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Valuing British music - Jazz futures Transcript

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VALUING BRITISH MUSIC - JAZZ FUTURES

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Around 10 years ago I found myself in the old Vortex club in Stoke Newington, in the north of London. I was there at a sound check to meet a guitarist about some teaching work, and there playing in his band was one of my most talented former students, saxophonist Denys Baptiste. This was before his Mercury prize nominated album and after leaving the Guildhall jazz course. My teaching involvement with Denys had involved organising for Tim Whitehead to tutor him on sax, and getting him some gigs at the Brentford Watermans Arts Centre. In any case, it was great to see him and I asked him how his career was going. He updated me and then said 'but hey wouldn't it have been great if you had told us all how poor we'd be when we started work as jazz musicians?' Denys had been on a new course which I ran at what is now part of Brunel University, really designed as a foundation course for rock and pop musicians. My reply was that actually I had taught a course - aimed at the pop and rock market - all about how musicians made money, but two things had probably got in the way of Denys using that information at the time. One was that Denys - like many young musicians - chose back then not to engage with much enthusiasm with the business side of music. That will never change completely, but I believe that young musicians are now increasingly realising the essential need to understand how their career chances may be best achieved by managing their business affairs properly and actively. The second reason was that back then I only had the data from my book on the UK pop and rock music business that had been recently published in 1991, and there were virtually no sources of economic information available to young jazz musicians about their sector of the music economy. Indeed for a few years in the mid 1990's I used to go into the Royal Academy's jazz course for one lecture a year also to provide information on the music business for their graduating students, and this re-inforced the feeling that the rock and pop world assumed the necessity for a business element to a musicians' career, while in jazz education it was somehow tacked on and almost ignored. So in some ways today's lecture is my contribution to answering some of the questions I should have been able to raise and answer for Denys all those years ago.

On a personal note, today's lecture is also the first time since the age of 16 when I left my old school that I have had anything to do with the Worshipful Company of the Mercers' who run both Gresham College and St Pauls' School. As a teenager it seemed hugely ironic and irritating to me that even as late as the 1980's my school, where Chris Barber and Alexis Corner were educated, found it acutely embarrassing for my little unofficial school jazz band - the only official or unofficial one in the school - to rehearse in their music rooms. I am delighted to say that in the past decade the school now has a thriving jazz education scene and is particularly involved with the Bull's Head venue in Barnes - so the school, and Gresham College, have obviously left well behind the cultural anxieties of many parts of the British establishment in allowing jazz within their walls. Education - I believe - is crucial to the future health of the UK jazz economy, so I am delighted that the country's educational establishments have changed from when Melody Maker berated a number of public schools that had banned jazz from their grounds with the following tirade back in 1933 as a response to Louis Armstrong's first concerts in Britain. Melody Maker's August 5th 1933 editorial proclaimed:

'Prohibition is just about the most dangerous device that any institution can employ to check the conduct of a community. Therefore when certain of our British public schools issue fiats to their pupils barring hot jazz, refusing to allow it to be played in school precincts, it can lead to those dangers of insubordination exemplified in illegal whiffing of Woodbines behind the woodshed. Do the MA's of our public schools really believe that there is anything pernicious about it? Do they honestly think that Duke Ellington, a humble disciple of Delius, is a black ogre conspiring to demoralise the youth of Great Britain?

This nauseating and entirely unjustified Victorian prudery, this incredible intellectual snobbery, this ranting ignorance can only result in turning out from our schools large numbers of junior intellectual snobs and repressed ignoramuses.'

(Melody Maker editorial 5th August 1933 as quoted in Godbolt, J 'A History of Jazz in Britain' 191-50, p.95)

I am mindful that jazz as a topic, and my approach to musical enquiry, are outside of the norm for this college's lectures, and I am pleased that this afternoon I can introduce an approach to musical scholarship which seeks to harness social, economic and cultural arguments and data to inform and support the development of musical life in Britain today.

Before I go on, I must confess my desire to give this lecture is to bring Jazz and its community into another significant academic organisation, so that more people understand the music's value and potential for our country's culture. It is this enthusiasm only, and for my marginal personal involvement with it, that gave me this impetus. I am not a jazz or jazz education specialist, and I offer my comments as a general introduction to this subject - & I look forward to discussing how British jazz may evolve further with the jazz specialists on our seminar panel later today, and offer this lecture as a brief overview introduction to some of the most crucial issues for jazz in the UK.

My primary aim today is to paint a picture of where jazz has reached in Britain today- both as a cultural form and as an economic activity. I will focus in this lecture on its cultural form and in the seminar this afternoon on its economic activity.

The past 20 years of jazz in Britain are particularly important to this as they represent when younger generations of jazz musicians have benefited from the end of the challenge for the establishment & acceptance of jazz in mainstream British cultural life, and the dawning of a new time in which British jazz artists seem able to set out for themselves a distinctive, culturally informed and entrepreneurial agenda that has much to teach musicians in all genres about forging a life and career in music.

I present this in no way as a definitive history of British jazz. My concern is to show how academics can, and should I believe, look at an area of musical life - in this case jazz - from an economic and social perspective - and raise issues which can inform a wide range of interests - public policy makers, commercial organisations who invest in music, and musicians themselves; and through this information, my hope is that investment and career decisions can be properly based on accurate data and empirical evidence.

As an educator in universities this has been a constant theme for me. Indeed part of the impetus to create the report that I will use as the basis of the economic part of today's lecture was a discussion between myself, others at the University of Westminster, and Jazz Services, about the need for economic data on Jazz in the UK to support the proper career education of young jazz musicians in today's universities and conservatoires. This economic analysis of jazz is part of a long term development by the music industry in Britain to create analytical economic mapping information for government and other interested parties. I, along with colleagues, have played a role in creating some of these new pieces of economic data - particularly in mapping musicians' earnings in a report for the Musicians' Union ('Nice Work if You Can Get it') and for London Arts ('Valuing Music in London'). This latest report on jazz enables future researchers to draw on new and more detailed data for Jazz which has before been unavailable to inform wider debates about the state of music in Britain, and the place of Jazz within the UK's music scene.

One issue I hope to explore further in today's seminar is the impending centenary of Jazz in Britain. As I am looking at the future for jazz here, this seems an intriguing prospect as it allows us to focus our minds on what next may be achievable by British jazz musicians in the coming decade or so. It also allows us an important moment to reflect on the journey that jazz in Britain has taken.

I am going to begin my exploration of the music of Jazz in Britain with a brief sojourn into its opening 70 years of history. This brings to life the sounds of jazz and also opens up some key cultural issues about its position in British life. I, like all other scholars approaching the study of early jazz in Britain, am grateful to Jim Godbolt for his work in this field, in particular for his book and associated set of recordings 'A History of Jazz in Britain 1919-1950'.

Godbolt gives a full account of the early development of British jazz acts in variety theatres around 1918-19. As he records, the arrival of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band on the Adriatic liner berthed at Liverpool on 1st April 1919 provided the British press and then the public with their first opportunity to hear live what Godbolt calls 'jazz proper' (p.8). Of course, ragtime was already established in Britain before the ODJB, having been promoted by sheet music, gramophone recordings, and the establishment of ragtime bands such as Murray's Savoy Quartette at London's Savoy Hotel in 1915.

But the ODJB's stay in Britain until July 1920, and the details of their long residency at the Hammersmith Palais, firmly establishes that American performed jazz had certainly arrived in Britain by 1919. So, in 2019 - just 12 years from now - we have the prospect of its centenary, and I look forward to hearing from our seminar panellists later what that may or should mean in 21st century Britain.

For now, let's listen to the new international, American and white sound of jazz as recorded by the ODJB in London on April 16th 1919 with their rendition of 'At the Jazz Band Ball' - particularly remembering the impact on their contemporary audiences of their volume, energy, and the novelty of the drum kit in their line up - then known as trap drums - which horrified many listeners to this new music.

PLAY ODJB 'At the Jazz Band Ball'

The ODJB's time in Britain sets the agenda for many of the tensions and ambiguities we still live with in understanding and making jazz today. It is a music borne from the Black American experience, but developed - and at times shamelessly exploited - by white commercial musicians. Jazz began as an utterly foreign music to Britain, but one which has provided our musicians - along with their counterparts across Europe & beyond - with an international canvas on which they can express their personal and cultural identity.

This foreignness was immediately picked up in the press reports of the ODJB's early performances. According to H.O. Brunn in his 1961 book, 'The Story of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band' (Sidgwick & Jackson, p.126) the entire audience in 1919 for the ODJB was 'shouting and clapping in a manner that was peculiarly un-British' (as quoted in G.McKay 'Circular Breathing' Duke University Press 2005, p.20).

Indeed the very foreignness of jazz in Britain infused some of the best early attempts by British based musicians to create jazz for themselves. These were led in the 1920's and early 1930's by a 'racially and socially mixed quartet' (Godbolt p.77) of band leaders, namely the 'British-Jewish dance band leader... Bert Firman, a wealthy Cambridge University undergraduate from Manila... (Fred Elizade), an orchestral violinist from Wales... (Philip Lewis), and an Anglo-Irish, Chelsea born Cambridge undergraduate in Spike Hughes'. Between them they

produced bands and 100's of recordings, often including visiting American musicians, that gave British musicians working in the dance halls and hotels, the chance to perform and develop their version of jazz, and was the start of home made jazz in the UK. As one example of this, let's hear Birt Firman's Rhythmic Eight in their version of 'You Don't Like it, Not Much' recorded in December 1927 with an unknown but typically ironic British sentiment in the vocal performance and song title.

PLAY BIRT FIRMAN'S RHYTHMIC EIGHT 'You Don't Like It, Not Much'

In an hour it would be foolhardy of anyone - perhaps apart from the Reduced Shakespeare Company - to attempt to recount all that has subsequently happened in British Jazz in its first 90 or so years. But the themes were well set up until the post second world war period:

- jazz achieved the interest and attention of audiences, who were often attracted to international star performers and hit songs
- British musicians worked performing jazz as part of a portfolio career across a range of popular music styles

& most British jazz took as its lead the stylistic agenda set by American musicians

The fifties changed this pattern, and were a challenging and exciting time in British jazz. The challenge was two fold. First, there was a new popularity of forms of UK jazz - in particular the various forms of Traditional jazz that translated into chart hits on both sides of the Atlantic with figures such as Acker Bilk, Kenny Ball, Humphrey Lyttleton, George Melly, Chris Barber, George Webb & Chris Colyer amongst many who have formed the backbone of a very particular type of mainstream British jazz that still thrives as a professional activity for these older performers today.

This traditional and mainstream jazz has produced a form of the music which is distinctively British and sits at a particular and paradoxical place in our society - by the 1970's, for instance, it was at once the sound of middle age, but also sometimes the music of marching protest for various oppositional causes, while being often the entertainment music of choice for the upper middle classes at weddings, spawning a wholly unique form of 'dad dancing' portrayed perfectly in the film '4 Weddings and A Funeral', and seen still today, I believe, at Oxbridge May Balls and public school parties.

This is not entirely a surprising result once we remember that a significant number of the band leaders connected with this movement - Chris Barber and Humphrey Lyttleton immediately come to mind - were alumni of great English public schools, and indeed still now the Lyttleton persona on radio summons up the bright but ultimately conformist public school rebel. Perhaps the definitive symbol of this rebellious conformity were the regular appearances of trade jazzers - especially Kenny Ball - on the 1970's grandma of modern daytime TV chat, Pebble Mill at One. Nevertheless, these performers did produce new forms of jazz in Britain that have sustained and been popular, while generally not attracting positive critical artistic comment for many years beyond those for whom it is a passion. Lyttleton's and Barber's roles in bringing black American jazz and blues musicians to the UK must also be mentioned as a key element to the development of the British music scene in the 50's and 60's with a profound influence on the emergent blues scene with Alexis Corner - a Barber sideman in his early days - at its heart. Just to recall the music of this time, let's hear some early Humphrey Lyttleton from 1949 with 'Maple Leaf rag'

PLAY 'Maple Leaf Rag'.

The other challenge, of course, was rock and roll. Jazz in the fifties moved from being close and allied to the mainstream sound of popular music with the dance band and the traditional & mainstream jazz sounds, to becoming marginal to the new rock and roll mainstream of youth culture. George Melly's book 'Revolt into Style' comments and documents this, in part.

As a counterpoint, modern jazz established itself as an alternative oppositional culture, both to pop and to trad./mainstream jazz. The modernists - Ronnie Scott, John Dankworth et al. - created their form of the best of current US jazz practice, which essentially continued the initial approach of jazz musicians in Britain - to copy and develop the US styles and to attempt at a distance to keep pace with new jazz ideas and concepts. For many this meant joining the so-called 'Geraldo's navy' (booked on to liners by Geraldo's musician agency) as musicians on transatlantic cruise liners to get a brief few hours in Manhattan to hear the new jazz live and acquire records to study at home.

Let's hear Ronnie Scott performing, also in 1949, as a timely contrast to Humphrey Lyttleton. Here he is at the King George's Hall, London, and a year after this venue stopped hosting its well known regular hot jazz concerts. This live recording is arguably the first bebop concert in London, and the bill also featured John Dankworth at the same event. This is the Ronnie Scott Club Eleven BopTet with 'Wee Dot'.

Play 'Wee Dot'.

In a sense the founding of the Ronnie Scott's Club in 1959 in Gerrard St embodied two key characteristics that have defined the British jazz scene once rock and roll had become the predominant sound of popular music.

First in this was the effort of British modern jazzers to emulate their American heroes. Ronnie Scott's programming quickly moved from its original focus on encouraging British talent in its headline acts to the showcasing of the leading US stars with British players and the house band playing second fiddle - and being pleased to have that opportunity.

Secondly, the fact of jazz musicians founding a club of the type of Ronnie Scott's presents us with a vision of the artist which needs to be fostered and valued in our community today - demonstrating that individual entrepreneurialism, bravery and art are necessary bed fellows to make music outside of the popular mainstream possible on a long term basis .

Other British jazz musicians took this course in the 60's to 80's 'from Peter Ind with the Bass & Tenor Clefs, Stan Tracey with Steam Records and Gary Crosby with Janine Irons now with Dune Records. The decision of all these musicians to take their commercial careers into their own hands - usually borne of economic or cultural necessity - symbolises the opportunity for the future of British jazz today, and it is an essential lesson for all our musicians.

It took, for me, until the late 1950's and early 1960's for the modernists' scene to evolve, gain strength and for new artistic movements to become possible which set the scene and now provide much inspiration for today's young jazz musicians. As John Wickes records in his book 'Innovations in British Jazz - 1960 to the present' (Soundworld Press 1999) '(The 1960's) was. the time that British jazz emerged from the cocoon of respectful emulation with which it had wrapped itself out of a mistaken attitude of self-imposed second-bestness to the 'genuine article', which had to be American and, preferably , black.' (p.1)

Three key and interlinked movements developed from the 1960's into the 1970's which laid the basis for the jazz scene of today:

- the experimental and free jazz scene;
- the immigration to Britain of South African exile musicians
- the start of intercultural jazz music (as it was not known then or now) led by non-white British musicians.

Linked to this was the dawning of work in jazz education. This has been an essential element in strengthening the jazz economy, and thereby helping it to be sustainable. In particular, we must not forget the pioneering work in these decades beginning at Leeds College of Music, Newcastle College, Ealing College of Higher Education and several others, as well as the emergence of music workshops which established the basis for key organisations such as the John Stevens' led Community Music (now CM) in London. As I shall discuss later, education is a key means through which jazz in Britain can develop further, and the early, mainly regional, pioneers in this area warrant mention in this regard.

The three themes I identified just now are interconnected in so many ways, the simplest route inside them seems to me to focus on one individual - Joe Harriott - who went on to influence later generations and who connected in his own way into each of these themes. This is not to deny the importance of many others whom time means I cannot discuss today - and I am by no means claiming any necessary pre-eminence for Harriott, I am simply using him as a way to illustrate my three themes.

Harriott is acknowledged by an eclectic diversity of contemporary British musicians for his originality in forging new paths in free improvisation and exploring the cultural interconnectivity that in the 1960's was becoming part of British life. Harriott - along with a number of his significant sidemen - was amongst the generation of so-called Windrush Caribbean immigrants arriving in London in 1951 aged 23. The impact on British music, culture and life of this wave of immigration has been discussed at length by academics and commentators such as Paul Gilroy and Mike & Trevor Phillips elsewhere. Most pertinent here, is that Joe Harriott quickly established himself as an innovator and as a band leader who looked to his roots and his distinctive place in Britain for the inspiration and identity of his work. He singularly did not look to America as his model.

By 1960 Bob Dawbarn anticipated something of what Harriott was to bring to British jazz when writing in Melody Maker (quoted in McKay 'Circular Breathing' p.152):

'Some decidedly odd sounds have been issuing from London's Marquee Club recently. Patient tracking will reveal the Joe Harriott Quintet rehearsing what Joe claims to be something completely new in jazz...'

In fact this 'something completely new' was the beginning of free form and abstract improvisation in British jazz which split the loyalties of musicians and the jazz audience, and in many respects pre-dated in its originality the work of Ornette Coleman in the US as well as British artists working towards similar goals. The key album in Harriott's earlier work was 'Abstract' in 1963 - here he goes straight for formalism in his approach to deconstructing the accepted norms of jazz performance in order to single them out and play with their absence and presence in a new way. Harriott is clearest about this in his own words on the album. As he writes:

'The music we produce is... in the same idiom as modern jazz but much more varied. Of the various components comprising jazz today - constant time signatures, a steady four-four tempo, themes and predictable harmonic

variations, fixed division of the chorus by bar lines, and so on we aim to retain at least one in each piece...'

In some ways, this attempt to explain his musical aims has echoes for me of Arnold Schoenberg and his pupil Anton Webern and their attempts to re-conceive the language of early 20th century classical composition, particularly in their period of atonal music preceding 12 tone serialism during which their often miniature works enabled them to experiment with our expectations of harmony, rhythm and pitch within the classical music of the time.

The critical success of Harriott's work was quickly established with 'Abstract' being the first British jazz album to be given a 5 star rating in America's top jazz magazine, 'Down Beat'.

As an example of Harriott's deconstruction of jazz, let's hear track 2, 'Shadows' on which Bobby Orr, the band's drummer, possibly for the first time in jazz, purposely relinquishes the drums' traditional time keeping role for one of conversational interplay.

The originality of this approach - and particularly the independence from American ideas - has been maintained by members of the band such as bassist Coleridge Goode writing in his own biographical book 'Bass lines: a life in jazz' He tells us:

'I don't think there was any connection between what Ornette did and what we were doing because his music then was strictly a solo effort. It was a soloist playing free, not a group playing free...' (Goode & Cotterrell 2002 P.151 - as quoted in G.Mckay p.155)

Let's hear the sound of this new British free jazz phenomenon, with 'Shadows':

Play 'Shadows'

Other key British musicians also pursued an agenda which looked within Britain for their inspiration, like Michael Garrick and his work with 1960's poets, and the multiplicity of musicians who developed free and improvised jazz into the international force it is now - John Stevens, Evan Parker, John Surman and many more. These musicians who were emerging into their prime in the 1960's have taken jazz inspired improvisatory music and techniques into a realm of its own - somewhere between jazz and contemporary classical music. Through this they have forged a British and European voice in jazz separate to the mainstream American tradition, but very much of interest to audiences particularly in Europe, often recorded on the ECM label. This new sound has embraced electronics since the seventies and just as a brief taste of this let's hear one example of this, from multi instrumentalist and composer John Surman and his 1972 album 'Westering Home'. This is an extract from 'JYNJYG'

Play 'JYNJYG'

Also at this time pianist Stan Tracey, amongst others, looked to home ground for inspiration for their music, rather than seeking out themes and models from America. Tracey's setting of Dylan Thomas' 'Under Milkwood' is probably one of the most sustainably popular British Jazz albums ever - if anyone has figures for the best selling British jazz album, it would be great to know; but according to my informal straw pole of specialist shops, this seems to be amongst the best long term sellers - because of the music of course, but also perhaps because of its connection with a classic of modern British radio literature.

While these and others shared some elements of Harriott's approach, none of them moved as early as Harriott into the next crucial phase of his artistic development - his collaboration with Indian violinist John Meyer to produce Indo-Jazz Fusions in the mid to late 1960's. As George McKay simply sums up, in their 3 albums 'the black Atlantic met the Commonwealth in the old heart of the Empire' ('Circular Breathing' G. McKay p. 158)

This was a new idea, according to Coleridge Goode, inspired at first by experiments of Indian and Western classical violinists John Mayer and Yehudi Menuhin, which turned into a venture which combined jazz and Indian classical music into a fused double quintet led by Mayer and Joe Harriott. The group first performed in Chichester in 1966 and subsequently produced three albums which - with their bringing together of British jazz musicians, and musicians from the Commonwealth both from the Caribbean and Asian sub continent, produced a unique space in which a new cultural identity in Britain was being improvised and composed - this is the identity we now inhabit, the identity which should inform our definitions of what we value in our art and culture, the identity which here in London is most important where our population is at least a third non white, mainly families of immigrants from the Commonwealth. Because of this, these Indo-Jazz fusions mean something different culturally to the earlier Ornette Coleman 1961 Indian-jazz experiments in the US. This is a peculiarly British exploration of and for identity - one that we are still embarked on and which in part makes our modern country unique and the role of jazz within our musical life quite special.

Let's hear one short track, from the band's second album, Indo-Jazz Fusions as an illustration of the sound of this new British identity in the making, if we can call it that. Here is 'Gana'.

PLAY 'GANA.'

Time does not allow me to explore other key immigrant groups such as Louis Moholo, Dudu Pukwana, Harry

Beckett and the various other South African immigrants whose music also added to the emerging and fluid sounds of jazz being played to great acclaim in the 1960's & onwards by immigrant and native British jazz musicians.

But this interconnectivity between jazz musicians who immigrated to Britain and native local players, created in jazz the model for what Robert Kwami, African music specialist and music education academic from London's Institute of Education, has in recent years championed as intercultural music - a music where the separate identities of musical traditions are respected and played with to create a new and distinctive fusion of their parts, retaining the cultural identity and integrity of each. How strange that jazz - an American music - should provide British musicians with the canvas on which to paint this new vision of our country's identity.

By the 1980's and into the early 1990's jazz in the UK had faced considerable economic challenges meaning some musicians were unable to sustain careers full time - but new voices were emerging. Jazz education also became a significant force - not just the Guildhall Jazz Summer School and the Postgraduate course led by the multi talented Scott Stroman; but at the Royal Academy of Music, Graham Collier had established the undergraduate jazz programme, while numerous other conservatoires, notably Trinity College of Music, had produced jazz programmes and ensembles. This education work also mushroomed for numerous jazz musicians into schools' workshops and a plethora of summer schools, short courses and adult education initiatives. As Mike Garrick recalls these education initiatives provided an essential additional income to musicians who could and were interested in doing the work, although he had some personal reservations on its long term impact:

'In the 60's and 70's there were music advisors working for counties who would book you as educators - I worked for one man in Hampshire for ten years then when he moved to Manchester where I worked for him for another thirteen. He was great. In a way though jazz education doesn't always help a declining scene because it trains more musicians to play better younger, they obviously get aspirations to play in public and the number looking for work increases.' (quoted in Pearson, m 'Conversations in Jazz' p.182)

Of particular importance was John Stevens' work in developing Community Music, now known as CM. His approach stood out from everything else going on in music education at the time as it was rooted in the creative essentials of artistic practice, not in the baggage of instrumental technique or genre or repertoire studies. Here John created a method for empowering musicians how to improvise, compose and perform, and for showing music tutors how to work in a genuinely creative way with young musicians that aims to enable them to design and carry through all aspects of their artistic work without pre-determining the outcome. I am delighted to say that with the consent of the Stevens' family my company Rockscool are re-publishing his seminal text for this work, 'Search & Reflect', later this year.

Given that Courtney Pine and later the Asian Dub Foundation came through CM, there is little to doubt the efficacy of John's approach, and it is only a pity his methods - rather than those of the classically minded music education professors of York and London Universities - did not become the orthodoxy in school music lessons. But that is another story?

Three groups of musicians emerged around the 1980's & 90's who collectively have set a new entrepreneurial agenda for jazz in the 21st century. They are now musicians aged 40 and 50 plus, who are the established mainstream of the UK jazz scene. These musicians were often either in or clustered around three bands, which were:

The Jazz Warriors
Loose Tubes
The Guest Stars

Between them these bands and their members have spawned a plethora of new sounds and initiatives in the UK jazz world that sets the scene for a next generation to thrive. Loose Tubes and the Jazz Warriors also allow us to track how the ideas & practices of the older musicians we have just discussed were carried forward a further generation and have been re-articulated and expanded upon. The Guest Stars present an important fulcrum around which a group of women instrumentalists, rather than single performers such as Barbara Thompson for example, could channel their creativity and sustain a long term career in jazz. Given that women make up only 14% of jazz musicians (with the vast majority being singers) currently working according to our recent Jazz Services survey, their significance seems to me to grow the longer we await bands to take on their mantle today.

The first of these groups to emerge was Loose Tubes. This was a fresh new and optimistic antidote to the difficulties of the jazz scene in the 70's. Many in the mainstream jazz media welcomed Loose Tubes as an exuberant breath of new vision and vitality, and at one point the only point of critical dispute was just how many musicians played in Loose Tubes? At one point Dave Gelly - in the liberal minded Observer - counted 22, agreed with by the Face and NME; the more conservative Telegraph magazine cried there were only 20, also confirmed by the London Evening Standard; while the Guardian went for the middle ground along with the Wire of 21.

However many there were in the band on any one night, Loose Tubes cut a new agenda in British Jazz in their organisation, music, and musical achievements. They started as a rehearsal band under the auspices of Graham Collier - who would lead the Royal Academy of Music's jazz courses - but quickly struck out on their own to create a new type of big band cutting across conventions - playing music they wrote themselves, standing in a V

shape on stage so everyone could see the cues without a band director, being very willing and excited to dance in and around the audience, playing with the conventional boundaries of what a concert or music theatre experience may normally have been; even allowing a different band member each night to choose the set list - they experimented with new forms of leadership and group expression, to the delight of their audiences, and brought a new energy which attracted the Arts Council to back their tours & compositions, and to the BBC to invite them to perform as the first jazz orchestra at the classical Proms in 1987.

Nearly 70 years after the ODJB arrived in the UK, British made jazz was becoming accepted in the halls of culture, both in the BBC and in the country's music conservatoires - and Loose Tubes were both the products of that new establishment (having studied and sometimes taught on these courses), and the recipients of governmental and BBC patronage.

Loose Tubes drew an eclectic array of musical influences from all areas of jazz history and from African music. They shared the group's composition work between them, often in the early days lead by Steve Berry and Django Bates, but also shared with John Eacott, Eddie Parker and numerous others. These players' subsequent careers across jazz, pop, and music education have infused the British music scene since the Loose Tubes chapter closed in the late 1980's. They founded their own record label which released the band's albums and recordings by group members for a time. There was controversy that Loose Tubes were in their first incarnations solely white and male - but as we shall see later in our discussion of the jazz economy, this was at the time quite reflective of the jazz scene then and to some extent now, and there was never to my knowledge any evidence of anything other than a positive attitude from Loose Tubes to issues of diversity. To get some sense of the vibrancy of their playing let's hear a track commissioned with Arts Council support on their third and last album, with the ironically titled Arts Council supported piece 'Accepting Suites from Strangers' by Django Bates with solos from trombonist Ashley Slater, flautist Eddie Parker and saxophonist Iain Ballamy, and percussion from Thebe Lipere of South Africa who had joined the group in 1986 having been asked to be a member in the early days. While the singing on this track is not necessarily typical of a Loose Tubes composition, its attitude exemplifies the band's positive and joyous approach to making music. The careers of the Loose Tubes' members have gone on to be a powerful force amongst contemporary British jazz performers as well as in education both in jazz with figures such as Chris Batchelor at Middlesex University, and John Eacott at Westminster University, and many others contributing to degree, Summer and short courses all over the country as regular tutors.

Play 'Accepting Suites from Strangers'

The next group of artists to discuss are the Jazz Warriors and a group of predominantly black British musicians led by Courtney Pine. Amongst these was also Gary Crosby, inspiration behind some of the key young players emerging in the past 5 years or so such as Denys Baptiste and Soweto Kinch. Gary recalled to Mike Pearson in 2004 his memories of how the Jazz Warriors and Loose Tubes changed British jazz in the 1980's:

'Prior to the Jazz Warriors, I don't think the British jazz scene of the 1970's reflected a multi-racial society so at least we've done that... At that time most of the Warriors, although not me, were in their early 20's and most of the guys from Loose Tubes were too. You're all looking to make a crust, there wasn't a lot to feed everybody so the obvious thing was to find people's weaknesses and complain about them' - as he refers, perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, to the controversy about Loose Tubes' predominant white membership.

The Jazz Warriors were formed as the big band project of the Abibi Jazz Arts organisation in London, Abibi being taken from the Tioi language of Ghana and being the word for Africa. Led by Courtney Pine in 1985 the Warriors helped launch and attracted to it a host of young Black British musicians who were inspired by Pine and the young Wynton Marsalis to establish a strong independent Black British voice in jazz - and one which attracted the backing of the Arts Council and of major record labels. As Pine asserts in 1986 in his first cover article in *The Wire* magazine:

'There will be a black British style because a lot of guys getting into it here come from the reggae thing or the calypso thing, which is very different from the New York musicians. A sound will evolve.' (quoted in McKay p.165)

One particular force in this regard was the young pianist prodigy Julian Joseph who returned from studies at Berklee and playing with Branford Marsalis, and released his debut album on East West records in 1991. Since then he has established himself as the highest profile Black British pianist, with long running BBC radio work alongside other projects including promoting London as a cultural ambassador and being the jazz face of the most conservative of Britain's examination boards, the ABRSM, and its jazz piano syllabus launched a few years ago.

A further factor in the Warriors was the leadership within the group not only of Pine, but also Tanzanian trombonist and composer Fayez Virji - further re-inforcing the multi ethnicity of the group's heritage and signalling this was a new sound in Britain that took America as an example, that wanted to learn the lessons of the hardships of previous generations of British black musicians such as Joe Harriott, and wanted to engage the attention of the mainstream music audience through the support of major labels, and Arts Council funded tours so that a more sustainable future for this music could be achieved.

Let's hear the Jazz warriors in full flight in their 1987 Island records recording - this is 'Saint Maurice' by Courtney

Pine:

Play 'St Maurice'

The third group to emerge at this time was the all woman Guest Stars, featuring a group of sisters both literally and also in the genuine struggle to establish a place in the jazz community for women instrumentalists. They went on to be one of the most successful British jazz groups of the 1980's touring internationally playing an average of 200 gigs per year and headlining the Blue Note Club in New York, along with recording three albums. Their members have continued working together and with jazz and rock musicians consistently since the band's break up in 1988. Perhaps Deirdre Cartwright as the guitarist has made greatest impact on the music scene with her own albums and her promotion activities through the Blow the Fuse club in which she promoted established and emerging jazz bands, as well as her fronting of the BBC Rockschoool series and, for me, writing the Guitar syllabus for our Rockschoool grade exams which reach 10's of thousands of musicians in 20 countries around the world each year.

Like Loose Tubes, the Guest Stars took their inspiration from a multiplicity of musical genres. Indeed John Fordham wrote in the Guardian in 1989 that this interest in a broad range of music may be something that at the time typified the work of many women jazz instrumentalists. In an article about trombonist Annie Whitehead, also associated with the Guest Stars' circle, he writes that:

'Women instrumentalists have become more visible, more audible, in the British jazz world... What unites them as much as their membership of a growing force of British high class women instrumentalists in what has until recently been a man's profession, is the originality and independence that they have developed through exposure to a mixed musical culture, in which definitions of musical differences have never made much sense.' (quoted in McKay, G p.286)

Because of their stylistic range, it is almost an impossibility to sum up the Guest Stars' sound in one example of their music, so as one element in their diverse work, let's hear one of Deirdre Cartwright's 1983 tracks from 1983, 'I Know I Know', with some of their trademark sounds - an African and South American fusion in their rhythm sections, their group backing vocal harmonies, and the space for members of the group to solo over highly danceable music.

Play 'I Know I Know'

Also important to the Guest Stars story is their management. Debbie Dickenson has been a significant role model for women wanting to establish a career in the business of jazz, and other areas of music, particularly in recent years since she has taken on the development of the music business courses at City University in London after managing the Guest Stars' career. So the impact of the Guest Stars continues both in providing musical opportunities for musicians in the activities of their remaining members in the jazz world and also empowering aspiring musicians and music business professionals with the opportunity to learn their craft.

By the early to mid 1990's this upsurge of young British jazz talent with a high media profile had encouraged major record labels to invest in a slew of jazz artists for their roster - Guy Barker, Julian Joseph, Tommy Smith, Andy Sheppard and Courtney Pine to name but a few.

As we report in the Value of Jazz in Britain, that has now changed - there are very few jazz artists with major label backing - and those that have it are almost all perceived and marketed as cross over - Jamie Cullum, Clare Teal, the ex-soap star actor Ray Quinn, or the high camp of the Puppini Sisters - to stretch a point. The high profile of some of these media friendly jazz stars may not suit some purists - but that misses the point. These stars are the window into jazz for a new and future audience for jazz. They may sing along to a Jamie Cullum track, full of classic jazz style and backed by some excellent British jazz performers such as Geoff Gascoyne, but what they are being attracted to is the idea of jazz. Stars such as Cullum need to be cherished by the jazz establishment as their spokesperson for the art, rather than derided for having sold out - he is just being who he wishes and is able to be. Let's hear Jamie as an example of the modern cross over jazz style - here is the jazz-pop cross over star singing on his 2005 album, with Geoff Gascoyne arranged strings. Here is '7 days to Change your Life'.

Play 'Oh God'

This may seem reason to be despondent, but the difference between now and other times in jazz's British history, is there is now a basis of an infrastructure for the music, and mechanisms for making new jazz available and appealing to audiences, that jazz musicians can and do effectively sustain their careers without having to rely on the social or commercial patronage either of government or major labels

Perhaps the most exciting prospect we see now is the development of musician inspired jazz labels that present young British jazz to a wide audience with some support from the Arts Council. Janine Irons and Gary Crosby's Dune Records is a classic example of this with its recent success in bringing contemporary young artists through Tomorrow's Warriors and onto individual albums to great critical acclaim. Denys Baptise was the first of their artists to be nominated for the Mercury Music prize raising the profile of his and their work to a broader public; and since then the urban sounds of Soweto Kinch have emulated Denys' lead. But Soweto have brought

a genuine urban sound into his jazz, playing on his album with the conventions of a band leader introducing and crediting his band and all the people who have influenced and helped him. The sound melds rap, hip hop and jazz in a special and very British - indeed London - style which is reaching out to a wide international audience. As we are approaching the end of the lecture, let's hear the final track on Soweto's Mercury prize nominated album 'Conversations', this is 'Outro':

Play 'Outro'

As important as Soweto's recent success is, so is the development of Dune as a label and force in music management. Here we have a black and woman led British jazz label which is setting the pace in jazz innovation in the UK, but is also going about its business in a clear and strategic long term fashion which aims to sustain itself as a commercial enterprise and the careers of its artists by supporting each other in their albums, tours and other work. Gary Crosby, the other driving force behind Dune, set out his agenda some years ago in his interview with Mike Pearson. Beginning by talking about audiences, he says:

'I can't waste any more time complaining about those who don't want to come or those who don't want to let me in. We have to find ways to attract them - it's no good going on about the BBC not doing enough broadcasts. I've been hearing that for 30 years, we have to make them notice us, or make our own programmes, publish our own magazines. Otherwise we're going round in circles... It's not good enough to just say 'well I play music' and look for what a marketing department can do for you... Thinking ahead I'm aiming for something with my company and my record label. I have to be positive and say 'yes things can change' but I think there has to be a change from within us as well. We have to realise that just as Pepsi-Cola wants to outsell Coca-Cola we have to think along those lines too. I know some of the guys would resist that and hear something sinister in what I'm saying but there's only so much you can get from outside funding. There are only so many times you can play to halls with 30 or 40 people and expect a promoter to take you back next year.' (as quoted in Pearson, M p.53-54)

This is just the sort of brave entrepreneurialism that all music - not just jazz - outside the most popular mainstream requires. New technologies such as the internet, My Space, and huge on line retailers like Amazon now present a combined music market which allows for music to be sold on line, for the 'long tail' of music beyond the mainstream and in niche markets to be stocked by on line retailers and sold to the audiences who wish to find them, whether they are near or far to a specialist record store or an artist's gig, and My Space and other internet sites - especially the artist's own site - provide for a great opportunity to sell cd's and promote all the activities that artists are undertaking.

In our seminar this afternoon I look forward to presenting further details of the Value of Jazz in Britain Report and discussing with leading professionals in the jazz world some ideas which come from this report for the development of jazz in Britain.

For today, I hope you have a picture of how far jazz has come in Britain in its first 90 years in Britain - from being a foreign music to Britain, it is now one which has developed so our jazz musicians can reflect and re-present to us a singular vision of what it is to be British in the 21st century.

I believe jazz is a sector of music that has often lacked a strong economy, commercial expertise and governmental subsidy, but now the combination of the premium demanded for live music, the building of a jazz education infrastructure, and new technology presents the jazz community with a real prospect of creating long lasting career opportunities for musicians and business people in British jazz. That will be the subject of our seminar this afternoon. I hope that many of you will join us for that. Thank you and Good afternoon.

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Wickes, J 'Innovations in British Jazz Vol. 1 1960-80' Soundworlds Press Chelmsford 1999
York, N 'The Rock file' Oxford University Press 1991

Discography (in the order of playing in the lecture)

Various artists 'Jazz in Britain 1919-1950' Proper records 2005
(ODJB, Birt Firman, Humphrey Lyttleton,
Ronnie Scott's Club 11 Bopstet)

Joe Harriott Quintet	'Abstract' Redial/Polygram 1998
John Surman	'Westering Home' Future Music/Island records 1995/1972
Joe Harriott/John Meyer	'Indo-Jazz fusions II' Redial/Polygram 1998
Loose Tubes	'Open Letter' EG Records 1998
Jazz Warriors	'Out of Many, One People' Universal 1987
The Guest Stars	'Selected Recording 1983-87' Blow the Fuse Records 2004
Jamie Cullum	'Catching Tales' Universal 2005
Soweto Kinch	'Conversations with the unseen' Dune Records 2005

Tracks Played in lecture:

Original Dixieland Jazz Band	'At the Jazz Band Ball'
Birt Firman's Rhythmic Eight	'You don't like it, Not much'
Humphrey Lyttleton & his Band	'Maple Leaf rag'
Ronnie Scott's Club 11 Bopstet	'Wee Dot'
Joe Harriott Quintet	'Shadows'
John Surman	'J'YNYG'
Joe Harriott/John Meyer Double Quintet	'Gana'
Loose Tubes	