

## Principal musicians cited

### **Armstrong, Louis; trumpet, vocal**

b. New Orleans, 1901; d. Queens, New York, 1971

An outstanding pioneer in jazz and popular entertainment, Armstrong set new standards in instrumental style and technique and vocal style and played the single most important role in the emergence of the jazz soloist. From small groups in the 1920s in Chicago (most influential of which were the ones which made the Hot Five and Hot Seven records) he turned to fronting a swing band in the 1930s and early 1940s. In 1947 he returned to the small-group format with his All Stars, remaining with them for the rest of his life. Later years also saw the recording of several popular song hits, most notably 'Hello Dolly' and 'Wonderful World'.

### **Basie, Count (William Basie); piano, bandleader**

b. Red Bank, New Jersey, 1904; d. Hollywood, 1984

Basie took over leadership of Bennie Moten's Kansas City-based orchestra in 1934 and, with the help of arrangers such as Eddie Durham, turned it into one of the leading bands of the swing era. His own piano style, spare and understated, was the basis of a simple, exciting, riff-based sound that also featured outstanding soloists such as Lester Young and Dickie Wells. Though adversely affected by the decline of big bands in the later 1940s he came back with a new band in the 1950s and continued to record and tour with it till his death.

### **Bechet, Sidney; clarinet, soprano saxophone**

b. New Orleans, 1897; d. Paris, 1959

With Armstrong, Bechet played a major role in altering the nature of early jazz to provide a key role for the soloist. A more passionate player than Armstrong (with whom he performed only rarely), Bechet was also a more volatile individual and this, combined with lengthy spells in Europe (especially France, where he was idolised by fellow musicians), resulted in less recognition in the USA. He was the first jazz musician to master the soprano saxophone.

### **Beiderbecke, Bix; cornet, piano**

b. Davenport, Iowa, 1903; d. New York, 1931

Influenced by Armstrong, Beiderbecke created his own distinctive style, with a clear, luminous tone and relaxed approach. He became known through his recordings with the Wolverines (Chicago 1924), later moving into bigger ensembles such as Paul Whiteman's orchestra. One of the few early white musicians for whom black musicians had a high regard, his health was undermined by alcoholism.

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**Bell, Graeme; piano, bandleader**

b. Melbourne, Australia, 1914

A very influential figure in the popularisation of jazz in Australia, Bell was also central to the revival of traditional jazz in post-war Europe. In 1947–8 he and his band performed for four months in Czechoslovakia, inaugurating a jazz movement there, and for eight months in England, where their approach to jazz as a dance music contrasted sharply with the more intellectual attitude that had grown up in the jazz record clubs. Other international tours followed in later decades, during which Bell and his All-Star band were based in Sydney.

**Blakey, Art; drums, bandleader**

b. Pittsburgh, 1919, d. New York, 1990

The Jazz Messengers of 1947 was the first version of a group with which Blakey's name became inseparably linked. From the mid-1950s on, the Messengers played a fierce hard bop, driven along by Blakey's powerful drumming, with its innovative use of high-hat and snare. The Messengers also provided opportunities for a great many young musicians beginning their careers, from Keith Jarrett and Wayne Shorter to Wynton Marsalis and Terence Blanchard.

**Bolden, Buddy; cornet**

b. New Orleans, 1877; d. Jackson, Louisiana, 1931

The one inescapable figure from the period before jazz was recorded (though legend has it he made a cylinder recording), Bolden led a small band that performed in New Orleans, in dance halls and in the open air, from 1895 to 1907. His cornet playing was highly celebrated locally for its excitement and attack, and he gave prominence also to blues and 'slow drags'. He was committed to a mental institution in 1907.

**Braxton, Anthony; alto saxophone, multi-instrumentalist, composer**

b. Chicago, 1945

Braxton joined the black avant-garde cooperative organisation, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), in Chicago in 1966 and was influenced by experimentalism, multi-instrumentalism and the group's social ideals. Working in succeeding years in both Europe and the USA he developed a career as a composer alongside that of soloist and group leader. In all roles he was frequently considered highly controversial. In his compositions he developed an original form of diagrammatic notation, in order to express (among other things) his strong sense of synaesthesia.

**Brubeck, Dave; piano**

b. Concord, California, 1920

The classically trained Brubeck became a household name with his Quartet's recording of the 5/4 tune 'Take Five' in 1959. The melody was by the group's saxophonist, Paul Desmond, but, like Brubeck's own 'Blue Rondo à la Turk', it reflected Brubeck's interest in the challenges of unusual time signatures and metres, and his lifelong attraction to serious composition. The Brubeck Quartet of the 1950s and 1960s

avoided developments such as hard bop and free jazz and was especially popular with an audience on the North American college circuit and at festivals. As well as forming subsequent quartets, some with his sons, Brubeck produced numerous compositions from the 1970s on, including cantatas, oratorios and works for jazz ensembles.

**Carter, Benny; alto saxophone, trumpet, arranger**

b. New York, 1907

Carter became a noted arranger for Fletcher Henderson's orchestra in 1930 before forming his own orchestra in 1932. From 1935–8 he lived in London, where he wrote arrangements for the BBC Dance Orchestra and was influential in the development of jazz in Britain and Europe. In subsequent years he wrote and arranged music for several films and helped to open Hollywood up for black musicians. Noted for his versatility and for the elegance of his performing style, Carter's outstanding achievement was his part in the creation of the big-band sound.

**Christian, Charlie; guitar**

b. Texas, 1916; d. New York, 1942

A pioneer of the amplified guitar, Christian first performed on the instrument in Oklahoma in 1937. In 1939 he joined Benny Goodman in Los Angeles, before coming to New York in 1940. His recording of 'Solo Flight' with Goodman in 1941 was one of several marking the arrival of the guitar as a solo instrument. Christian's ability to create long improvised single-note lines for chorus after chorus was captured on a live recording of 'Swing to Bop' at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem. He died of tuberculosis.

**Coleman, Ornette; saxophone**

b. Fort Worth, Texas, 1930

From a background in rhythm-and-blues bands in the west and southwest of the USA, Coleman became one of the pioneers of free jazz, playing a major role in creating a form of the music that departed radically from conventional structures and harmonic changes. Especially influential were the albums, *The Shape of Jazz To Come* (1959) and *Free Jazz* (1960), involving a new approach to collective performance.

**Coltrane, John; tenor and soprano saxophones**

b. Hamlet, North Carolina, 1926; d. New York, 1967

Coltrane's early career in big bands and rhythm-and-blues groups did little to suggest the hugely influential musician he was to become. His first major exposure came in two spells with the Miles Davis band in 1955–7 and 1958–60. He formed his own group in 1960 (with, among others, McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones) and in the period from then till his death it built an international reputation as a supremely innovative ensemble. Coltrane himself combined an unprecedented technical mastery and improvisatory imagination, often expressed in overwhelming performances, with a quiet spirituality. His playing moved from being dominated by complex harmonic changes through his famous 'sheets of sound' to a style based on motivic variation.

**Corea, Chick; piano**

b. Chelsea, Massachusetts, 1941

Following early involvement with Latin-style groups, Corea joined Miles Davis in 1968 at the beginning of the jazz-rock movement, leaving in 1970 to form the avant-garde group Circle with Dave Holland and Barry Altschul. His own interests lay in a more lyrical, Latin-influenced approach with a wider market, and in 1971 he formed the first of three Return to Forever groups (the third, which included a string ensemble, disbanded in 1980). In the later 1980s he formed his Akoustic and Elektric bands.

**Davis, Miles; trumpet, bandleader**

b. Alton, Illinois, 1926; d. Santa Monica, California, 1991

A dominant figure in jazz for over forty years, Davis was also remarkable for his persistent interest in radical stylistic change and experiment. Switching from the particular challenges of bop to a smoother, more sonorous approach (dubbed ‘the cool’) in the late 1940s, he went on in the mid-1950s to make a series of seminal recordings, with his own quintet and with the orchestra of Gil Evans, that are especially notable for his own intense but relaxed, spare but complex trumpet playing. In the late 1950s, especially on what became perhaps his best-known album, *Kind of Blue* (1959), he explored a modal approach. Following the rise of rock in the 1960s, Davis was at the forefront of jazz-rock experimentation, on albums such as *Bitches Brew* (1969). In later years he continued to explore new possibilities, while also revisiting earlier styles.

**Ellington, Duke (Edward Kennedy Ellington); piano, bandleader, composer**

b. Washington, DC, 1897; d. New York, 1974

In one of the most productive careers in jazz, Ellington led his celebrated orchestra for almost fifty years. His first major opportunity came in 1927–31, when his band was the resident ensemble at Harlem’s Cotton Club, providing atmospheric cabaret and dance music for the white clientele. Experimenting with sonorities and structures alongside popular songs and big-band numbers, he found himself lauded in Europe as a composer in the early 1930s, and continued from then on to develop new conceptions of the jazz piece, especially through a long series of suites, from *Reminiscing in Tempo* (1935) and *Black Brown and Beige* (1943; subtitled ‘a tone poem to the American Negro’), to the *New Orleans Suite* of 1971. In later life an underlying spirituality showed itself more openly in a series of ‘sacred concerts’. Central to Ellington’s approach to composition and arrangement was an awareness of the qualities and timbral character of each of his musicians, a large number of whom remained with him for many years.

**Evans, Bill; piano**

b. Plainfield, New Jersey, 1929; d. New York, 1980

Evans was a member of the Miles Davis group who recorded the landmark modal album, *Kind of Blue*, in 1959. For much of the rest of his career he recorded with his own trio, forming a particularly creative relationship with bassist Scott LaFaro. In this context Evans developed his highly influential style, introducing greater lyricism and reflectiveness alongside rhythmic intricacy and innovative voicings.

**Evans, Gil; bandleader, arranger**

b. Toronto, 1912; d. Cuernavaca, Mexico, 1988

Evans came to attention as arranger for Claude Thornhill in the 1940s. His interest in the subtle timbres of what became known as a 'cool' sound was a major contribution to Miles Davis's *Birth of the Cool* recordings of 1948–50. Evans teamed up with Davis again in the late 1950s to record a set of albums (including *Porgy and Bess*) in which his highly textured, chromatic orchestral sound perfectly sets off Davis's solo trumpet.

**Fitzgerald, Ella; vocal**

b. Newport News, Virginia, 1917; d. Beverly Hills, California, 1996

Considered by many to be the first female vocal equivalent of virtuoso instrumentalists, Fitzgerald established herself as a big-band singer in the 1930s, before going solo in 1942. Her performances at Jazz at the Philharmonic concerts, from 1946, were celebrated for her scat singing. Beginning in the 1950s a series of 'songbooks', featuring interpretations of songs by major songwriters performed in a style merging jazz and popular singing, brought her to a wider audience.

**Garbarek, Jan; tenor saxophone**

b. Mysen, Norway, 1947

In his recording career Garbarek has been particularly closely associated with the German-based label ECM and its owner Manfred Eicher, who shares a liking for a spacious concept of recording sound, influenced by the atmospherics of Scandinavia, and an interest in combining jazz, classical and ethnic music. Garbarek played with Keith Jarrett and worked also with Don Cherry, Chick Corea and George Russell among many others. By the late 1980s he was widely regarded as the leading tenor saxophonist in Europe.

**Gillespie, Dizzy; trumpet, bandleader**

b. Cheraw, South Carolina, 1917; d. Englewood, New Jersey, 1993

From an early career in big bands, including Cab Calloway's, Gillespie became one of the young generation experimenting, mainly in New York, with the new style (which Gillespie himself may have christened), bebop, or bop. Throughout his subsequent career he led both small groups and big bands, often mingling bop approaches with Afro-Cuban rhythms. His trademark image, in which he performs with puffed-out cheeks on a trumpet whose bell is raised at an angle of 45 degrees (the result of an accident to an instrument in 1953), became widely recognised around the world. His trumpet style was extrovert and dramatic, with a brilliant sound.

**Goodman, Benny; clarinet, bandleader**

b. Chicago, 1909; d. New York, 1986

Following an early career in California, Chicago and New York, Goodman formed his own band in 1934. The band became famous nationwide due to its radio broadcasts. Particularly popular with the young, it proved one of the most exciting bands of the swing era, earning Goodman himself the title 'King of Swing'. Noted for his discipline,

Goodman achieved a new level of recognition for jazz with a Carnegie Hall concert in 1938. A virtuoso instrumentalist, he was the first jazz musician to venture successfully into performing works from the classical repertory.

**Hancock, Herbie; piano, composer**

b. Chicago, 1940

A member of Miles Davis's quintet from 1963 to 1968, Hancock participated in Davis's move into jazz-rock and in the band he himself subsequently formed pursued the overall idea of fusion widely, making use of African and Indian elements alongside rock and jazz, and introducing electronic instruments. With the album *Head Hunters* (1973) he turned consciously to appeal to a wider, disco-orientated market and continued in this vein into the 1980s, returning to jazz with an award-winning score for the film *Round Midnight* in 1986.

**Hawkins, Coleman; tenor saxophone**

b. St Joseph, Missouri, 1904; d. New York, 1969

Hawkins played a major role in transforming the tenor saxophone from a component of the dance band into a premier jazz solo instrument. His long career began uncertainly, his first major opportunity coming when he joined Fletcher Henderson's band in 1924. Hawkins stayed with Henderson for ten years, during which time he developed the basis of a virtuoso technical style combined with a high level of emotional intensity. He spent the years from 1934 to 1939 in Europe, returning to make his seminal – and bestselling – recording of 'Body and Soul'. He toured extensively from the late 1940s on with his own and other groups and made many festival appearances.

**Henderson, Fletcher; piano, bandleader, arranger**

b. Cuthbert, Georgia, 1897; d. New York, 1952

A key figure in the development of the big-band style, Henderson came to New York in 1920 to seek employment as a chemist (he had a degree in chemistry) but drifted into music when work did not materialise. After accompanying various classic blues singers he formed his first band and obtained a residency at the Roseland in 1924, remaining there for ten years. Under various influences, including the brief presence of Louis Armstrong and the skills of arrangers Don Redman and Benny Carter, Henderson turned this orchestra from a dance band to one of the first jazz big bands. By the late 1920s he was writing his own arrangements, and after the demise of his own band, these charts were taken up by Benny Goodman at the start of the swing era. Lacking the leadership qualities of others, Henderson was unable to capitalise fully on the swing boom, but continued to contribute many arrangements.

**Holiday, Billie (Eleanora Fagan); vocal**

b. Baltimore, 1915; d. New York, 1959

Holiday's career as an internationally known vocalist began when she was spotted by entrepreneur John Hammond singing at a Harlem nightclub in 1933. Recordings and tours with various bands followed, including those of Benny Goodman, Teddy Wilson and Count Basie. With Artie Shaw's orchestra in 1938 she was one of the first black singers to front a white band. In 1939 she departed from her practice of interpreting

popular songs to perform and record the anti-lynching song by Lewis Allen, 'Strange Fruit'. Voted top vocalist in the early 1940s her subsequent career was affected by drug and emotional problems, but these also invested many of her later performances – by which time her light voice had taken on a rough edge – with a deeply affecting voice of experience. Her approach to her material was based on a combination of subtle phrasing against the beat and stretching of the melody.

**Jarrett, Keith; piano**

b. Allentown, Pennsylvania, 1945

Jarrett's outstanding technique first attracted widespread attention as a member of Charles Lloyd's quartet in 1966–69. He moved on to join Miles Davis, playing organ and electric piano. On leaving Davis he returned to acoustic piano and in 1972 performed his first solo piano concert. With the support of the ECM label Jarrett not only revived solo piano playing, he developed it in unprecedented ways with extended improvisations that integrated many styles and could last more than thirty minutes. His best-known record, *The Köln Concert* (1975), was a remarkable example of his ability. It also demonstrated his appeal to a wider audience. He has continued to perform in small groups, with Jan Garbarek and others, and has performed numerous works from the classical repertoire.

**Lewis, John; piano, composer**

b. LaGrange, Illinois, 1920; d. New York, 2001

Formally trained in music and anthropology at the University of New Mexico, Lewis became interested in jazz during wartime military service, through contact with drummer Kenny Clarke, and joined Dizzy Gillespie's big band in 1946. In 1952 he joined Milt Jackson's Quartet, soon to be renamed the Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ). The ensemble was to dominate his life (it disbanded in 1974, but reformed in the 1980s), but he also taught at the Lenox School of Jazz and at Harvard University and formed the cooperative big band, Orchestra USA. Lewis's style, and that of the MJQ, was based on a restrained version of bebop. He was known as a delicate but subtle improviser with a fondness for countermelodies when accompanying soloists. In his own compositions he integrated jazz with stylistic approaches from eighteenth-century European music.

**Lewis, Ted; clarinet, bandleader**

b. Circleville, Ohio, 1892; d. New York, 1971

An ex-vaudevillean performer, Lewis led a novelty band in the 1920s and 1930s that often included significant jazz musicians, such as Jimmy Dorsey and Benny Goodman.

**McLaughlin, John; guitar**

b. Yorkshire, England, 1942

McLaughlin's approach to jazz was strongly influenced by rock (he played with rock musicians including Eric Clapton in London, before emigrating to the USA in 1969) and Indian music. After collaborations with Tony Williams and Miles Davis in 1969–70 on pioneering jazz-rock albums, he founded his own Mahavishnu Orchestra (which

he would later re-form twice) and the group Shakti. In addition to conventional electric and acoustic guitars, he played a specially designed double-necked electric instrument.

**McShann, Jay; piano, bandleader**

b. Muskogee, Oklahoma, 1916

As a young musician McShann absorbed the southwestern blues and boogie-woogie traditions. His subsequent big bands featured blues prominently, and his own piano style retained the strong flavour of boogie-woogie. His first, Kansas City-based big band provided an early professional opportunity for Charlie Parker. In the 1940s McShann led bands in New York and California, before returning to Kansas City.

**Marsalis, Wynton; trumpet**

b. New Orleans, 1961

Highly proficient in both jazz and classical music from a very early age, Marsalis joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in 1980. While there he made his first album as a leader and attracted wide attention for the brilliance of his technique. In 1984 he received two Grammy awards, one for a jazz recording, the other for a recording of classical trumpet concertos. In 1987 he co-founded the Jazz at the Lincoln Center programme in New York, becoming its artistic director. From this position he has argued passionately for the greater recognition of jazz and has been involved in numerous educational and media initiatives. The 1990s saw several jazz-centred compositions, including the oratorio, *Blood on the Fields* (1994), and the growth of an interest in dance, expressed in works for Twyla Tharp and for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

**Mezzrow, Milton 'Mezz'; clarinet**

b. Chicago, 1899; d. Paris, 1972

Only an average performer, Mezzrow's main claim to fame lay in his autobiography, *Really the Blues* (1946), with its colourful, if self-centred, account of the jazz scene of the 1920s and 1930s, and of how he was deeply attracted to African-American culture. Mezzrow also organised a number of important recording sessions with musicians such as Sidney Bechet.

**Miller, Glenn; trombone, bandleader**

b. Clarinda, Iowa, 1904; d. in air crash over English Channel(?), 1944

The leader of one of the most popular bands of the Swing Era, Miller based his approach on precise arrangements that left little room for improvisation. Some of his best-known numbers ('Moonlight Serenade', 'In the Mood') became popular music hits. He died travelling to France to arrange for his British-based wartime band to play for the troops.

**Mingus, Charles; double bass, bandleader**

b. Nogales, Arizona, 1922; d. Cuernavaca, Mexico, 1979

As an instrumentalist Mingus transformed double-bass playing, raising the standard of performance to a virtuoso level to rival that of 'front-line' instruments. As bandleader and composer he merged techniques from different styles of jazz and black



music (including the blues and gospel music he had grown up with in Watts, Los Angeles) in often complex pieces, which nevertheless had a distinctively sonorous individual style, capable of a huge range of expression. In performance, Mingus's music blurred divisions between composition and improvisation.

**Monk, Thelonious; piano**

b. Rocky Mount, North Carolina, 1917; d. Weehawken, New Jersey, 1982

As pianist at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem in the early 1940s Monk was at the very heart of the nascent bebop movement. However, he did not record under his own name till 1947, and his career did not fully take off till the late 1950s. His idiosyncratic style, lacking the more obvious trappings of virtuosity, exposed him to charges of incompetence, but was actually a very demanding approach, full of displaced rhythms and harmonic surprises. As a composer (he is best known for 'Round Midnight'), he created many pieces that mixed the warmly melodic with the asymmetrical.

**Montgomery, Wes; guitar**

b. Indianapolis, 1923; d. Indianapolis, 1968

Montgomery's mid-1960s recordings fronting large ensembles, including string orchestras, brought him to a wide audience, but it is the trio recordings he made, beginning in 1959, that show him most clearly to have been a highly innovative jazz guitarist in the tradition of Charlie Christian. Combining Christian's development of long, finely phrased single note lines with chordal passages and octave playing, Montgomery created a subtle, influential style that was widely admired.

**Morton, Jelly Roll (Ferdinand Lamothe); piano, bandleader**

b. New Orleans, 1890; d. Los Angeles, 1941

One of the most colourful figures in early jazz, Morton reached the peak of his career as bandleader-composer with the recordings made with his Red Hot Peppers in 1926–28. Basing his music on his own multi-thematic piano pieces, he produced highly crafted arrangements incorporating the elements of New Orleans collective playing. In his Library of Congress interviews in 1938 he recalled his early life in New Orleans, its many musical idioms (including the Caribbean 'Spanish tinge'), and the role of the 'piano professors'.

**Oliver, King (Joe Oliver); cornet, bandleader**

b. New Orleans, 1885; d. Savannah, Georgia, 1938

From 1922 to 1927 Oliver led highly influential bands in Chicago. Drawing principally on New Orleans musicians, he famously provided the first major opportunity, in 1922, for Louis Armstrong. The recordings made by Oliver's Creole Jazz Band in 1923 made a powerful impact on fellow musicians. Oliver's own style – sometimes dubbed 'preaching trumpet' – was especially noted for its use of the mute.

**Parker, Charlie; alto saxophone**

b. Kansas City, 1920; d. New York, 1955

Parker grew up in the competitive atmosphere of Kansas City, where he absorbed the local swing idiom with its characteristically strong blues influence. Following a period

in Jay McShann's big band he moved to New York in the early 1940s, where he met and performed with other young musicians involved in what would become bebop. He led his own group for the first time in 1945, working in New York and California. He established a considerable reputation, but fell victim to a destructive lifestyle associated with drugs and alcohol. Generally regarded as one of the most innovative musicians in jazz, he raised improvisation to new levels. Within the convention-challenging context of bebop he introduced a concept that blended virtuosity with innovative approaches to melody, phrasing and rhythm.

**Russell, George; composer, piano**

b. Cincinnati, 1923

Russell developed his influential theory, the 'Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization', in the late 1940s, publishing it in 1953. Compositions embodying his principles were performed by his own ensembles and by groups led among others by Dizzy Gillespie, Lee Konitz and Bill Evans. Russell was an influential teacher at the Lenox School of Jazz, the New England Conservatory and the University of Lund (Sweden).

**Stanko, Tomasz; trumpet**

b. Rzeszow, Poland, 1942

Stanko's 1962 group Jazz Darings was strongly influenced by American free jazz, especially that of Ornette Coleman. In 1974 he formed a quartet with Edward Vesala (drums; b. Mäntyharju, Finland, 1945). In the 1980s he played with many American free-jazz musicians, and formed his own group, Freeelectronic.

**Sun Ra (Herman Blount); keyboards, composer, arranger**

b. Birmingham, Alabama, 1914; d. Birmingham, Alabama, 1993

Sun Ra formed his Solar Arkestra in Chicago in the 1950s, performing an influential precursor of free jazz. Keeping many musicians with him for many years, he moved to New York in the 1960s and Philadelphia in the 1970s, all the time using his complex ensemble-based music to explore different tonal and timbral combinations. His recordings, all made for his own label, were not widely known and he often had little work. An enduring interest in Egyptian culture (which he contrasted to Biblical culture) and in astronomy and cosmology earned him a reputation as an eccentric in some quarters, but his interests were part of deeply held beliefs and concerns about the future and the past, especially for black peoples.

**Surman, John; baritone and soprano saxophones, composer**

b. Tavistock, England, 1944

Surman first came to attention in workshops run in Plymouth, England by Mike Westbrook, later becoming a member of his orchestra in London. Here, and in the groups he formed himself from 1968, he demonstrated an outstanding technique on baritone saxophone, extending the possibilities of the instrument. In 1969 he made a jazz-rock recording with John McLaughlin. In the 1970s and 1980s he performed with many European musicians and formed a saxophone trio, SOS, with Mike Osborne and Alan Skidmore. He continued to play with big bands, including the British orchestra organised by Gil Evans.

**Tatum, Art; piano**

b. Toledo, Ohio, 1909; d. Los Angeles, 1956

Although from the time he first came to New York in 1932, as an accompanist for blues singer Adelaide Hall, to his death Tatum regularly played with small groups and made group recordings, it is as a solo pianist that he is best known. His first solo recordings, in 1933, were regarded with astonishment by fellow musicians, who marvelled at the fullness and accuracy of his technique, coupled with his sense of exploration and his interpretation of swing. Never part of the bebop movement in the 1940s, his career was revived by a series of solo and group recordings for producer Norman Granz in the 1950s. These show at its best Tatum's ability to retain the heart of an existing piece of music and yet transform it with a range of techniques.

**Waller, Fats (Thomas Waller); piano, organ, composer**

b. New York, 1904; d. Kansas City, 1943

Waller's main early influences were the stride piano playing of James P. Johnson, (whom he met in Harlem around 1920), the songwriting and performance style of black vaudeville, and the classical studies he also undertook. His reputation as a songwriter, an accompanist and a hugely entertaining performer (much in demand at after-hours parties) grew in the mid-1920s. His collaboration with lyricist Andy Razaf proved particularly fruitful, leading to the Broadway show, *Hot Chocolates*, in 1929, with its hit song, 'Ain't Misbehavin''. He made a number of solo recordings for the Victor label between 1929 and 1934 that demonstrate a fascination with harmonic alteration and rhythmic variety, within the context of a stride-based approach. He toured extensively in the USA and Europe in the late 1930s and 1940s, and appeared in several films, including *Stormy Weather* (1943).

**Weather Report; jazz-rock group**

Founded in 1969, its principal and most consistent members were Joe Zawinul (keyboards; b. Vienna, 1932) and Wayne Shorter (soprano and tenor saxophones; b. Newark, New Jersey, 1933). Among other musicians featured before the group was disbanded in 1986 were Airto Moreira (percussion; b. Itaiopolis, Brazil, 1941), Jaco Pastorius (electric bass; b. Norristown, Pennsylvania, 1951; d. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 1987) and Peter Erskine (drums; b. Somers Point, New Jersey, 1954). Weather Report built a considerable following and moved more towards rock in the 1970s. Their playing continued to be characterised by a group approach which emphasised interaction and overall sound textures, and avoided foregrounding the soloist.

**Whiteman, Paul; bandleader**

b. Denver, 1890; d. Doylestown, Pennsylvania, 1967

Often derided in jazz circles because the music that earned him the title 'King of Jazz' in the 1920s was jazz-inflected dance music, not 'real jazz', Whiteman created an alternative to jazz that was acceptable to worried guardians of public morality. He also commissioned and featured compositions – most famously, George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) – that incorporated classical and jazz idioms (so-called 'symphonic jazz'), and gave employment opportunities to a number of white jazz musicians.

**Williams, Tony; drums**

b. Chicago, 1945; d. Daly City, 1997

One of the most highly regarded drummers of the last forty years, Williams joined Miles Davis before he was 18, staying till 1969. He left Davis to form his own influential though short-lived fusion band, Lifeline, which also featured John McLaughlin. He returned to jazz with the band V.S.O.P. in the late 1970s, joining forces with Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter. His drumming style, more assertive than his predecessors' without sacrificing clarity, was especially notable for his ability to anticipate – and therefore interact with – improvising soloists.

**Young, Lester; tenor saxophone**

b. Woodville, Mississippi, 1909; d. New York, 1959

A central member of the Count Basie Orchestra when it came from Kansas City to New York in 1936, Young made his first recordings with a small group drawn from that band. Musicians and listeners saw a striking contrast with another tenor saxophonist, Coleman Hawkins, with Young offering a gentler, less intense elegiac approach, and a partiality for long melodic lines. In recordings with Billie Holiday he showed himself to be a superb accompanist. Highly regarded by the next generation of musicians, he was a deeply sensitive, private man who led a nomadic existence and never occupied a central position. His later playing often took on a deeper tone.