about the disparity in pay, and in recognition, since Garrett is a far superior jazz player.

On a positive note, fusion artists have accomplished what skeptics denied: they really did bring young people back to jazz, maybe not in huge numbers, but in enough numbers that jazz is once again on the charts. McCoy Tyner and others now play to large audiences in America and abroad.

Fusion artists' second accomplishment was in revitalizing jazz composition. Fusion pieces typically involve electronic sounds and an eclectic mix of influences, often from Latin American and African sources. Their forms are unusual, too. Ellington and Strayhorn had opened up formal possibilities by writing many pieces with ten-bar sections and other unusual touches, as did Monk in the postwar era ("Criss Cross," "Boo Boo's Birthday") and Wayne Shorter and others in the 1960s. Fusion pieces are often through-composed—that is, they lead from the beginning to the end without repeating the beginning—or use long forms with several sections and themes. (Of course, twelve and thirty-two bars are still the rule in acoustic jazz.)

11

Traditionalism, Revivalism, and the "Young Lions," 1980 to the Present

"Jazz is back," the papers started to announce in the early 1980s (I read it in Boston in 1978), but within the field there is much controversy about the *way* it has come back. My students are constantly surprised about some of the things that are controversial among jazz professionals. For example, they can't imagine any kind of heated debate revolving around such a relatively cool and soothing trend as fusion. Similarly, they don't understand all the fuss about the "young traditionalists," many of them black, who have become prominent since the early 1980s. After all, their movement has helped attract listeners, both black and white, who were turned off by avant-garde jazz and had no interest in fusion. As Marilyn Marshall noted:

These days, jazz is attempting to overcome its image as an elitist art form, and a number of younger artists are returning to traditional jazz roots. Perhaps the best known is trumpet virtuoso Wynton Marsalis. Other highly-touted young jazz artists include saxophonists Branford Marsalis and Donald Harrison, trumpet player Terence Blanchard, pianists Kenny Kirkland and Mulgrew Miller, and female drummer Terri Lyne Carrington.

Jazz is also finding a home on more and more Black college campuses, which artists and educators say is essential if young Blacks are to

learn the art. In addition to Clark, such schools as Howard University, Southern University and Texas Southern University have strong jazz programs. Jazz artists are also visible on college campuses as instructors and visiting artists. (Marilyn Marshall, "Are Blacks Giving Away Jazz?" *Ebony*, February 1988)

Part of the traditionalists' efforts has been an ever-increasing emphasis on re-creating the older styles. In itself, revisiting the past is fine, but doing so has certain drawbacks, as Peter Watrous points out.

They're everywhere: tribute concerts, tribute groups, tribute records, repertory groups, floods of reissued records. This year's JVC festival, programmed by George Wein and as good an indication of official jazz culture as can be found, was more than ever laden with homages to past masters, from Mingus to Ellington, from Buddy Rich to Billie Holiday. Lincoln Center, which has started a long overdue jazz series, calls it Classical Jazz, with emphasis on the word classical. Of the eight jazz shows they've produced over the last two years, five have been tributes. The American Jazz Orchestra, a fine repertory group working out of Cooper Union, exists to perform classic big-band jazz in concert.

Jazz is awash with its past, and that's a mixed blessing. As much as the constant revivals of past glories make for satisfying, historically important listening, the danger is that if looking backward becomes jazz's prime activity, the music becomes embalmed, lifeless. (Peter Watrous, "Jazz Moves Fast Forward into Its Past," *New York Times*, September 18, 1988)

Re-creations are rife with musical problems. At any one concert a clear consensus about how to approach recorded music is rare, especially when the live players present are capable of improvising new music of their own. John Rockwell, another *Times* critic who writes about all kinds of music, is one of the few to have considered this problem. He was inspired to comment after attending concerts of the American Jazz Orchestra, a big band active in New York between 1986 and the early 1990s that specialized in jazz "repertory"—that

is, in the re-creation of famous recordings, along with commissions of new music.

A more interesting question is strictly esthetic: to what extent is jazz inherently improvisatory, and how should the performances of the American Jazz Orchestra (or any similar attempt at recreation, small-scale or large-scale) be balanced between fidelity and freedom?

Clearly, jazz contains a crucial improvisatory element. Some jazz performances were and still are strictly notated (or memorized) and others are purely improvisational (like free jazz). But most jazz falls between those extremes, drawing sustenance from both sides. (John Rockwell, "Can Jazz Survive 'Classical' Treatment?" *New York Times*, September 14, 1986, section II, pp. 19, 26)

Speaking of improvisation, among the younger generation the emphasis is on learning to improvise in the styles that predate John Coltrane's and Ornette Coleman's breaking the boundaries in the 1960s. Peter Watrous notes the inherent dangers in this trend.

In jazz, an entire generation of young musicians is rejecting, with a surety only Freud could have predicted, their immediate musical parents—the avant-gardists of the 60's and 70's—in favor of the 40-year-old rules of be-bop.

A visit to almost any jazz club will find a band with a young Philly Joe Jones or young John Coltrane, well dressed, on the bandstand, living tributes to past masters. Celebrating their predecessors is a necessary step in the learning process. But taken to an extreme, as it often has been recently, this celebration comes at the cost of submerging the individualism that defines great jazz. Though half an hour with a John Coltrane facsimile, his style learned from records, is intriguing, it also seems empty and a bit perverse.

Ultimately, that slavishness to the past subverts progress, and the new ideas that are implied in an individual style, that jazz needs to survive. As with tributes, the young conservative jazz musicians often seem as if they're passive, with no musical voice of their own and defined and limited by the conservatism of their times, rather than

actively making sense of the present for themselves. (Peter Watrous, "Jazz Moves Fast Forward into Its Past," *New York Times*, September 18, 1988)

Jon Pareles wrote a long piece about this new traditionalism in 1984. Pareles focused, quite rightly, on trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, a key figure in jazz as of this writing. Born in 1961, Marsalis is from a jazz family in New Orleans—not a Dixieland family, but a modern jazz family. His father, Ellis, is one of the leading pianists in the city; he was featured on trumpeter Nat Adderley's album *In the Bag*, along with Nat's brother, Cannonball, back in 1962. Marsalis's older brother, Branford, is renowned for his saxophone work in jazz, in pop with singer and songwriter Sting, and in television for a while, beginning in May 1992, as the bandleader on NBC's "Tonight Show". Of Wynton's four other siblings, two are also jazz musicians—trombonist Delfeayo, who has chosen to concentrate on producing, and drummer Jason, the youngest. Wynton (the Irish name was given in tribute to the great black American pianist Wynton Kelly) has become a leader in the jazz field, and he wears this hat comfortably, proudly, and boldly. His trumpet style has changed dramatically over the years, as he has molded it, rather self-consciously, to reflect his changing philosophy. When he first recorded with Art Blakey in 1980 and then with Herbie Hancock, he was flashy and modern, darting in unexpected directions. Today, he pays tribute to such past masters as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington's mute specialist, Cootie Williams, in solos that sometimes sound, to these ears, like patchworks rather than coherent personal statements. His work is always technically astounding, however, and he is known for his peerless performances of classical music. Wynton is the only person to have won Grammys in both jazz and classical categories. He was also honored with the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in music composition.

Pareles also explores the avant-garde work of David Murray and Anthony Davis, among others, which would seem to be antithetical to Marsalis's traditional stance. Optimistically, Pareles concludes that the two camps are moving closer together.

Jazz Swings Back to Tradition

JON PARELES

The crowd outside Sweet Basil, on a Monday not long ago, is so large and so eager that even jaded Greenwich Village strollers stop to ask who's playing inside the jazz club. David Murray and Wynton Marsalis, they are told; that's why the place is packed.

That made several Mondays in a row that the David Murray Big Band drew full houses, playing a stack of new compositions that cut exultantly across the history of jazz. In the richly voiced chords and leisurely ballads, one can hear echoes of Duke Ellington; in the jumping call-and-response between saxophones and brasses, there's a whiff of Count Basie. Charles Mingus would have been proud of the band's gutsy, raw-boned swing.

David Murray, 29, sits at stage left, cradling his tenor saxophone, his ear cocked to the music. He rises for a solo that arcs upward from a sultry melody to harmony-defying squeals and squawks. The music he composes is designed to be shuffled and reshuffled, and it's likely that it will never be performed in the same order twice. That's one reason for the full house.

There are curiosity seekers in tonight's audience, since word has spread that the guest soloist is Wynton Marsalis, the widely praised 22-year-old trumpeter from New Orleans. In a few weeks, the young musician would go on to win Grammy Awards for his performances as both a jazz *and* a classical artist. Marsalis, who invariably performs in jacket and tie, has championed jazz's legacy as swinging, harmonically sophisticated music; what's more, he has denounced some avant-gardists as "charlatans."

Yet he's right at home in Murray's trumpet section, studiously concentrating on his parts and waiting for his chance to play a solo. When he gets the nod, he looses high, poised blue notes, then growls with gusto as the band digs into something like a New Orleans stomp. It's not a battle of styles—it's an embrace.

That gleeful moment reflects the new priorities of 1980's jazz: reclaiming jazz tradition from a modern perspective, shifting the balance from the soloist to the group and, more often than not, swinging with a vengeance.

It also marks yet another shift in the role of the jazz composer. Jazz might be defined as music created from the friction between planning and spontaneity, or between written and improvised music. A written score is only the outline of any musical performance, but especially so in jazz, where swinging rhythms defy exact transcription and where improvisation continually changes the balance of a piece. In the big bands of the 1930's, precise orchestral scores were laced with short and long solos; in the small-group jazz that prevailed after World War II, a composition was likely to be just a quick tune whose chords became a springboard for extended improvisation, repeatedly cycling through the sequence of chords that make up the form of a song. As improvisers broke away from standard harmony during the 1960's, jazz compositions grew less and less restrictive, and they became almost abstract in the 1970's, when a composer like Anthony Braxton might specify a register and a rhythm, but leave melody and harmony to be improvised. Now, after the upheavals of the 1960's and the fragmentation and experimentation of the 1970's, jazz composers face a historical question. What should they do now that everything is permitted?

It's a question with no simple answer. Jazz has evolved as a distinctly American mixture of art music, folk music and entertainment—a complex, classic tradition that supports itself primarily in nightclubs. Many of the pioneers who defined jazz while gaining worldwide popularity—among them Louis Armstrong, Ellington and Basie—are now dead. At this point in jazz history, it's impossible to point to one vanguard style or musician, such as John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and “free jazz” in the late 1960's or Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and be-bop in the 1940's. And the jazz audience has dwindled, turning to rock and pop music or to the light, pop-styled instrumentals that the music business categorizes as “jazz-fusion.” But because the music can be recorded live and inexpensively, jazz has not disappeared from the market. Indeed, this Friday will kick off the 1984 Kool Jazz Festival, a 10-day, 50-concert extravaganza in New York which will feature, among many others, Wynton Marsalis.

While most of the best jazz continues to be made by black musicians, and the lexicon of jazz—its blue notes, its swinging rhythms and the way improvisation and composition meld together—is

Afro-American, most of the audience for new jazz is still white, as it has been since the 1960's.

“I think that the black community, if they get a chance to hear my music, they appreciate it,” says David Murray. “But my music doesn't have the opportunity to reach the total black populace.” Murray is referring to the fact that jazz clubs are expensive places to hear music, and also that radio stations seeking black audiences are far more likely to play pop hits than jazz: “Black people don't get a chance to hear their own music on the radio,” he says. But there is some question whether jazz is still “their own music.” Many young people, black and white, simply prefer music they can dance to and pop songs—idioms less committed to innovation—and would continue to do so even if radio exposed them to jazz.

The 1960's avant-garde gave new jazz a fearsome, fire-breathing image. Leading jazz musicians claimed an affinity between their music and radical politics; even the labels placed on the music—“new thing,” “free jazz,” “energy music”—suggested revolutionary hopes. The rage expressed by such black spokesmen as Malcolm X and Eldridge Cleaver found an explicit parallel in the intense, expressionistic blowing of saxophonists like Pharoah Sanders and Archie Shepp—who were also working out new musical ideas by breaking down song forms and expanding their sonic palettes.

Younger jazz musicians today are not without their own frustrations. “Jazz is still put down into a lower class of economics and of acceptance,” says Murray, in a quieter voice than one would expect after hearing his broad-shouldered saxophone tone. “I think the music should be uplifted. Instead, it's treated as a kind of slave music.”

However, Murray adds, “I didn't start a bigger band for any political reason. I did it to hear more notes.”

And so, after decades in which forms have been defied and shattered, a new generation of jazz composers have begun to rebuild. They are well-schooled, often in both jazz and the classics; they take virtuosity for granted. They organize bands that draw on not only the entire sweep of jazz—from African roots to swing to free-form improvisation—but the sonorities of folk music from around the world and the complex structures of classical music as well.

"It's still energy music," David Murray says. "It's just conforming to some things that were forgotten for a little while."

Such ambitious composers as David Murray, Anthony Davis, Henry Threadgill, Craig Harris, Douglas Ewart, David Holland, James Newton, Ronald Shannon Jackson, John Carter and Butch Morris are working their own transformations of older traditions.

"We are in a period of transition," says Albert Murray (no relation to David), the novelist and author of "Stomping the Blues," who is now adapting Count Basie's reminiscences into an autobiography. [published in 1985]. "There is a breakdown of certain conventions in society, and that doesn't send people looking in all directions. It sends them looking for fundamentals. It might be called postavant-gardism."

"There are going to be more people who can play everything," is the way David Murray puts it.

Both jazz and classical music were sidelights at the 26th annual Grammy Awards last February. After all, classical music and jazz each accounted for only 6 percent of record sales in 1983. New jazz, like contemporary classical music, represented only a fraction of that, and most of it was recorded by small, independent companies.

On the other hand, rock and pop account for more than half of all record sales—and for the bulk of the Grammy presentations. But on the awards broadcast, as Michael Jackson garnered Grammy after Grammy, something extraordinary happened when another young musician, Wynton Marsalis, in white tie and tails, went on camera.

Marsalis performed the finale of the Hummel trumpet concerto more smoothly than the Grammy orchestra, spitting out every triplet. Then he joined his jazz quintet for the daredevil stops and starts of his own tune "Knozz-Moe King" (a variant of "No Smoking," perhaps). Soon afterward, his second jazz album as a quintet leader, "Think of One," and his classical album of trumpet concertos by Haydn, Hummel and Leopold Mozart were respectively declared "Best Jazz Instrumental Performance, Soloist" and "Best Classical Performance—Instrumental Soloist (With Orchestra)." Marsalis is the first musician ever to win simultaneous jazz and classical Grammy awards.

Marsalis has risen more quickly than most young players. His first album, "Wynton Marsalis," sold 100,000 copies, a massive number for an album of jazz without electric instruments. His prowess befits the former first trumpeter of the New Orleans Civic Orchestra, a onetime student at the Juilliard School and the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, and an alumnus of the Brooklyn Philharmonia and the "Sweeney Todd" pit band on Broadway. (He'll also be performing at the Mostly Mozart Festival this summer.) Yet classical music was barely half of his education. The rest came from his father—the pianist Ellis Marsalis, who has been teaching a generation of young New Orleans jazz musicians—and from playing in local rhythm-and-blues and jazz bands before carving out a national reputation.

In 1980, at 18, the trumpeter dropped out of Juilliard to join Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, a group that since the 1950's has been a springboard for young, aggressive jazz musicians. Marsalis's pure, pealing tone and mercurial solos caused the jazz press to declare him a prodigy. Then Marsalis joined the Herbie Hancock-V.S.O.P. quartet, with an even more demanding repertory. When he was barely 21, Marsalis began leading his own quintet, and became one of the few new jazz musicians signed directly to a major record label, Columbia.

In his Grammy acceptance speech, a slightly nervous Marsalis pointedly thanked "all the guys who set a precedent in Western art, and gave an art form to the American people that cannot be limited by enforced trends or bad taste."

Little by little, the history and performance of jazz have been accepted as an academic discipline, and a number of leading jazz musicians are teaching on college faculties: Archie Shepp and the drummer Max Roach at the University of Massachusetts; the saxophonist Jackie McLean at the University of Hartford; the bassist Richard Davis at the University of Wisconsin. Rutgers University has an Institute of Jazz Studies in Newark, and the music faculty at its New Brunswick campus includes the pianist Kenny Barron, the guitarist Ted Dunbar and the drummer Michael Carvin; the bassist Larry Ridley has tenure on the Rutgers faculty.

Outside the universities, such organizations as the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music in Chicago, the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts and a creative-music workshop in

Woodstock, N.Y., have, in the last decade, fostered a new respect for the jazz tradition.

It is a climate in which, even as the inventors of the jazz tradition die out, younger musicians are exposed to all the history they want to hear, including reissued recordings. Marsalis, for one, has emerged from such training a vehement jazz traditionalist who believes in "swing, melodic invention and harmonic correctness." As he puts it, "Without chords and harmony and a rhythm—without the obstacles—improvisation is nothing."

Marsalis has been criticized for sounding like an encyclopedia of jazz trumpet styles, from Miles Davis's melancholy to Louis Armstrong's growls to Fats Navarro's liquid phrasing to Clifford Brown's clarity to Dizzy Gillespie's puckishness. "If you play trumpet and you *don't* sound like Miles or Dizzy or Clifford or Fats, you're probably not playing jazz," Marsalis argues. "If you don't sound like somebody else, you sound like nothing."

In much small-group jazz since the be-bop era, performances have taken the shape of theme-solo-theme. Marsalis's own quintet is up to something more, shifting keys and tempos from solo to solo, continually reorchestrating the themes. It is as if the late 1960's and 1970's, with their free-form experiments, never happened; Marsalis is grafting the complex forms of the 1980's onto the daring harmonies of the 1960's.

"The sincerity has to come back into music," Marsalis insists. "The 1960's let a lot of people in who were willing to be charlatans, some sort of noble-savage profundity. Each of our generations got weaker instead of stronger.

"To me, you definitely have to study be-bop," Marsalis continues. "It's like Beethoven having to know counterpoint. It's not enough for a guy to grow up in Texas and eat chicken and ham hocks, or whatever that 1970's social-critic view was. Music is precise; cats should know the chords and the theory. The old stuff has not been absorbed yet. Duke Ellington was writing hip arrangements in 1938, and they're still hip."

"The next thing is going to swing," he adds. "The key is in the rhythm. It's not in harmony or melody. The next innovation is going to be when somebody does something in the rhythm."

"I don't lose an hour of sleep worrying about whether my music 'swings,'" says pianist Anthony Davis, who has emerged from classical training with his own conclusions. Along with such other jazz composers as John Carter, George Lewis, Douglas Ewart and John Lindberg, the 33-year-old Davis has taken the postavant-garde direction of complex structures and extended pieces away from the bandstand toward the concert stage. He is probably the most abstract and classical-sounding composer among his peers: While improvisation threads through his pieces, the music's momentum comes not from a syncopated beat, but from the working out of compositional tensions, as it might in a piece by Schoenberg or Stockhausen.

Davis, the flutist James Newton and the cellist Abdul Wadud were invited to be part of the New York Philharmonic's Horizons '84 festival of new American music earlier this month as improvising soloists in Davis's "Still Waters."

Davis's Manhattan Plaza apartment shows the depredations of his 4-year-old son, yet around the piano things are orderly. A pencil is close at hand; Bach keyboard compositions top a stack of music on the piano itself; nearby shelves hold Davis's own scores, some in his own spidery handwriting, others bearing the clearer notations of professional copyists.

"I would be hard-pressed to tell you exactly what key this is in," he says, opening one of them to point out which parts are composed and which are improvised.

Davis, who studied classical music at Yale and the drumming of southern India at Wesleyan, played in jazz bands around New Haven. In New York, he worked his way up the jazz circuit, performing as a solo improviser and in groups led by David Murray, the trumpeter Leo Smith and others. Eventually, however, his ambitions as a composer led him away from the three-sets-a-night routine of club performance.

Davis writes pieces that are openly influenced by modern classical music, as earlier jazz was influenced by marches, hymns and pop tunes. In conversation, he is as likely to mention Steve Reich or Jacob Druckman—composers whose music uses no improvisation—as he is to cite Ellington. Davis's pieces are heady and atmospheric; they often use lush harmonies and intricate repeating patterns to create a sense of

suspended time. The merits of Davis's music have been debated by classical critics as well as by jazz fans who want straightforward swing in their music.

"I don't think these traditions are as separate as some people would have you believe," Davis argues. "Afro-American music has always been American; Scott Joplin was obviously listening to a lot of music, including classical music, and I think that's true of Jelly Roll Morton, too. I came to the realization that I really wasn't concerned whether people looked at my music as jazz or not. I'm writing American music, and it draws on a whole spectrum of influences in all kinds of traditions. If somebody uses tradition as a way of limiting your choices, in a way that's as racist as saying you have to sit at the back of the bus. Ellington and Mingus are very important in the tradition of what I'm writing, but I have also studied Stravinsky, Messiaen and Takemitsu. What's so heinous about European influences? I think now there's an idea of finding common sensibilities rather than sticking to your own little community."

Davis has all but abandoned the usual jazz circuit in favor of places like the Brooklyn Academy of Music and an avant-garde performance loft in SoHo, the Kitchen, which recently sponsored him for a grant to write an opera based, intriguingly, on the life of Malcolm X. (A portion of "X" will receive a workshop performance in Philadelphia on June 29.) [It premiered at Lincoln Center in 1986.]

"I feel I'm liberated from the commercial function that this music had to perform before 1940," Davis says. "I don't feel it's my job to sell drinks. I'm writing art music, and I feel the responsibility to create the best music I can."

Only in recent years has jazz begun to get the kind of institutional help that American opera companies and symphony orchestras are used to receiving. The National Endowment for the Arts (which awards Federal grants for arts projects and, in its choices, signals a direction for private-foundation support) started a jazz pilot program in 1970, giving \$20,050 to 30 individuals and organizations. By 1979, jazz grants to performers, organizations and educational programs had reached \$1 million. In the past two years, N.E.A. jazz support has been approximately \$1.3 million, out of a \$13-million music budget.

Meet the Composer, an organization that awards grants to support live appearances by American composers, gave some 30 percent of its budget to jazz composers last year. Such support—and a new willingness by such classical-music presenters as the Carnegie Hall Corporation, which this year featured both jazz artists and composers at the Carnegie Recital Hall—allows composers to try out new forms that might not go over in a club setting.

"Government support is a very small part of what makes an art scene run," cautions Nancy Weiss, coordinator of the new-jazz program at New York's Public Theater. "In the long run, the survival of a kind of music has do with the marketplace; an art form is going to come and go on the basis of its audience."

Is it possible to reconcile the formal innovations that fascinate Davis and other chamber-jazz composers with the swing that traditionalists like Marsalis demand? A number of jazz composers are betting on it.

Some of the most exciting music anywhere is now being made by an axis of groups whose style might be called avant-gutbucket jazz—a loose rubric for the music of David Murray's big band and octet, the Henry Threadgill Sextet, Craig Harris's Aqua Band, Olu Dara's Okra Orchestra, Ronald Shannon Jackson and the Decoding Society, the Dave Holland Quintet, the Butch Morris Ensemble and other "little big bands," as they have been dubbed. At their best, these bands don't just look back; they offer a kaleidoscopic view of jazz from the roots up.

"If I can give somebody an inkling of how this part of the tradition links up with that part of the tradition," says Murray, "if they can hear that in my playing, that's wonderful."

Murray heard those connections as he was growing up, learning the saxophone as he listened to his mother play piano at the Berkeley, Calif., Missionary Church of God in Christ. "I was just down in Midland, Texas," he says, "at the church where my father is head deacon, playing a piece with the organ player. I put all the ingredients in that I'd put in a solo concert, all the squeals and squawks. All those sounds that are supposed to be new and avant-garde are also an expression of the blues in a religious form, speaking in tongues. I always feel like I've been a person who's playing the melody, and hooking that up

with the rhythm. I come out of the church, and the church is all melody."

Murray is generous with his own melodies. In the Greenwich Village apartment where he lives with his wife, the photographer Ming Murray, he can lay his hands on some 130 original pieces, many of which intertwine three or four melody lines at a time. "Every part makes it work," Murray says. "It's not separate tunes, it's all one thing."

Among those pieces are arrangements for standard jazz quartet (piano, bass, drums, saxophone), for Murray's octet, for string orchestra, for the big band and for the World Saxophone Quartet (a new-jazz supergroup, with Murray, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett on saxophones). Critics have compared this quartet without a rhythm section to a chamber-music group, while Murray likens it to street-corner doowop singing.

Because a sideman in one avant-gutbucket band may be the leader of another, the little big bands can trade ideas and may even build up a shared repertory—something that jazz hasn't enjoyed since the 1960s.

"There's getting to be a group of about 25 to 30 musicians that I associate with," says Murray, "and any one of those musicians knows my music. They may not know my newer music, but there's usually something that we can concur on and play. Or I may know some of their music."

Yet composers like Murray, as opposed to bandleaders of an earlier era like Ellington, seldom have a stable, working band to use as a compositional laboratory. To subsidize such occasional, large-scale projects as his big band or his string orchestra, David Murray writes theater and dance scores and tours the circuit of European summer jazz festivals.

In a briskly professional rehearsal on Sweet Basil's bandstand at noontime before a Monday night gig, Murray's big band whips through a dozen intricate tunes in two hours, pieces that pile melody on melody in counterpoint that would challenge Hindemith—although Hindemith never stomped like this. "Fire it up!" says Murray, urging the band to hit a tune harder. As that piece reaches its last chord, a few onlookers at the bar can't help applauding.

Such infectious, intelligent music seems destined to find its audience eventually. There appears to be something in it for everybody—free spirits, intellectual rigor, complex cross-references, old-fashioned melodies and an unstoppable beat.

The new jazz still has to overcome its image from recent decades—as music that is forbidding, incoherent or too complex for nonspecialists to understand. But with or without an increase in popularity, and with or without governmental support, the music itself has forged two invaluable connections: Jazz's past has become a respected resource; jazz's future—its young musicians—shows enthusiasm and tenacity.

"If you can play this music," says Wynton Marsalis, "you don't want to play anything else. You're always thinking that you're on the brink of something." (Jon Pareles, "Jazz Swings Back to Tradition," *New York Times Magazine*, June 17, 1984)

As I write this in 1997, several things have changed since Pareles made his observations. First of all, government support for the arts, jazz included, has decreased, even while respect for jazz is on the rise. Second, the avant-gardists and Marsalis continue to be at odds, and the promise suggested by the engagement with Murray was not fulfilled. In fact, Marsalis has become increasingly rigid in his definition of jazz. He and his colleague, critic and essayist Stanley Crouch, appear to believe that in order to be considered jazz, music must include the blues, improvisation, swing feeling, and what they call "the Latin tinge," after a statement made in one of Jelly Roll Morton's recorded interviews to the effect that the "Spanish tinge" is essential to jazz.

Marsalis's opinions would not be noteworthy except that he has gained more and more influence in the jazz community. He is artistic director of jazz at Lincoln Center and sets the programming and hiring policies there; has hosted a radio series and a television series designed to introduce audiences to various aspects of jazz, as he sees it; is a regular guest on television shows; and is routinely asked to put his imprimatur on all kinds of jazz projects around the United States. A number of critics and musicians feel that Marsalis is too close-minded in applying his influence. The following piece

delineates some of their criticisms and offers Marsalis's detailed reponse.

Wynton Bites Back: Addresses His Critics

WILLARD JENKINS

"There are those people who are trying to protect (jazz) or say exactly what it is, and they're destroying it, because it grew from the mere fact that it embraced all the things that were available, from the Caribbean, from Spanish music, everything. It was all these things that allowed (jazz) to happen and it has been those types of ideas that have made it progress."

SAXOPHONIST-COMPOSER HENRY THREADGILL, *JAZZ TIMES* 3/94

"The jazz musician wields power that is neither melodramatic nor obnoxious, achieving individuality through the collective affirmation of the swinging band, now and again mediating on the moment at the piano keyboard and orchestrating the individual consciousness through the paces of blues and swing."

STANLEY CROUCH, 1994

"Jazz is, living high off nickels and dimes, tellin' folks 'bout what's on your mind. Jazz ain't nothin' but soul. For me, jazz is all the truth to be found, never mind who's puttin' it down. Jazz ain't nothin' but soul." So goes the partial lyric to a little ditty called "Jazz (Ain't Nothin' But Soul)," rendered most notably by Betty Carter and later Joe Lee Wilson. Or, to paraphrase a familiar refrain credited to Louis Armstrong and a host of others, if you don't know what jazz is, don't mess with it.

Seems Wynton Marsalis has expressed some very definite ideas about what jazz is, and perhaps more pointedly—what jazz isn't, or what isn't jazz. For this cardinal sin he's been summarily taken to task by a number of musicians and critics; a provocative example of the latter group's critical attitude coming from the sharp pen of Kevin Whitehead in the November 23 *Village Voice* Jazz Supplement. Titled "It's Jazz, Stupid" Whitehead's piece appears to be dealing with the notion of a constricted definition of jazz as the writer sees it, coming from the Lincoln Center Jazz Department, and most notably its Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis.

Whitehead intones: "According to said experts, we have to be vigilant, separating the frauds from musicians who really deal with swing and the blues—separating real jazz musicians from those who play not-jazz. In '93 a few local authorities—a Jazz at Lincoln Center honcho (presumably Marsalis or Jazz Director Rob Gibson) and a *Times* critic (presumably Peter Watrous) among them—tried their best to set me straight: William Parker, Albert Ayler, Muhal Richard Abrams, they don't swing, so they're out. Reggie Workman, Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, that's "European music"—Taylor just comes from Messiaen. Jazz musicians can't come from Europe because jazz already has a European component, precluding further input from that quarter. Jazz needs standards, or people will think Kenny G is jazz, and the music will suffer. Jazz has its tradition-honed rules, and to be accepted you have to measure up."

Whitehead went on to criticize those who would narrow the boundaries of jazz, saying "Jazz has never been about one thing: no single criterion defines a music that can simultaneously encompass Bunk Johnson, Charlie Parker, and Billy Strayhorn." Earlier in the piece Whitehead suggests that "Narrow definitions of jazz in general rest on historical assumptions about the music, though exclusionists like to claim historical high ground. In jazz, one faction often tells another it's wrongheaded or not jazz; these were major 40s and 60s pastimes."

Kevin goes on to make a case for jazz being a music derived from a variety of sources. He relates how at various times in their careers such giants as Coleman Hawkins, Monk, Ornette, and others were thought to be out of the bounds of the jazz tradition of their day. Later in the piece Whitehead's take on the August 3 Lincoln Center Thelonious Monk concert, a sort of recreation of the big band Monk charts (a concert we referred to in our editorial last issue) suggests that "a mostly under-30 band led by Marcus Roberts" (most of them Marsalis associates or "Wyntonians" as Whitehead referred to them) didn't "really cut it technically;" continuing by suggesting that "patrons paid \$35 to listen to on-the-job training, which raises the larger issue of why Jazz at Lincoln Center really exists: to educate the public about and expose it to quality jazz, or to subsidize Wynton's working groups, whose members are heavily featured uptown?"

Our editorial commentary on Jazz at Lincoln Center last issue (Vol. 4 No. 4) was met with some measure of interest from the jazz community. Telephone calls, letters, and assorted exclamations of support for our position—which we felt was an altogether reasonable and balanced one—arrived for several weeks thereafter. [In that editorial Jenkins basically maintained that the concerts, taken by themselves, were marvelous, but that they would be better, and it would be more responsible, to present a broader variety of musicians and styles.] The lone detractors appeared to be a few folks at the International Association of Jazz Educators Convention last January in Boston; and quite frankly those folks appeared not to have absorbed the piece in its entirety.

In response to Whitehead's piece in the *Voice*, and in what appears to be a "I'm mad as hell and I'm not gonna take it anymore" frame of mind, Wynton Marsalis wrote a rather lengthy letter to the editors of the *Voice* for publication. According to sources, when asked to edit the piece to standard *Voice* letter-to-the-editor length (which would have cut the letter by quite a bit less wordage) Wynton refused to do so. Just prior to the publication of our [NJSO] *JOURNAL* (Vol. 4, No. 4) editorial and days after publication of Whitehead's *Voice* piece, Jazz at Lincoln Center Director Rob Gibson sent NJSO the following letter from Wynton in hopes that we would consider publishing it.

To provide the *JOURNAL* reader with a bit of context we decided to quote the above passages from Kevin Whitehead's *Voice* article, as a prelude to publishing Marsalis' letter. One other point of interest related to at least one of Wynton's pronouncements in the letter is this from Whitehead's article: "Wynton's/Lincoln Center's most outspoken detractor is Lester Bowie (see the *Down Beat*, August 1993 interview Whitehead conducted with Bowie and Greg Osby), conspicuously an advocate of black musicians." This said in response to those who would attribute criticism of Jazz at Lincoln Center to a sort of reverse racism, presumably on the part of white critics. What follows is Marsalis specific response to Whitehead and general response to his critics everywhere, particularly those who would take the Jazz at Lincoln Center philosophy to task.

Wynton Speaks: "Who Actually Is Stupid"

As one reared in a tradition that greatly respects "playing the dozens," I have often enjoyed the twelve or thirteen years of insults posing as aesthetic insight from some segments of what masquerades as the jazz critical community. Normally, I take the position that nothing below me can hurt me, and nothing above me would, but a recent article by Kevin Whitehead in the *Voice*'s jazz supplement—"It's Jazz, Stupid"—was such a mixture of personal attack, attempted condescension, and disinformation that I have decided, finally, to step down into his arena, where arrogance and ignorance are served up in place of information. This must end. It is not the fact of criticism that disturbs me; criticism can easily lead to enlightenment for the musician and listener. I am disturbed, however, by our neophyte pundit's combination of inaccuracy and disrespect, which proves, under scrutiny, that if he thinks anyone is stupid, it must be our audiences, who have enthusiastically supported our efforts for the past seven years with sold-out concerts and standing ovations. Or perhaps he means the thousands of students who are constantly petitioning Jazz at Lincoln Center for more information and events.

I intend to deal with a number of erroneous propositions in his piece, but let me begin with the thing he knows absolutely nothing about—music. I was struck time and again by his misuse of musical terminology to support specious arguments. He discusses the repeated use of the minor third, which he calls "piano's basic blue note," as though it is an indication that someone is playing or alluding to the blues. Actually, it could be an indication that someone is in a minor key, in which case, the major third is the related blues interval. In fact, there is no one basic "blue note," but a series of notes in any given key that can be flatted or sharped to create blues intonations. For example, the major seventh against the dominant seventh; or the flat five against the fifth. There are many examples, but none takes precedence over the others.

He says that Earl Hines and Thelonious Monk are "out." What type of descriptive term is this in a piece of musical criticism? Given the fact that all jazz, from Buddy Bolden to Ornette Coleman, is "outside" of European conventions of instrumental technique and performance,

while constituting twentieth century American conventions, what exactly is the writer saying? Whatever his meaning, he continues, later saying that the August 3rd Jazz at Lincoln Center concert of Thelonious Monk's music—which fortunately was taped!—was full of improvisations in which the players “ran blues changes, ignoring Monk's structural quirks and trap door silences—the out content.” How does one “run blues changes?” Does he mean by playing on dominant seventh chords or superimposing the form of a blues on an unrelated song? Well, the majority of Monk's songs feature the dominant seventh chord with a flat five (a blues sound). So he can't mean that. As far as anyone imposing the 12-bar blues form on a 32-bar song like “Evidence,” I can assure you—as will the tape—that this never happened.

By the way, what, exactly, is a blues change—in the context of a soloist “running it” on a song? I guarantee you we'll wait a long time for the answer to that, and if we get one, it will not be correct. And even this wrong answer will not be from the writer or his editor, Gary Giddins, a man whose position in the hierarchy of jazz criticism is far higher than the quality of his ideas, which are pedestrian when not self-serving. So far as the “structural quirks” and “trap door silences” are concerned, what did John Coltrane and Johnny Griffin, two musicians who were rightly celebrated for their work with Monk, do with “the out content,” since neither of them used significant silences in their improvising[?]

Also, I would like to say that the late Charlie Rouse, who played with Monk for over ten years and toured with my band in 1987, was fond of saying that he played every Monk song with the sound of a blues. This is also what Charlie Parker said about his own playing of standard songs. None of these men, of course, understood the problems of jazz as well as the writer, who also claims that (the program's bassist) Reginald Veal and (pianist) Marcus Roberts were lost during features. Interestingly, the writer chooses not to say which Monk songs, and how they were lost. Were they playing the wrong chords, mutilating the form, playing in another key? We can always go to the tape, but I'm sure we won't have to—many so-called jazz critics have gotten used to abusing musical facts without fear of redress. After all, it's only jazz.

My integrity is then impugned by the insinuation that Jazz at Lincoln Center concerts are being used to subsidize my band members. My band members are on my annual payroll. We play about 120 concerts a year. The three or four concerts we play at Lincoln Center have negligible impact on our financial situation. To imply that an old boy system has to be in place for the public to want to hear Marcus Roberts (who won the 1st annual Thelonious Monk competition) or Herlin Riley or Wessel Anderson, is inappropriate and disrespectful.

Our freelance expert writes as though my opinions of what he considers “the vanguard” have a political basis that justifies the term “neo-conservative.” I would like to clarify. I have been welcomed on the bandstands of such “vanguard artists” as Dewey Redman, Lester Bowie, and David Murray, and have played with Billy Higgins, Edward Blackwell, Elvin Jones, and Charlie Haden. None of these musicians had anything derogatory to say to me in person, musically or verbally. So my convictions are musical, not political, for I have also performed the musics of Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and John Coltrane with musicians who were integral to the development of these styles. I began with Art Blakey and have stood between Doc Cheatham and Harry Edison, next to Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Farmer, Ruby Braff, Red Rodney, Jon Faddis, Sarah Vaughan, and Betty Carter. No matter the school, I have spent more time with musicians trying to share information than argue about what's right or wrong with their playing or mine. Who has this writer studied or played with, and what is the source of his authority other than poor editorial decisions?

If anything, the truly conservative vision is held by the writer and his ilk, all of whom have an investment in anarchic rebellion and sociological rhetoric as opposed to sophisticated affirmation and musical engagement. They pretend to be an oppressed intellectual minority, when, in fact, they sadly represent the overwhelming majority of critical opinions in jazz. If this were not true, the annual polls of jazz critics wouldn't always highly position the “out” musicians the writer pretends are unrecognized by the establishment. In case you didn't

know it, my ever so eager to be rebellious friend, you and your editor are the establishment, although it is sinking fast under your watch.

In an attempt to pretend that our vision at Lincoln Center is narrow, Mr. Giddins allows the writer to state that, "Jazz has never been about one thing. No single criterion defines a music that can simultaneously encompass Bunk Johnson, Charlie Parker and Billy Strayhorn." Jazz at Lincoln Center has featured music either written by or associated with all of these musicians. No single criterion can define any art form, and, at Lincoln Center, we're not trying to provide any single criterion, which is why we've been able to present Harold Ashby as well as Dewey Redman, Doc Cheatham as well as Don Cherry, Jay McShann as well as McCoy Tyner, the music of Jelly Roll Morton as well as Randy Weston—to cite only a few examples. Because no single criterion applies doesn't mean that no criterion applies.

He says that Lester Bowie is Jazz at Lincoln Center's most outspoken critic. Bowie emphatically—and correctly—says he does not play jazz; he says he plays "Great Black Music." Well, we are *Jazz* (emphasis Mr. Marsalis) at Lincoln Center. We play jazz, jazz-blues, and we swing—as hard as possible, at different tempi—all night long. By swing, I don't mean a drum machine, but the rhythmic sensibility that allows for continued thematic development in the context of a jazz groove. If this writer—or any of the other would be taste-makers who want to hear "some hip black musicians"—would like me to illustrate what constitutes a jazz groove, I would be glad to. I do it all the time in jazz classes.

The writer further implies that I have a deficient knowledge of what "new" jazz is made of, that I have disdain for European influences. That is not the case. I'm concerned with degrees of influence and the true redefinition of material. Jazz musicians have reinterpreted and utilized European instruments, harmony, and form with such originality that a new music was born. Now we are supposed to believe that very small percentages of actual jazz make something jazz. Is anything with strings on it a piece of European concert music? Is any music using bass and drums jazz music? Does improvisation or call-and-response make something jazz? Obviously, no. Just because this writer is incapable of understanding what constitutes a piece of

jazz, must we follow his example? As a professional musician, I have performed many pieces of avant garde "classical" music by composers as diverse as Berio, Stockhausen, Shapey, Schuller and Zwilich, to name a few. Therefore, I have a working musician's familiarity with that vocabulary, a familiarity that the writer obviously lacks since he mistakes those who do poor improvised versions of that music, with a few jazz smatterings, for jazz musicians—even when those same musicians make it clear that they aren't playing jazz.

Apparently, this writer has never taken it upon himself to achieve the real job of a critic, which is to illuminate what constitutes artistic success. He claims to be influenced by the thinking of Albert Murray. Well, he didn't read Mr. Murray closely enough. If he had, he wouldn't abuse the function of critical language, which is to communicate specific information or substantial aesthetic ideas. The real problem in jazz is not narrow definitions of it but the dominance of arrogant and incompetent writers who believe their underdeveloped taste constitutes the truth. I have done hundreds of master classes for students of jazz. If I stand before a class of students and tell them "Anything could be jazz and anything could be swinging," what and how would I tell them to practice? Students don't need vague generalities but specifics, like what King Oliver gave Louis Armstrong.

Finally, let me issue a wake-up call to the writer and his like-minded colleagues. Do not deceive yourselves. Through personal invective and misinformation, veiled paranoia and envy, you will not determine the context in which serious musicians will develop and are developing. You represent an unfortunate intellectual tradition that has burdened this art with varying degrees of paternalism and little actual concern for those musicians dedicated to meeting the extremely high standards set by the masters of jazz, all of whom *swing* (emphasis Mr. Marsalis). By attempting to impose aesthetic criteria far beyond what your knowledge allows, you wish to con the public into believing that you possess an intellectual superiority to jazz and to the musicians who play it. This has always been the case with jazz criticism of the lowest school. But this is the new day that you always are searching for. The "sound of surprise" that you all so often claim to want to hear will be the sound of accuracy.

Henceforth, I want to make it clear that I will no longer silently tolerate your willful disrespect of the skills required to play jazz music. I will be responding to inaccuracies in your reporting when I am made aware of it. My intention is not just to expose you for the charlatans that you are, but to supply the public with another opinion. If you wish to expose me publicly anywhere in any forum, please waste no time contacting me at Lincoln Center. I am always ready to discuss the specifics of *music* (emphasis Mr. Marsalis), not sociology or race politics. But no matter how often you are publicly exposed, I don't expect you all to change. As the great African proverb goes, "A log may lie forever in a river but it will not become a crocodile." (Willard Jenkins, "Wynton Bites Back: Addresses His Critics," *National Jazz Service Organization Jazz Journal* 5, no. 1 [ca. April 1994])

Notice that Marsalis hedges on a few of his answers. To the question, "Why do Marsalis's own band members figure in almost all of his concerts?" his response was, "The three or four concerts we play at Lincoln Center"—the number has increased since then—"have negligible impact on our financial situation." He did not answer the question.

Marsalis is evidently angry and indignant, to say the least. After all, he clearly loves the music and has personally played a major role in the resurgence of jazz since the mid-1980s. And he is one of the great musicians of our century. One might well ask if that isn't enough to satisfy his critics. But the fiery debate continues.

On Marsalis's heels, more and more young players, such as the truly exciting saxophonist Joshua Redman, are recently getting record deals and exposure. Again, this trend appears advantageous for the musicians, yet within the field, many are concerned about the focus on younger players. Francis Davis has been a particularly thoughtful and astute observer of the jazz scene, and he helps explain the problems with this movement.

The deadening sameness of most of what I was hearing on records and in clubs began to get to me about five years ago—not coincidentally around the same time that *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* ran a long piece in which the writer Tom Piazza enthused about a flock of

musicians under the age of thirty who had recently been signed by major labels eager to find the next Wynton Marsalis.

Piazza opened with a look at the trumpeter Roy Hargrove wowing his elders on an unnamed Charlie Parker tune at Bradley's, a club in Greenwich Village. "Ten years ago, you could have stopped into every jazz club between Bradley's and Yankee Stadium and not found any 'youngsters' playing this way," Piazza claimed. "For a long time, young musicians were taught to play a hybrid form that was jazz in name only, often heavily electronic, with large infusions of funk and rock in it."

This was published in 1990, so "ten years ago" was 1980, a blink before Wynton and Branford Marsalis, when the most talked-about young musicians in Manhattan were Anthony Davis, George Lewis, Craig Harris, David Murray, and the like—nominal avant-gardists busy collaborating with poets, choreographers, and painters in a game attempt to erase the line that has traditionally separated jazz from the other performing arts. They had more on their minds than a Columbia Records contract and a week at the Village Vanguard. You didn't hear them at Bradley's, but maybe that spoke badly about Bradley's, not about them.

A few months later in 1990, *Time* ran a cover story on Wynton Marsalis (they were only seven or eight years late in getting around to him), with sidebars on most of Piazza's tadboppers. The whole package was headlined "The New Jazz Age," and a spate of such articles has followed in the years since. And they're still coming.

The problem with such "trend" pieces, quite apart from their refusal to consider that there might be young musicians shunned by major labels for not fitting the desired mold, is that they perpetuate the neocon myth that jazz evolved from bebop to aberrant fusion to bop again, with thirty-plus years of free and its offshoots not even counting as jazz. They also foster the illusion that nothing much was happening in jazz until the arrival of these neophobic youth, proof of which is that you hardly read a word about jazz in these magazines since the *last* time they published trend pieces on "the swing back to tradition" or whatever. (Francis Davis, "Introduction" in *Bebop and Nothingness* [New York: Schirmer Books, 1995])

Davis had more to say on the current jazz scene's youth craze in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Youth has become the most frequent topic of conversation in jazz. The talk concerns a crop of instrumentalists in their twenties and very early thirties, including the tenor saxophonists Joshua Redman and James Carter, the trumpeters Roy Hargrove and Nicholas Payton, the pianists Cyrus Chestnut and Jacky Terrasson, and the bassist Christian McBride, who are supposedly luring audiences their own age and younger to jazz. . . .

You could call it the Wynton Marsalis factor. Every ten years or so, for a different set of reasons each time, cultural trendsetters rally behind one musician with whom they sense a bond and who then comes to symbolize jazz to the mass media. Before Marsalis it happened in turn to Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Keith Jarrett. Marsalis improbably combined youthful arrogance with an obeisance to tradition that bordered on ancestor worship: Columbia's success in marketing him persuaded the other majors that the trick to selling jazz was to play up its genealogy and long history of esoteric appeal even while attempting to demystify it by means of trim young figures in designer suits. Though unprecedented in recent memory, the election of a *type* of musician to carry the banner for jazz was probably inevitable, given the difficulty of finding another performer as charismatic as Marsalis and given the long-standing preference of magazine editors for pieces on jazz "trends," as opposed to on individual musicians. . . .

The animosity with which a lot of jazz critics regard Marsalis owes something to his having usurped their authority. His pronouncements on jazz in interviews and in occasional byline articles carry more weight with readers than do those of any of us who write regularly about jazz (including even Albert Murray and Stanley Crouch, Marsalis's associates at Lincoln Center). And in turning thumbs down on most of the innovations in jazz since 1960—in vehemently insisting that it can't be jazz if it doesn't swing from beginning to end and explicitly refer to the blues—Marsalis has been telling disgruntled longtime listeners exactly what they were waiting to hear. . . .

Longtime jazz listeners, for their part, want jazz to be as it was in the fifties and early sixties, when a devotion to jazz was still a sign of being hip. (Francis Davis, "Like Young," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1996)

As for new listeners, Davis notes wryly, "People who have never really listened to jazz want it to go on sounding the way they've been led to believe it should, so that they'll be able to recognize it in case they ever chance to hear any"!

Tom Masland has observed that this youth orientation is simply a marketing strategy to attract young listeners.

Most fans are men in their 30s, 40s and 50s. But record companies want to pry college-age consumers, proven record buyers, away from mainstream popular music. So many have tried a tactic pioneered in rock and roll: creating stars. "I thought if I went after young artists at least that would pique the interest of the kids," says George Butler, a Columbia Records executive who takes credit for Marsalis's sudden rise. (Tom Masland, "Between Lions and Legends," *Newsweek*, February 24, 1992)

On the contrary, Francis Davis feels the industry's preoccupation with youth, aside from the artistic problems it presents, is not an effective way to bring in new listeners anyway.

There have always been young jazz musicians, but only lately has anyone made a fuss over them just for *being* young—instead of for auguring change. . . .

Are more young people listening to jazz because they can identify with [Joshua] Redman and the others? From what I've noticed, the answer is yes only if you count as "young" dating couples in their late twenties and early thirties. I've been to shows where the youngest people in the house were on the bandstand. In allowing itself to become so strongly identified with its past, jazz may be bargaining away its future. Positioning jazz as a sane acoustic alternative to raucous, mechanized pop might be an effective short-term sales strategy, but doesn't all this sanctimony about "tradition" and the emphasis on boilerplate

bebop send a message to teenagers and college students that jazz offers absolutely nothing of interest to them? (Francis Davis, "Like Young")

Another problem raised by this "youth-ism" is that fine musicians who are not so young any more are often ignored.

[There are] dozens of fabulously gifted jazz artists who have paid for the fact that they are dead center in their careers. They served their apprenticeships long ago. Without pandering to popular tastes, they have survived. And while the latest young lions work to master the earlier idioms of acoustic, straight-ahead jazz, these older players stand at the cutting edge of its evolution. This should be *their* time, and they know it. Says bass player Ray Drummond, 45, "There are some guys my age who feel not just cheated, but betrayed." (Tom Masland, "Between Lions and Legends")

As Masland points out, these middle-aged artists are making an acceptable living, but it seems highly unfair that they are making less than people with fewer credentials. Another problem has developed that affects musicians of all ages: most jazz musicians freelance with a variety of bands, because very few bands can offer their members full-time work. According to Roxane Orgill, this situation is economically sound, but she fears it may not be musically productive.

Opportunities for live performance are so limited that only a handful of the so-called young lions—including Mr. Hargrove, Joshua Redman, Jacky Terrasson and, of course, Wynton Marsalis—can provide enough work to keep a band together. For musicians who don't have major recording contracts, the struggle is even greater.

The effect on jazz could be disastrous, because without working bands, the music can't develop. Whereas a classical score sits on a shelf until a conductor takes it down and leads an orchestra through a performance, jazz comes out of an oral tradition. The music has to be played, and by people who are familiar enough with one another to go out on a limb, to experiment as Joe Oliver did with Louis Armstrong in the Creole Jazz Band and as Duke Ellington did with his orchestra,

John Lewis with the Modern Jazz Quartet and Miles Davis with his various quintets and sextets. (Roxane Orgill, "Fewer Gigs Means Fewer Jazz Bands," *New York Times*, August 6, 1995)

Down Beat, which debuted in 1934 and is the most widely read periodical on jazz internationally, has joined the chorus of concern about the scarcity of full-time bands. In the issues of March and May 1997, John Corbett published the first two installments of an ongoing series about this problem. It is entitled "Fanfare For the Working Band."