12 Fusions and crossovers

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While it remains a fascination that one of the first recordings of African-American music was made in Sweden in 1899 – 'Cake Walk' (a version of 'At A Georgia Camp Meeting' by Kerry Mills), by the Kronoberg Society Regimental Band conducted by Erik Högberg – the first jazz recording is usually cited as 'Darktown Strutters Ball' by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band from January 1917. Prior to that we can only guess what the music might have sounded like as a deliquescent folk music in the rural southern states of America. But we do know that early jazz drew together several strands of vernacular music, including Negro spirituals, work and folk songs, ragtime, minstrel music, brass-band music and blues, that were freely mixed with elements from hymns, popular songs and popular classics of the day.

From the start, jazz was a pluralistic music. One of its great early practitioners, Jelly Roll Morton, argued that the music should always include a 'Spanish tinge' while the unambiguous *habañera* section in *St Louis Blues*, published by W. C. Handy in 1914, is revealing of jazz's practice of appropriation; an important, if often neglected, feature of a music that already comprised a diversity of elements drawn from a variety of sources both from within and without the African-American diaspora.

Appropriation is a recurring theme in the subsequent evolution of the music and reveals a continuing dialogue, not only with popular culture but other musical forms, in order to broaden the scope of jazz expressionism. After all, mass culture and modernist high culture had been in dialogue since the mid-nineteenth century, modernism appropriating whatever elements it needed for experimentation and articulation. Jazz, an exemplary expression of the modernist impulse in American culture, continued this practice, culminating in perhaps the most controversial moment in contemporary jazz history, the appropriation of rock.

This collision of genres was initially called 'jazz-rock' and subsequently 'jazz-rock fusion' or simply 'fusion'; there is no agreed meaning for these terms, despite their widespread use. The present account proposes exploring a distinction between 'jazz-rock', as originally applied to the first wave of experimenters in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the term 'fusion' that crept into the lexicon around 1973–4. The term 'fusion' was first used in

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jazz in 1963 by record producer Orrin Keepnews as the title of an album by guitarist Wes Montgomery, who in mixing light, accessible improvisation with strings created an easy-listening album with an appeal extending beyond jazz audiences to 'crossover' into the popular market. 'Some of the words the dictionary uses to define *fusion* are "blending," "melting together," "coalition"', said Keepnews in his liner notes. Subsequently, the term would reappear in jazz in the mid-1970s and become associated with electric pop-jazz intended to 'crossover' into the youth market. In the 1990s and beyond, 'electric' jazz musicians would be at pains to distance themselves from this term, something this account will also seek to explore.

A socio-musical crisis: jazz and the emergence of rock music in the 1960s

When John Coltrane's restless experimentalism was silenced by his death in July 1967, a stillness overtook jazz that was perhaps more profound than when Charlie Parker died in 1955. It coincided with the sudden and unexpected rise of rock music that robbed jazz of the collegiate audience it had enjoyed throughout the 1950s. Charles Mingus and Ornette Coleman had temporarily withdrawn from the scene and, while Miles Davis had one of the finest small groups in jazz, it was popular with everyone except the general public. The free-jazz abstraction of the 'New Thing' was alienating potential young white fans who had hitherto formed a significant audience base for jazz, while older musicians were doing what they had always done, playing standards and the blues. 'The world's jazz output seems to fall into one of two categories', observed *Melody Maker* at the time, 'I've-heard-it-all-before or I-never-want-to-hear-it-again' (liner notes to Lloyd, *Forest Flower*).

While rock did not completely relegate jazz to exterior darkness, it did at least consign it to the commercial twilight. 'During the heavy rock years', wrote the popular culture critic Albert Goldman, it was 'an embarrassing scene. Jazz had lost its audience and was talking to itself' (1993, 236). With jazz clubs closing and reopening as discotheques, many leading American musicians moved to Europe in search of work, including Stan Getz, Phil Woods, Benny Bailey, Art Farmer and Johnny Griffin. Others took part-time jobs to supplement their wages, such as McCoy Tyner and Pete LaRocca (who drove taxicabs). Others went into non-jazz work, Lou Levy backing singers such as Peggy Lee and Steve Kuhn playing society music, while others found work in Broadway pit bands. It was a time when many commentators began to advance the prognosis that the end of jazz was in sight: 'Jazz As We

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Know It Is Dead', pronounced *Down Beat* on its front cover on 5 October 1967, while *Melody Maker* contained a 'Requiem for a jazz we loved and knew so well' (2 September 1967).

As the end of the 1960s approached, it was gradually becoming clear that rock was not about to burn itself out like the Twist or the Loco-motion, and many musicians began making an accommodation with it. Pillars of jazz society such as Duke Ellington and Count Basie recorded versions of Beatles hits, the Modern Jazz Quartet signed with the Beatles production company Apple, while Ella Fitzgerald, an interpreter of the American popular song *par excellence*, began giving prominence in her repertoire to numbers such as the Carpenters' 'Close to You' and the Beatles' 'Something'. Both the Woody Herman and Buddy Rich big bands made increasing use of rock and pop material, while performances by Don Ellis's new band assumed the trappings of rock concerts with psychedelic lighting, electrified saxophones and rock-style amplification. 'New Thing' saxophonist Albert Ayler made use of rock rhythmic patterns and 'soul singers' on his album *New Grass*, while Gerry Mulligan summed up this rush to be 'in tune with the times' by recording *If You Can't Beat Them, Join Them*. The latter included a liner photo that showed Mulligan shrugging his shoulders, as if to indicate a mood of futility and abandonment of principles.

Initially, jazz musicians sought to control rock music, attempting to make it conform to their notion of primitivism. But control is incompatible with rock's energy and to avoid its primitivism was to fail to acknowledge the source of its popularity. They found the concept of rock's volume, courtesy of Jim Marshall's monster 100-watt stacks, a denial of subtlety, failing to appreciate how volume contributed to rock's authenticity. Jazz musicians at first treated rock songs as they had the bossa nova, by adapting to the new rhythmic patterns. But the jazz rhythm section of acoustic piano, acoustic bass and drums missed the point by a mile. While albums such as Bud Shank's *Michelle* or Dizzy Gillespie's *My Way* showed that jazz musicians were quite prepared to take songs from popular culture, as they had in the past with Broadway show tunes, they also showed how they failed to realise their instrumental versions obscured those dimensions of the original hits that had made them compelling and subversive in the first place. Bud Shank covering 'Sounds of Silence' on flute sounds inauthentic because it is impossible to disentangle the memory of Simon and Garfunkel's original hit from the actual song itself. Singers and song had become bonded in a performance that exhausted the song's meaning because in pop and rock it is the recorded performance of the song that assumes an autonomous character, not the song in itself.

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A resolution of opposites: jazz and the appropriation of rock

Clearly, any *rapprochement* with rock posed problems of authenticity in balancing the sounds associated with rock and jazz improvisation. Yet a working model of what a jazz-rock 'fusion' might sound like was revealed by the English band, Cream, formed in July 1966. Combining former jazz musicians Jack Bruce on bass and Ginger Baker on drums with blues purist Eric Clapton on guitar, they broke open the temporal limits of blues and popular songs with long, extended improvisations over rock rhythms. When the band toured the USA in 1967, *Rolling Stone* magazine pointed out that Cream 'had been called a jazz group'.[1] Indeed, during their tour many critics credited Cream with combining jazz and rock: 'The healthiest development in popular music these days is the extraordinary convergence of jazz and rock', said *Life* magazine in January 1968.

On the album *Wheels of Fire* is a performance of 'Spoonful' which provides a context for *Life* magazine's observation. Here the chord sequence is quickly abandoned in favour of a long Clapton solo in which Bruce's ostinato bass takes a prominent role in accompaniment, to the extent that it expands to provide contrapuntal lines more in the manner of a duet. Meanwhile the drums, after initially adopting a repeated rhythmic figure, gradually expand and develop this motif, colouring and commenting on the guitar and bass dialogue. As Clapton would later observe, 'I always felt . . . I [had] to fit into whatever concept [Baker] wanted to lay down . . . because he's much more of a jazz based musician; the Cream was really a jazz group, a jazz-rock group.'[2]

At this point it is important to note that jazz history has traditionally relied on canon formation and a chronological method of reconstructing jazz history based predominantly on 'masterpieces'. This exclusionary reading exalts favoured artists while bypassing others. Cream, a group which has generally been overlooked, had a considerable impact on the American scene; not only were rock bands forced to consider extended improvisation in their approach but many forward-looking young jazz musicians recognised that Cream's extensive use of improvisation over rock rhythms suggested a real possibility of a union between jazz and rock. For example, the youthful Chick Corea, while a member of Miles Davis's band in 1969, is on record as expressing admiration for Cream's synthesis of improvisation and rock.[3]

For young musicians coming of age in the 1960s, the social revolution was happening all around them. Tripping on acid had made the unthinkable commonplace and popular culture was swept with unusual connections and new ideas. In such a climate, integrating jazz and rock seemed not only natural but logical. 'Let's do something different!' said guitarist Larry Coryell,

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who in 1965 was 22 years old: 'We were saying, we love Wes [Montgomery], but we also love Bob Dylan. We love Coltrane but we also love the Beatles. We love Miles but we also love the Rolling Stones. We wanted people to know we were very much part of the contemporary scene, but at the same time we had worked our butts off to learn this other music [jazz]. It was a very sincere thing.'[4]

Musicians such as Coryell did not regard the prospect of combining jazz and rock as a commercial proposition, but as a way of moving the music in a new direction, as bebop and free jazz had done in the past. Coryell arrived in New York in 1965 and quickly made a reputation for himself, appearing in 1966 on the Chico Hamilton album, *The Dealer*, which flirted with combining jazz improvisation and rock rhythms. Given an opportunity to record under his own name, Coryell turned to his rehearsal group that included drummer Bobby Moses and saxophonist Jim Pepper. Calling themselves the Free Spirits, they cut their eponymous debut album, also in 1966. A somewhat self-conscious mixture of jazz improvisation with rock rhythms, these two albums were among the first in the USA to suggest the potential union of jazz and rock.

After Free Spirits broke up, Coryell joined vibraphonist Gary Burton to form a working quartet in January 1967. Their first album, *Duster*, from later in the year includes original compositions by Carla Bley and Mike Gibbs. Throughout the album Coryell used an acid tone customarily employed by rock guitarists, and on 'General Mojo's Well Laid Plan' unmistakable rock rhythms were employed; clearly Burton was working towards a synthesis of jazz and rock of his own. When the group appeared at the Berlin Jazz Days festival that year, they stunned German musicians who were unaware that a fusion of jazz and rock was being contemplated in the United States, the German writer, Alexander Schmitz, pointing out that they turned the German jazz scene around 'more or less overnight' (liner notes to Pike, *Masterpieces*). One of the first bands to reflect Burton's influence was the Dave Pike Set, whose inclusive vision of jazz extended into World Music and was years ahead of its time.

Experimentation was in the air; flautist Jeremy Steig, who had toured with Paul Winter and whose first album was produced by John Hammond, immediately became a Beatles fan when the group arrived in America. He formed a group in 1967 that included vibraphonist Mike Mainieri, pianist Warren Bernhardt, guitarist Adrian Guillery and bassist Eddie Gomez. Not only did they incorporate influences from rock, but each band member made a tape loop of sounds of their own choice and would play it at random on stage. However, their debut album, *Jeremy and the Satyrs* (1968), refrains from such abandon but nevertheless reveals a modestly successful combination of jazz and rock.

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Burton's quartet continued to produce a series of well-conceived jazz-rock miniatures into the 1970s, and in 1968 he produced an album by a band that included tenor saxophonist Steve Marcus and pianist Mike Nock, both former fellow students from Berklee College of Music. Together with Coryell on guitar, the group called themselves Count's Rock Band and made their debut with *Tomorrow Never Knows*, including a version of the Byrds' 'Eight Miles High' where Marcus, the notional leader, plays in a middle-to-late Coltrane style over a powerful rock groove: so effective is Marcus's playing and so thoroughly had he absorbed the lessons of Coltrane that it is impossible not to speculate on what Coltrane's response to jazz-rock might have been had he lived another three years. Count's Rock Band worked infrequently, but before breaking up made a further two albums.

Coryell's subsequent career failed to capitalise either on his musical prowess or the fact that he was one of the first people to experiment with combining jazz and rock. Any potential his subsequent association with Marcus might have yielded was frustrated by personal problems, so it was with a sense of wiping the slate clean that he formed Eleventh House in 1973 with trumpeter Randy Brecker, Mike Mandel on keyboards, Danny Trifan on bass and Alphonse Mouzon on drums. Their debut *Introducing the Eleventh House* was recorded in September that year and might have had more impact had such an album been recorded earlier in the jazz-rock period. Events, however, had moved on and, as in much of Coryell's career, he gave the impression of following rather than leading.

After his period with Count's Rock Band, Mike Nock moved to the West Coast to join John Handy's quintet; Handy was flirting with rock grooves during his frequent appearances at Fillmore, where he appeared on the bill with popular rock acts of the day. The Fillmore was rock music's main emporium, masterminded by Bill Graham, who had helped launch the career of the Charles Lloyd Quartet – a group that included Keith Jarrett on piano, Ron McLure on bass and Jack DeJohnette on drums. Nimbly managed, the group had become the most popular in jazz with a fresh approach that moved in and out of rock rhythms with albums such as *Forest Flower* and *Dream Weaver*, the bestselling jazz albums of 1967.

'Lloyd's quick rise to international recognition provides an antidote to the disparaging commentary floating about the current state of jazz', observed *Down Beat*.[5] Adopting the colourful clothing of the prevailing Californian flower-power generation, instead of the lounge suits and ties typically associated with jazz musicians, and playing long, ecstatic versions of tunes with hip titles like 'Love Ship', Lloyd clicked with rock crowds. 'It was a time of idealism', said Lloyd: 'There were not these lines of demarcation in music.

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Kids were listening to all kinds of music. So when we played the Fillmore we were very lovingly and warmly received and it opened a door because things were kind of depressed in the jazz scene. Jazz clubs were struggling for their existence.'[6] Such success in the then depressed market for jazz was sufficient to attract a feature in *Harper's* magazine, in which the group were hailed as the 'First psychedelic jazz group'. More than any other group of the time, Lloyd suggested that it was possible that rock could provide jazz with a source of energy and inspiration; and, more significantly, he demonstrated that there was a large, young audience receptive to new ideas. His success started the jazz world talking, increasing speculation that a fusion between jazz and rock could not be far off.

In fact, such a move had been widely predicted in the press; as early as August 1967, in a feature entitled 'A Way Out Of The Muddle', *Time* magazine expressed the hope that a marriage between jazz and rock might happen. And in 1968, *Down Beat* editor Dan Morgenstern wrote: 'A particularist, exclusive and non-proselytizing attitude ill behooves jazz in its present predicament, which briefly stated is the crying need of a bigger audience. If rock offers a bridge, jazz would be foolish not to cross it.'[7] More particularly, with a trade story in *Billboard* announcing that jazz would hit rock bottom in 1969,[8] rock music was now widely perceived as the catalyst that might well revitalise an ailing jazz.

Meanwhile, before Handy's group broke up in 1968 they had recorded *Projections*, which moved towards a synthesis of jazz and rock. Subsequently, Nock and Handy's violinist Michael White formed the group Fourth Way with bassist Ron McLure and drummer Eddie Gladden. Under Nock's leadership, the group convincingly stated a case for combining jazz improvisation and rock rhythms. Nock used one of the first electric keyboard set-ups in jazz, a stunning array of early synthesisers, ring modulators, flanges, a Fender Rhodes electric piano and wah-wah pedals, and he utilised their full potential from far reaches of white noise to guitar-like sounds. Combined with White's electric violin, his work seemed poised to usher in a new era of jazz. 'When the history of electronic music is written', said *Rolling Stone* magazine, 'the pioneering work of Fourth Way should neatly eclipse the influence of many other more highly publicized groups.'[9]

It was not to be. After three albums the band broke up in April 1970, its existence spent almost entirely on the West Coast, the wrong side of the continent to get the attention of the influential East-Coast critics who were effectively the opinion formers in jazz. The sense that a new page was being turned when jazz entered the age of rock-influenced music would be enacted out entirely on the East Coast under the eyes of a music press which had widely predicted such a move and were looking for a player around whom history could be constructed.

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From the margins to the mainstream: the dialectics of jazz-rock

During the previous twenty years, Miles Davis had proved, not once but several times, that where he led others followed. With Lloyd's group the most successful in jazz in 1968 through their inclusive approach to popular culture, musicians and critics were waiting to see what Davis's response would be, and, with the break-up of his groundbreaking quintet that year, Davis began to reposition his music to reflect the changing times. After a series of inconclusive recording sessions, he went into the studios in February 1969 to record *In a Silent Way*. Reaching 134 on the *Billboard* chart, it demonstrated the aesthetic feasibility, if not the commercial viability, of jazz-rock.

Davis's ensemble – with an enlarged three-keyboard set-up, John McLaughlin's guitar, Wayne Shorter on soprano saxophone and cautiously stated rock rhythms from Dave Holland on bass and Tony Williams on drums – consciously distanced itself from the sound of Davis's earlier quintets. Another striking deviation was a concerted application of postproduction techniques by producer Teo Macero. In popular music, the notion that a recording should sound like a 'captured' live performance had given way to elaborate production techniques in the studio. In contrast, jazz had learnt hardly anything from this.[10]

In the eyes of many, Davis sanctioned a move into rock-influenced music. Because of his reputation as a musical pathfinder, the portents seemed clear: jazz-rock represented the way ahead because Miles Davis said so, and subsequently it has not been unusual for jazz histories to credit him with creating jazz-rock. In fact, Davis and his record company Columbia were keen to register the kind of success two popular groups on the label were already enjoying by combining jazz and rock. Blood Sweat & Tears and Chicago grafted a horn section on to a rock rhythm section and mixed jazz-influenced solos and ensemble passages with vocals, and were enjoying unprecedented pop sales. These groups were commercially produced and their recordings intended for a mass market, and their music was shaped accordingly. Actively promoted by Columbia, they reflected the music industry's constant drive to expand their market share by the mainstreaming and marketing of 'new' products from the margins, in this case creating a commercial jazz-rock hybrid.

The success of Blood Sweat & Tears' eponymously titled second album and the marketing push given it through corporate advertisements and radio play contributed to a climate where a financially beleaguered jazz world sat up and took notice of jazz-rock. It also suggested to the record industry a way of turning round their unprofitable jazz sales by giving the music a contemporary spin. 'Clive Davis was the President of Columbia Records

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and he signed Blood, Sweat & Tears in 1968 and Chicago in 1969', said Miles Davis. 'He started to talk to me about trying to reach this younger market and about changing' (Davis and Troupe 1989, 287–8).

If *In a Silent Way* represented a tentative move towards a jazz-rock synthesis, then *Bitches Brew*, recorded in August 1969, saw Davis embrace the concept wholeheartedly. By then Davis had come under the spell of rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix, who had a profound effect on his music. Davis's long-time friend and collaborator Gil Evans shared Davis's enthusiasm for Hendrix's music, and during a 1980 interview demonstrated how he and Davis incorporated the chords of Hendrix's 'The Wind Cries Mary' into the title track of Davis's 1969 album, *Filles de Kilimanjaro* (Enstice and Rubin 1992, 145). Indeed, there can be no mistaking how the deeply mysterious groove of Hendrix's 'Voodoo Chile' from his third, and final, Experience album, *Electric Ladyland* (released in September 1968), was echoed in 'Miles Runs the Voodoo Down' from *Bitches Brew*, recorded eleven months later. Here Davis avoids popular music's smooth contours with a grittiness and awkwardness that flies in the face of commercialism, using dissonant chords and angular open-ended improvisation. With Columbia aggressively marketing *Bitches Brew*, and in so doing assisting the passage of the jazz-rock 'concept' into the jazz mainstream, the album sold 400,000 units in its first year and won the 1970 Grammy for 'Best Jazz Record'.

The sound of *Bitches Brew* was in sharp contrast to Davis's music in live performance, which had taken on the proportions of free-form electronic abstraction. When Shorter left the group in December 1969, his replacement was a 19-year-old from Brooklyn, Steve Grossman. Saxophone solos were no longer as important a feature of Davis's music as they had been in the days of his acoustic quintet. Gone were the narrative certainties of Davis's own playing, which veered sharply in favour of fragmentation and coloration, often electrified and distorted through a wah-wah attachment. Columbia, in contrast to what Davis notes in his autobiography, did record the band and we do have bootleg recordings which document this radical shift in his music.[11] These changes, however, were not reflected on *A Tribute to Jack Johnson* (1970), where it was his stated intention to confront the music of Hendrix head-on.[12] The Davis/McLaughlin jam during the first half of 'Right Off' sees Davis's trumpet framed by the raw electronic energy inspired by Hendrix. He showed he had by no means abandoned the lyricism of his acoustic period, with a solo of such poise and structure that compares favourably with any from his earlier period.

Three days after *Jack Johnson*, Davis finally documented the electronic experimentation in which he was engaged in live performance on *Black Beauty: Miles Davis at Fillmore West* and, two months later, *Miles Davis at Fillmore*. Subsequently, Davis's output was uneven, although *Get Up With It*

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(1974) contained a heartfelt tribute to Duke Ellington, who had died at the time of the recording sessions. In 1975, Davis embarked on a tour of Japan, although his health had been a cause for concern for some three years prior to this. The resulting albums, *Agharta* and *Panagaea*, provided the clearest indication of the impact of Hendrix on Davis's musical odyssey, this rather austere music belying any claim that Davis had sold out to the sirens of commerce (see, for example, Crouch 1996).

When *Rolling Stone* reviewed Davis's *In a Silent Way*, it was followed on the same page by a review of *Emergency!* by the Tony Williams Lifetime, so closely together were the two records released.[13] If Davis's album was characterised by an absence of significant musical events, favouring pastel tone colours and delicate shading, then Lifetime gave apodictic testimony that they had discovered a new way of reconciling jazz expressionism empowered by rock. Manic and desperate, for a moment at least, it seemed as if it were to Williams and not to Davis that destiny was beckoning. Lifetime comprised Williams (who had left Davis's employ in early 1969) on drums, McLaughlin on guitar and Larry Young on organ.

McLaughlin had moved from England to join Williams's band after playing in a variety of jazz ensembles in Britain and Europe and having worked as a session musician.[14] Prior to leaving he had recorded an album called *Extrapolation* with a group that included saxophonist John Surman. Rhythmically and harmonically fluid, it made use of both modal harmonies and the 'time, no changes' principle of improvising, in which the composition provides tempo, key and mood but leaves the chord changes to the spontaneous interaction of improviser and accompanists. It was these principles that McLaughlin brought to Lifetime. Davis was so impressed with McLaughlin's playing that, even before *Emergency!* had been recorded, he had invited the guitarist to join his own group. McLaughlin declined, but became a fixture on Davis's albums for the next two years.[15]

While early experiments such as those by Coryell, Burton, Steig, Lloyd and, just a few weeks earlier, Davis had incorporated rock's rhythms and tone colours, none had used the dynamics of electricity to such coruscating effect as Lifetime. Prior to the *Emergency!* session all the band members had jammed with Hendrix, and it is impossible not to think of this music as being touched by his terrifying electronics: 'I was heavily influenced by Jimi Hendrix', confirmed Williams.[16] After recording two albums, the band broke up in April 1971, but on subsequent albums without McLaughlin, Williams struggled to position his music in jazz.

Encouraged by Davis, McLaughlin decided to form his own ensemble after Lifetime disbanded. The Mahavishnu Orchestra, when it opened at Greenwich Village's Gaslight Café in July 1971, so mesmerised audiences it was immediately held over. McLaughlin, dressed in white, was a striking

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figure using a double-necked guitar (one neck of six strings, the other of twelve). With Jerry Goodman on electric violin, Jan Hammer on keyboards, Rick Laird on bass and Billy Cobham on drums, critics immediately expressed admiration for the band, which exhibited a high degree of ensemble cohesion at demandingly fast tempos, and revelled in unusual time signatures and abrupt changes of metre.

While performing at the Gaslight, the group recorded *The Inner Mounting Flame*, featuring compositions of McLaughlin's which were often as complex as any bebop lines and also reflected the influence of eastern cultures. The album was more influential in its time than even *Bitches Brew* which, for all its innovative importance, had often been turgid and congested with discursive melodies and soloing. *The Inner Mounting Flame* was more focused in structure and rhythm, collective ensemble interplay was reinforced with an intensity that belied its spontaneity and, with the bass often participating in the complex ensemble passages, the role of Cobham on drums was elevated to that of an equal voice within the ensemble.

Nothing like the sound of 'Meetings of the Spirit' or 'The Noonward Race' had ever been heard in jazz or rock. The newness was in the virtuosity itself; the group's 'coherence and control comes like a shaft of light in the muddied and confused', said *Melody Maker*, predicting that 'The effects of this album will be far reaching.'[17] Even today the album conveys a feeling of the new. It was followed by *Birds of Fire* (1973), which reinforced the startling first impression of their recording debut. The title track, in 18/8, opens with an ominous crashing gong that presages McLaughlin's thematic statement, with his overdriven guitar over a bass and violin ostinato that leads into passages of free-flowing improvisation over virtuosic drum accompaniment. It was not until autumn 1999 that *The Lost Trident Sessions* was released by Columbia/Legacy, the results of a recording session at London's Trident studios from 25 June 1973 intended to be their third album. Subsequently there were reports[18] suggesting artistic differences during recording, but in an interview McLaughlin gave in January 1974 he expressed optimism that the album would soon be released, saying, 'It's a terrific sound and some people have told me they think it's dynamite.'[19] Here was an empathy and cohesion that only a stable working band could achieve, and a degree of energy and animation that reached a level of emotional and creative intensity which, with hindsight, would appear almost impossible to sustain. Indeed, after just one more album, the live *Between Nothingness and Eternity*, the band was unexpectedly wound up on 29 December 1973.

With Mahavishnu's success, McLaughlin was quickly recognised as the most influential guitarist since Wes Montgomery, an inspiration to both jazz and rock guitarists, even helping to contribute to a rise in instrumental proficiency in rock (in London he had given lessons to Jimmy Page, for

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example). However, the Mahavishnu Orchestra set in train a host of imitators who copied the superficial aspects of their style, making virtuosity an end in itself at the expense of content – a trend which would arguably become the undoing of jazz-rock.

Art into artifact: the commodification of jazz-rock

Pianist Chick Corea was one musician who was sufficiently impressed by the Mahavishnu Orchestra to change musical direction. After leaving Davis in September 1970, Corea's first inclination was to explore the areas of abstraction pursued by Davis's group with an acoustic trio called Circle. A change of musical direction prompted the formation of Return to Forever, with Corea on electric piano plus multi-reed player Joe Farrell, bassist Stanley Clarke, drummer Airto Moreira and vocalist Flora Purim. An aesthetically pleasing fusion of jazz with Brazilian and Latin rhythms, their first album, *Return to Forever* (1972), contained Corea's widely admired composition 'La Fiesta'.[20] To keep the band together at a time when there was a lack of work under Corea's own name, the rhythm section played with Stan Getz, recording on *Captain Marvel* in March 1972 all but one of Corea's compositions for Return to Forever that would appear on the subsequent *Light as a Feather* (October 1972). In spring 1973 Farrell left, prompting another change of musical direction. 'I feel the formation of the Mahavishnu Orchestra was equally important [as Miles Davis's bands]. What John McLaughlin did with the electric guitar set the world on its ear', explained Corea. 'No-one ever heard an electric guitar played like that before and it certainly inspired me. I wanted to express that emotion. John's band, more than my experience with Miles, made me want to turn up the volume and write music that was more dramatic and made your hair move.'[21]

Corea took McLaughlin's virtuosity as a licence to demonstrate his own keyboard facility, combining somewhat grandiose orchestral effects with stunningly fast passages of meticulous precision for guitar, keyboards, bass and drums. Initially with Bill Connors on guitar for *Hymn of the Seventh Galaxy* (1973), he was replaced by Al DiMeola on *Where Have I Known You Before* (1974) and *No Mystery* (1975). It was perhaps inevitable that the band's virtuosity would take it over the top, as indeed DiMeola has acknowledged (liner notes to Corea, *Music Forever*). *No Mystery* has strong echoes of 'progressive' (or 'pomp') rock of bands such as Yes, and Emerson, Lake & Palmer, which becomes more apparent when considering Corea's *Romantic Warrior* from 1976 in the context of Rick Wakeman's *Myths and Legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.* Opening with 'Medieval Overture', Corea performs four programmatically styled pieces

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before climaxing with 'Duel of the Jester and the Tyrant'. Clearly, this music was expected to sell into the jazz market, but it also had the potential of 'crossing over' into the 'pomp' rock market. It made Corea one of the most popular crossover artists of his day, albeit combining the worst of two worlds: a fusion of jazz's populist urges and rock's elitist ambitions, a theme that underwrites subsequent 'fusion' albums recorded by Clarke and DiMeola in their own right.

Like Corea's, the career of Herbie Hancock moved towards an accommodation with commercialism. Fired by Davis for returning late from his honeymoon in South America in September 1968, he formed a sextet that recorded five albums[22] and met with modest success on the touring circuits. However, when work dropped to just two bookings a month he was forced to concede that his excursions of free-form 'spacey' improvisation and occasional recondite interaction was not what the public wanted. A self-confessed Sly Stone fan, in 1973 he decided to form a jazz-funk band. 'Instead of getting jazz cats who could play funk, I got funk cats who could play jazz', he explained (Coryell and Friedman 1978, 162). The resultant album, *Head Hunters*, rocketed to 13 on the *Billboard* pop chart, and within a year had sold 750,000 units. The die was cast; with a pop hit under his belt, subsequent albums set about distancing his work from jazz. Hancock was annoyed at critics who continued to associate him with jazz, which he and his management considered an impediment to pop sales, citing his as a specific artistic choice to 'crossover' from jazz into pop. When his album *Future Shock* produced the single 'Rockit', one of the biggest instrumental dance hits of the 1980s, he said: 'I've been trying to take the pop stuff more into the pop area and leave out the jazz. I think I've pretty much succeeded at that because the last few records I don't consider jazz at all. "Rockit" has nothing to do with jazz.'[23]

Exploring the potential: Weather Report

Weather Report was formed in 1971, a musical partnership between Cannonball Adderley's former pianist Joe Zawinul and saxophonist Wayne Shorter, who had distinguished himself in the ensembles of Art Blakey and Davis. Their debut album, *Weather Report*, with an acoustic group of saxophone, piano, bass, drums and percussion, utilised this conventional line-up in highly unconventional ways. A point of departure was signalled in 'Eurydice', a piece free from metric and harmonic structure, while 'Milky Way' used the resonance of the acoustic piano to create an arresting tone poem. Their second album, *I Sing the Body Electric*, saw Zawinul adopting electric tone colours, using a Fender Rhodes piano on one side of the

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album to explore collective improvisation, while the other side included the ambitious impressionistic 'Unknown Soldier'. Their next album, *Sweetnighter*, owed something to the complex rhythmic layering of post-'Cold Sweat' James Brown on numbers such as '125th Street Congress' and 'Boogie Woogie Waltz'. It was also the first album on which Zawinul used a synthesiser, which pointed the way to the more orchestral approach of *Mysterious Traveller* that followed. Utilising the potential of the recording studio to a greater extent than on their previous albums, 'Nubian Sundance' featured complex layers of rhythmic patterns from two drummers, with motifs and orchestral effects overdubbed to present a constantly changing canvas of sounds. *Black Market*, from 1976, introduced the electric-bass player Jaco Pastorius, a virtuoso performer who galvanised the band. The title track, a programmatic piece that refines some of the ideas introduced in 'Nubian Sundance', announced a period of heightened creativity that saw the band become the top attraction in jazz.

In 1977 came *Heavy Weather*, with the structurally sophisticated track 'Birdland' receiving a Grammy nomination for 'Best Instrumental Composition'.[24] Weather Report had now travelled some distance from the free-form collective improvisations on *I Sing the Body Electric*, taking in a wide variety of approaches to broaden the expressivity of the jazz combo. One important ingredient in the album's success (it reached 30 on the *Billboard* chart) was Pastorius's playing, opening up a new world for the electric bass just as Jimmy Blanton had with the acoustic bass 37 years earlier.[25] Although Weather Report went on to make 15 albums in all, with the exception of *8.30* (1979), their finest work was now behind them. Their range extended from classical influences, most notably the French impressionists, to World Music and bebop, big-band music and chamber music. They went from open-form collective improvisation to elaborately conceived forms, from structures with no apparent metre to straight-ahead swing. They achieved a successful integration of improvised lines and pre-written parts and adapted the new electronic technology to create a fresh and vital context for their playing. Alongside Duke Ellington, Weather Report created a body of work that numbers among the most diverse and imaginative in jazz.

From jazz-rock to fusion

In 1973, Columbia increased the advances against future sales to its top artists while at the same time increasing the amount spent on promoting them in order to put pressure on its competitors. By 1974, all guarantees to artists had skyrocketed against a background where recording costs had increased

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by 200 per cent, exacerbated by the energy crisis and a shortage of vinyl (i.e., polyvinyl chloride, a petroleum derivative). These factors combined to place unprecedented pressure on artists to attain sales targets or be dropped from the labels to which they were signed. In such a climate many jazz musicians were forced to reassess their artistic direction along the lines of socio-economic reality. Jazz artists were encouraged to record albums with – to use the new buzzword – 'crossover' appeal, music that has the potential to cross from one established market into another; for example, from jazz into pop, a market that offered the greatest potential for sales. Many musicians who had no affinity with trends in popular culture felt pressurised to respond accordingly – Barney Kessel recorded *Hair is Beautiful*, Paul Desmond recorded *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and Benny Golson went disco with the album *I'm Always Dancin' To the Music.*

When Hancock's *Head Hunters* went gold, Columbia immediately sought to establish itself as the major force in jazz-rock fusion, closely followed by Atlantic. Artists who ultimately failed to make the mark on the ledger in any significant way, such as Dexter Wansel, Rodney Frankin, John Blair, Walt Bolden and Jaroslav, began to crowd the major-label rosters. By now the promise of the early jazz-rock experimentation had given way to a more commercial music that was being called fusion, a key distinction between it and jazz-rock being that the dominant non-jazz elements of the jazz-rock equation no longer came from the creative side of rock but from pop with simple hooks and currently fashionable dance beats. Fusion completed the music-marketing cycle continually enacted by record companies in popular music, taking a music from the margins (jazz-rock) and mainstreaming it for mass consumption (fusion). This process was summed up by Columbia's advertising of the period, which announced: 'Jazz has taken a long-overdue upbeat swing lately: the esoteric music of a relatively select few has become the music for just about everybody.'[26]

The jazz-rock continuum

When jazz-rock emerged at the end of the 1960s, it set a new agenda for change and continued to evolve in a way that many other areas of jazz would not. From the beginning, jazz-rock was never a static genre with clearly defined boundaries but a music in constant flux. As we have seen, one direction saw the colonisation of jazz-rock by record companies resulting in fusion, which with further commercial refinement during the 1980s and 1990s produced so-called 'smooth jazz'. A contemporary update (in terms of dance beats, melodic hooks and electronic technology) of 1970s fusion, smooth jazz was specifically designed for FM airplay, with musicians writing

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tunes and devising solos specifically to satisfy the rigid musical formatting requirements of FM radio stations. As one New York FM station manager put it, 'Primarily we are looking for bright tempos and melodies that are recognisable . . . We want melodic strength that the casual listener or non-*aficionado* can pick up on.'[27]

In 1987, Radio KTWV in Los Angeles came up with an all-fusion rotation policy and quickly became the city's most popular radio station. Its 'smooth jazz' became the fastest-growing radio format of the 1990s, with revenue growth rising to a phenomenal 77.7 per cent, far outstripping 54.2 per cent for alternative music, 37.1 per cent for adult contemporary, 20.4 per cent for country and only 15.2 per cent for rock.[28] Fusion happened to click with the right money demographic, the 25- to 52-year-olds, and by the end of the 1990s there were over 200 radio stations across America that specialised in formatting fusion, with high rotation playlists often put together by market-research firms specialising in 'audience testing' to ensure recordings were selected on 'the basis of the broadest possible appeal' (or, to put it another way, the lowest common denominator).

Today, the spectre of fusion has grown so large it fills the viewfinder, to the extent it has been fashionable to ignore the distinction between it and jazz-rock, lumping them together and writing the whole lot off as having turned art into artifact – a classic case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. No one would consider evaluating the swing era (which raises many issues similar to those posed by jazz-rock) in terms of Guy Lombardo, Jan Garber, Art Kassel, Tommy Tucker, Kay Kyser, Gus Arnheim, Abe Lyman, Fred Waring or Anson Weeks. Yet this is precisely what has happened with the perception of jazz-rock; it has become perceived in terms of fusion artists such as Kenny G, The Yellow Jackets, The Rippingtons, Kirk Whalum, Spyro Gyra, Grover Washington and Dave Sanborn.

Nevertheless, the eclecticism inherent in the original late-1960s premise of jazz-rock has continued to offer a set of possibilities warranting serious exploration. It has meant that for many musicians in contemporary times, a distinction between jazz-rock and fusion has become crucial when seeking to situate their music within the overall context of jazz. They distance their work from 'fusion' because of the pejorative connotations of a term that now implies a frankly commercial music, with more in common with pop than jazz. Pat Metheny has referred to fusion as 'The "F" word', asserting his work was inspired by 'the early jazz-rock experiments of the late sixties and early seventies'.[29] John Scofield has sought to make a similar distinction: 'The jazz-rock thing, the best of it, bands such as Weather Report, Miles, Mahavishnu, they all had their own style and their own way of doing things and I think they were really important. I guess I would like to be considered in that category somewhere, but putting the pieces together from my viewpoint.'[30]

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For these musicians, jazz-rock and fusion are not one and the same thing; for them perhaps the most significant aspect of the jazz-rock of the late 1960s and early 1970s was the aesthetic potential suggested by key recordings that implied a whole range of new musical possibilities. Electronic tone colours suggested great scope for broadening the expressive range of jazz, while the big beat of 'rock' *per se* was never a characteristic of the music, at least not in the terms Grateful Dead or Led Zeppelin fans would recognise it; rather, a hunt for ever more sophisticated rhythms to invigorate compositional forms was set in motion. By the early 1970s the music of James Brown – 'Every man is a drum'[31] – inspired a new rhythmic complexity that did not come exclusively from the rhythm instruments. As Brown's influence along with World Music elements crept into the work of Davis and Weather Report, it was clear that jazz-rock had begun to transform the familiar tone colours and rhythms of jazz.

By the end of the 1970s, fusion seemed to have run its course and events elsewhere in jazz suggested a realignment of the avant-garde with the jazz mainstream (reflected in the work of musicians such as David Murray, Chico Freeman, Anthony Davis, Arthur Blythe and others) that presaged a return to a tradition-based synthesis of earlier styles that would dominate jazz for the next two decades. However, Miles Davis's return to the concert platform in 1981 after a furlough of some five years became the most publicised event in jazz history, with virtually every newspaper in the world carrying some reference to the event. Within a year he was commanding just under a million dollars for an eight-concert tour in Japan. His music, a well-calibrated mix of funk rhythms, electric tone colours and jazz improvisation, reignited interest in the possibilities of jazz-rock.

While Davis's albums over the next ten years lacked the ambition of his earlier work, somehow it did not seem to matter. He became a fixture on the international touring circuits and the biggest draw in jazz. The reason was simple: audiences wanted to consume the aura and physical presence of one of the great and enduring legends of jazz before it was too late. In many ways his music, paradoxically, was less important than the event. Of the albums he recorded during this period, the most dramatic was *Tutu*, which carried an arresting Irving Penn photograph on its cover that seemed to indicate a new beginning. Made for Warner Brothers in 1986 (and produced by Marcus Miller) after 31 years with Columbia, without his regular touring group, it featured synthesised orchestral effects made possible by the programming of Jason Miles that simultaneously evoked Gil Evans but suggested the mystery of things unforeseen. Davis's final three albums for Columbia, *Star People* (1982), *Decoy* (1984) and *You're Under Arrest* (1985), were recorded when guitarist John Scofield was a member of the band, his twisted blues lines inspiring Davis to extend himself beyond the

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rather modest aspirations of his improvisations on earlier, post-comeback recordings.

Scofield – a former Berklee College of Music graduate who, in addition to his work with Davis, had performed and recorded with Jay McShann, Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Chet Baker, Billy Cobham, Gary Burton, Charles Mingus and David Liebman – formed his own band in 1986. With Marc Cohen on keyboards, Garry Grainger on bass and Dennis Chambers on drums, the group's cohesion was much admired by musicians at the time, and Scofield's guitar had now matured into a readily identifiable style with his use of unusual intervals and rhythmic sequences and fluid, often polytonal harmonies. With this new group, Scofield succeeded in reawakening the potential inherent in the eclecticism of a jazz-rock union to a greater extent than perhaps the return of Davis had done. *Blue Matter* (1987) is one of the key albums of the 1980s, reminding a rather self-righteous acoustic mainstream that great jazz could still emanate from jazz-rock and suggesting the idiom was far from exhausted.

The Blue Matter group was disbanded after almost three years of constant touring. Scofield then formed a group with Joe Lovano on tenor, Anthony Cox on bass and up-and-coming drum star Bill Stewart in 1989. The group remained together until 1993, producing a run of critically acclaimed albums, most notably *Meant to Be* (1991) and *What We Do* (1993). Less equivocal than his previous group, this ensemble mixed elements of the jazz-rock equation with acoustic jazz, a powerful duality that pointed strongly to the continuing influence of jazz-rock. Scofield continued to produce albums reflecting this ethos into the new millennium, including *A Go Go* (1998), with the organ trio Medeski, Martin & Wood, and *Bump* (2000).

Scofield's predecessor in the Davis band was guitarist Mike Stern, who had not been displayed to best advantage by the trumpeter, who wanted his young charge to play like Hendrix. Strongly influenced by Wes Montgomery and Jim Hall, Stern's more considered side can be heard on bassist Harvie Swartz's *Urban Earth* and *Smart Moves* (1986), his own *In a Different Light* (1990) and *Give and Take* (1997). He made several albums with saxophonist Bob Berg, both under his own name and Berg's, where the emphasis was on wide-eyed soloing over an unsubtle backbeat, but the commercial stance of the music could not entirely conceal an original voice. When Stern left Davis, it was to join a band co-led by Pastorius. During his tenure with Weather Report, Pastorius (who had evolved a virtuoso technique on Fender and fretless basses) suggested he might exert a defining role in the music. It was not to be: just like one of jazz's earlier, tragically doomed young heroes, Pastorius was to die at the age of 35, his end hastened by drugs, alcohol and fast living. In his wake he left several albums which attested to his virtuosity

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but, for one so gifted, rather curiously lacked depth or substance. Yet on his debut album, *Jaco Pastorius* in 1975, he had taken the jazz world by surprise with just four choruses of Charlie Parker's 'Donna Lee'.

Pastorius had been a key element in a trio led by guitarist Pat Metheny for his recording debut as a leader, *Bright Size Life* (1976). Metheny had been a child prodigy, teaching guitar at the University of Miami at 17 and joining the faculty of Berklee College of Music in Boston at 19. Metheny left Berklee in 1976 to form the Pat Metheny Group with Lyle Mays on keyboards, Mark Egan on bass and Danny Gottlieb on drums. Through tireless low-budget barnstorming, piling into a cramped van and travelling hundreds of miles between gigs, he had built his band into an international attraction by the end of the 1980s. The success of their 1978 album, *Pat Metheny Group*, the Grammy-winning *Offramp* (1981) and *First Circle* (1984) was the key to the group's growing popularity. Alongside his endeavours with his touring group, Metheny continued with his trio in a more equivocal jazz climate, while *80/81* (with tenor saxophonists Mike Brecker and Dewey Redman) revealed a wide-ranging vision of jazz.

As the popularity of the Pat Metheny Group grew, so did Metheny's ambitions for it. *Still Life Talking* (1987) and *Letter From Home* (1989) saw both Mays and Metheny creating suave yet accessible musical soundscapes using extended forms, so that with the release of *Imaginary Day* (1997) he was able to say, 'We have been spending the last ten years getting deeper and deeper into extended compositions and it's been a fascinating challenge. I'm not talking about just a one shot thing with a bunch of solos. I really do feel that in writing for the group it's like writing for a large ensemble because of what electronic instruments can do. No one else is seriously dealing with the potential of what electric instruments are capable of doing at this point in the jazz world, to me it's such a rich territory.'[32] A good example of Metheny's ambitious structures and 'orchestral' writing for electronic instrumentation is 'The Roots of Coincidence', at one point juxtaposing thrash, dance rhythms and even a passage that evokes French impressionism in a deftly handled collage (none of which is sampled, incidentally), contrasted by an expansive developmental section that takes a germ of an idea and spreads it over a broad canvas.

Like the Pat Metheny Group, the group Steps drew inspiration from the early jazz-rock experiments, this time with musicians who had been around at its inception. Vibraphonist Mike Mainieri had been a member of Jeremy and the Satyrs while tenor saxophonist Mike Brecker and keyboard player Don Grolnick had been members of the early jazz-rock group Dreams, which in live performance in 1969 had impressed Miles Davis, who frequently attended their New York concerts. Drummer Steve Gadd had played with a group called Stuff, and with Chick Corea and

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Chuck Mangione, while bassist Eddie Gomez was known through his work with the Bill Evans Trio. Steps attracted considerable underground interest through their performances at Seventh Avenue South, the New York jazz club owned by Brecker and his brother Randy. They were invited to Japan to play and record, and *Step by Step* and *Smokin' in the Pit* from December 1980 served notice that they had the potential to become a force in 1980s jazz. At the time, Mainieri called Steps a 'contemporary bebop band' and, indeed, many numbers they played were straight ahead and honoured the head-solos-head convention of bop, but often juxtaposed with square rhythmic patterns that suggested rock.

Paradox, recorded in 1981, revealed a more scrupulous attention to ensemble dynamics and articulation. In 1982 the band changed their name to Steps Ahead and their eponymous album was quickly dubbed 'the new acoustic fusion'. Largely misunderstood by critics at the time, the band's diligent application of sophisticated forms with a musical intent mediated by consistency of approach offered something fresh in the early 1980s. A unique, one-of-a-kind ensemble whose individual members succeeded in realising their collective potential, their frequent use of contemporary rhythms avoided the prevailing straight-ahead swing of the hard-bop renascence but meant they were frequently placed on the bill with electric jazz groups. To be heard, the band went electric themselves, sacrificing their astute acoustic poise, although *Modern Times* (1984) and *Magnetic* (1986) suggested they might take up the pathfinding role of electronic respectability vacated by the wind-up of Weather Report. But by 1987 the band had gone their separate ways. Brecker's own recording debut as a leader a year later, *Michael Brecker* (with Pat Metheny, Kenny Kirkland, Charlie Haden and Jack DeJohnette), remains a definitive statement in drawing together elements of post-bop, *ad hoc* song forms and shifting rhythmic densities that encapsulate not only the legacy of jazz-rock, but also the drawing together – fusing if you will – of many stylistic elements to create something new and fresh.

Appropriations and postmodernism: a contemporary dialectic

In the climate of renascence in the 1980s and 1990s, American impatience and intolerance with the contemporary, even to the point of displaying a refusal to acknowledge its place in the narrative of jazz history, had the effect of discrediting experimentation. Even so, it continued to flourish at the music's margins. In the 1980s, alto saxophonist Steve Coleman called his James Brown-inspired music M-Base, using funk rhythms as a basis for improvisation that by 1988 became the jazz critics' flavour of the

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month – for months. Coleman's group Five Elements made their recording debut with *Motherland Pulse*, which was followed by several albums on the JMT label before they were signed by record giant RCA Victor, by which time a certain monotony of tone and predictability had crept into their music. With, at various times, like-minded musicians such as alto saxophonist Greg Osby, Graham Haynes on trumpet, Geri Allen on keyboards, Marvin 'Smitty' Smith on drums and Cassandra Wilson on vocals, their music was almost in determined opposition, perhaps even protest, to the neo-classical movement. Osby, for example, called it 'a period of stagnation', adding, 'If you wore a suit and are between 18 and 22 and played like somebody on a Fifties Blue Note album, you got a record deal. That can't be good for the future of jazz. Unless someone expresses themselves with something they thought of, they conceived and brought to fruition, you don't have complete artists.'[33] In the mid-1990s, Coleman moved away from the chattering guitars and funk, and his experimental ensembles, The Metrics and The Mystic Rhythm Society, explored ethnic rhythms, a study that took him to Africa and Cuba in his search for authenticity.

M-Base was the first of several buzzwords that entered jazz at this time; acid jazz, coined by British DJ Gilles Peterson to describe his musical mix for dancefloor fans that included 1980s soul jazz, 1970s soul classics, jazz-funk, 1970s disco and 1960s classics from the Blue Note catalogue, reached New York in 1990. It took hold at the Giant Step, a club in the basement of the Metropolis Café in Union Square run by Jonathan Rudnick and Maurice Bernstein. Digable Planets launched their hit 'ReBirth of the Slick' at their club, home of the resident group Groove Collective, which combined bebop solos with a disco beat. However, much that passed for acid jazz was no more than pop music, such as The Brand New Heavies' 'Dream on Dreamer' or Jamiroquai's 'Blow Your Mind'. British guitarist Ronnie Jordan was more convincing: his 'new-jazz-swing' album, *The Antidote* (1992), sped up *Billboard*'s chart and numbered among the top five listings, selling over 200,000 copies on the strength of a funky version of Davis's 'So What'.

In its quest for novelty at the expense of substance, acid jazz soon had turntable scratches and rappers added to the mix. The London group, US3, with rappers Shabaam Sahdeeq and KCB, plus keyboardist Tim Vine and producer Geoff Wilkinson, made their name by sampling Blue Note funk-jazz hits with a heavy synthesised drum accompaniment. The success of *Hand on the Torch* produced the hit single 'Cantaloop Island (Flip Fantasia)', a heavily sampled version of Hancock's original from the album, *Empyrean Isles* (1964), which had an inventive solo by British trumpet player Gerard Prescencer added, thrusting hip-hop jazz into mainstream consciousness. The group's popularity prompted a re-release programme by Blue Note called the 'Rare Groove Series' dedicated to heroes of 1950s and 1960s soul

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jazz such as Donald Byrd, Grant Green, Gene Harris, Ronnie Laws, Horace Silver and Lonnie Smith. By the mid-1990s acid jazz had spread to most US cities, its popularity giving impetus to the careers of several young musicians playing in a non-acoustic context, such as Medeski, Martin & Wood, and guitarist Charlie Hunter.

From the mid-1980s, New York's 'Downtown' scene became the centre of American experimental jazz, a broad spectrum of music that went from the free bop of alto saxophonist Tim Berne to the Jewish Alternative Movement. Echoing developments in European jazz by broadening jazz expressionism through the addition of indigenous cultural elements, the Jewish Alternative Movement used Jewish folk tunes and religious songs, or themes inspired by them, as a basis for jazz improvisation. Groups such as the Hasidic New Wave, led by Frank London on trumpet and Greg Wall on saxophones with David Fiuczynski on guitar, the Paradox Trio led by Matt Darriau (actually a quartet), David Krakauer's Klezmer Madness, The Klezmatics and Gary Lucas's Gods and Monsters were among many that brought tone colours into jazz that had not been heard since the (albeit legitimised) clarinet introduction to Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* or Ziggy Elman's solos with the Benny Goodman Orchestra on 'Bei mir bist du schön' (1937) or on 'And The Angels Sing' (1939).

The doyen of the Downtown scene was alto saxophonist John Zorn, whose group Masada, formed in 1993, was named after the fortress in Israel where besieged Jews chose suicide rather than surrender to Titus's legions in the first century AD. Comprising Zorn plus trumpeter Dave Douglas, bassist Greg Cohen and drummer Joey Baron, they combined Hebraic folk music with the tradition of the Ornette Coleman Quartet of the late 1950s and early 1960s. With his stark and arresting solos, Zorn was revealed as a composer and conceptualist of great originality. Masada recorded prolifically, their repertoire eventually extending to some 600 compositions. Beginning with *Masada One* and progressing into double figures, their albums remained consistent in their artistic delivery, with *Masada Live in Jerusalem* (1994) a particularly vivid representation of the group.

Zorn's music, a substantial body of work, often makes widespread use of collage, a technique inspired by the modernists, but which postmodernism has made its own: a juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous elements where there is never one fixed configuration. Zorn has come to represent the postmodern impulse in jazz by his expropriation and transformation of practices, fragments and signifiers of sometimes different, sometimes alien musics and cultures to relocate them within his own expressionism. With *The Big Gundown* (1986) featuring boldly reworked movie themes by spaghetti-Western composer Ennio Morricone and *Spillane* (1987), a homage to B-movie private detectives in general and the Mike Hammer

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character in particular, Zorn not only garnered a kind of respectability for the Downtown scene but on 'Two Lane Highway' (from *Spillane*) broke the composition up with some 60 abrupt segues into contrasting moods.

Zorn called these segues 'jump cuts', which he likened to modern youth's compressed attention span that results in channel hopping on television. Here was postmodernism, streams of vivid fleeting images that destroyed the traditional organic unity of art, a matrix of internal relationships that appeared as a collage of musical events, one following closely on the heels of another. With the formation of Naked City in 1989, their eponymously titled album saw Zorn bring tight focus to the elements he had explored on *The Big Gundown* (movie themes) and *Spillane* (jump cuts) with elements reminiscent of the New Thing soundmakers of the 1960s with nine musical fragments (between 8 and 43 seconds in length) dotted throughout the album, refusing to yield to conventional meaning and thus experienced as a shock by the listener.

On 'Latin Quarter', Zorn uses jump cuts to programmatic effect, while 'Lonely Woman' (an Ornette Coleman composition) engages directly with postmodernism with its inclusion of the bass line from Henry Mancini's television theme, 'Peter Gunn'. The group, comprising Zorn on alto saxophone, Wayne Horvitz on keyboards, Bill Frisell on guitar, Fred Frith bass and Joey Baron on drums, made several further albums which add little to the group's startling debut. Perhaps with groups such as Naked City, with their unequivocal use of electric instruments and rock rhythms, we can trace the heritage of the original jazz-rock experimenters, pushing at the boundaries of jazz to find new horizons. Certainly this was true of several Downtowners. Horvitz with his own group produced two classic Downtown albums, *The New Generation* and *Bring Yr Camera*, while Frisell became celebrated as one of the most original guitarists of his generation, his own albums – some produced and directed by Zorn – drawing on elements of Americana including country and western and American folk tunes. The drummer Bobby Previte, who appeared on many Zorn recordings, equally established himself as a composer and conceptualist, introducing World Music elements and rock on albums such as *Claude's Late Morning* and *Empty Suits*. 'Now that adherence to a museum curator's idea of authenticity has become the rallying cry, Previte's music argues for divergence and freedom to ransack the tradition', observed *Down Beat* magazine in 1991.[34]

Postmodernism, reflected in the diversity of the Downtown scene, produced a myriad of highly personal styles and innovations that did not accede to commodification in the way previous styles of jazz had done. Marketing strategies as much as canon formation gather around unified concepts such as 'New Orleans', 'Chicago', 'swing', 'bop', 'hard bop', 'cool', 'West Coast', 'free', 'jazz-rock' and so on. The sheer stylistic diversity of postmodernism meant

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that it resisted convenient categorisation, so its impact was restricted to the recognition an individual player might achieve rather than the force generated by a community of similarly orientated and competing artists. Perhaps most importantly, postmodernism showed how the essentially teleological model of coherent evolution had now passed to individual contributors who refused to congregate around the security of established canons, but instead conceived and performed their own individual interpretations of jazz, drawing on a variety of sources, many beyond jazz. It was this juxtaposition of references, information-age sound bites decontexualised by juxtaposition, that created the 'new', and it was perhaps here that the future of jazz lay. Looking beyond established convention, these musicians sought to create something new and vital, a jazz reflecting their own time rather than that of previous generations, no matter how appealing it might have been to bask in the reflected glory of jazz's posthumous heroes.

Global fusions and the question of 'authenticity'

In the 1930s, Django Reinhardt showed just how close the camp-fire extemporisations of a Manouche gypsy guitarist were to jazz improvisation within the context of the Quintette du Hot Club de France. The group stood out because their jazz was so quintessentially European at a time when everyone else's was so quintessentially American. With violinist Stephane Grappelli playing ying to Reinhardt's yang, their boulevardier brio convincingly suggested that jazz could have a strong European component without sacrificing the elements that made African-American jazz compelling and subversive. It was a significant moment, revealing that jazz was not an exclusively American preserve – Reinhardt could count Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins and Eddie South among his admirers.

Reinhardt was the first major European musician to propose an alternative to the dominant American style of jazz expressionism. Hitherto, and subsequently, it was the great American innovators who set the standards by which everyone was judged. Musicians such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell, Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Ornette Coleman and Miles Davis emerged in such quick succession that the world was left gasping as it tried to keep pace with these pioneers. On the face of it, jazz appeared to be an American music with an international following, but in Scandinavia, musicians who had absorbed bebop at Parker's feet when he toured Sweden in 1950 began integrating elements of their own culture into the dominant American style of jazz expressionism. The evolution of what became known, in Scandinavia at least, as

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'the Nordic tone' in jazz was the first major global 'fusion' of jazz and World Music beyond the shores of the USA.

Lars Gullin's childhood and teenage years were spent on the island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea where he developed a first-hand knowledge of rural and urban Swedish music traditions, providing the inspiration for a tonal vocabulary that evoked the Swedish folk tradition he applied within the context of bebop. One of the most accomplished baritone saxophonists in jazz, in 1952 he recorded a version of 'Sov du lilla vida ung' (Sleep, little pussy-willow), but his own compositions such as 'First Walk', 'Merlin', 'Danny's Dream', 'Ma', 'Fedja', 'Fine Together', 'It's True', 'Like Grass', 'Castle Waltz' and many others were imbued with a pensive melancholy characteristic of his Swedish folk heritage and of Swedish composers such as Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Hugo Alfvén. In the 1960s, the development of a 'Nordic tone' was taken a stage further by Jan Johansson who, rather than seeking inspiration from Swedish folk music as Gullin had done, went straight to the source and interpreted indigenous folk melodies as a basis for jazz improvisation.

An accomplished pianist, Johansson had toured and recorded as a member of Stan Getz's quartet in 1960. In February 1961 Johansson recorded an album under his own name, *8 Bitar Johansson*, originally issued in Sweden. It was later released in America on the Dot label as *Sweden Non-Stop*, where it was awarded four-and-a-half stars by *Down Beat*. The record was a mix of Johansson's own compositions and jazz standards, but it also included an unconventional addition to a jazz record of the time: a Swedish folk melody called 'De salde sina hemman'. It garnered a favourable critical response, particularly in Scandinavia, something that encouraged him to record more Swedish folk songs during the course of 1962–3 with bassist Georg Riedel on three Swedish extended-play discs. These songs were taken from an anthology of some 8,000 indigenous melodies and folk songs published as *Svenska Latar* in 24 volumes. In 1964 the EPs were collected on the LP, *Jazz pa Svenska*.

The carefully nuanced sound of Johansson's piano, as revealed by the meticulous recording quality on *Jazz pa Svenska*, captured a new sound in jazz. 'Nordic tonality is in fact a sort of blues, Nordic blues, Scandinavian blues if you will', explained drummer Egil Johansen. 'For us jazz musicians it's but a short leap to experience that melancholy as a companion to joy' (Kjellberg 1998, 115). Two songs from this bestselling album, 'Visa fran Utanmyra' and 'Emigrantvisa', became widely played on Scandinavian radio, especially in Sweden, and were adopted as a symbol of Nordic tradition in the midst of an increasingly pluralistic culture. During the post-war years Scandinavia had readily accepted innovations from the US, from consumer products to social attitudes absorbed through film, theatre and literature.

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But by the time of Johansson's premature death in 1968, the Vietnam War was causing a crisis of conscience, prompting a lively debate around nationalism and what constituted the national soul. Johansson's music fitted perfectly into a Scandinavian culture that had become intent on reclaiming its Nordic sensibility, and music from *Jazz pa Svenska* was in perfect synchronicity with the times, assuming the trappings of a 'visionary statement'. Odd Sneegen (of Svensk Musik) claimed it was 'a rural symbol of security in a [Scandinavia] marching towards anonymous big city wildernesses'.

While Johansson was not alone in attempting to find a Nordic voice within jazz – trumpeter Bengt-Arne Wallin's *Old Folklore in Swedish Modern* (1962) was also moving along similar lines – it was Johansson's work that was the most popular and influenced younger generations of Scandinavian pianists, including Bobo Stenson and Esbjörn Svensson. Yet in seeking to express a cultural identity quite removed from the essentially African-American characteristics of jazz, it raises the question of 'authenticity'. Does an indigenous American music shaped by the African–American experience become less meaningful when played by non-Americans, and specifically, non-Americans who seek to import elements of their own culture into the music?

Such questions have a striking resonance with the reaction to Charles Ives's Second Symphony, which he completed in 1901 or 1902 when the dominant culture in America was predominantly derived from Europe. Then critics resisted the introduction of Stephen Foster and 'American' themes suggesting gospel music into the 'European' symphonic tradition. The issue we are concerned with in jazz is, of course, precisely the reverse of this: that of elements suggesting European cultures and folk traditions introduced into a music with a strong 'African-American' tradition. In both instances, resistance to established convention is framed in terms of an idealised past violated by the crass and insensitive pluralism of the present. Yet progress is impossible without change – indeed, the essence of jazz has been realised in the process of change itself. Today, we regard the arguments voiced against Ives's symphony as quaint when seen in the context of composers such as Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, William Grant Still and Elliott Carter, who consciously evoke elements of Americana in their writing. Jazz, which has continually been reinvigorated by the process of appropriation, has shown that in absorbing elements of quite different cultures it has successfully broadened the basis of jazz expressionism, as it had, for example, in the 1940s when Dizzy Gillespie introduced Cuban rhythms into bebop. 'You can apply any personal input coming from whatever part of the world and it's possible to find a way that will work in the jazz idiom', observed Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek. 'We have players from any part of the world now doing their own, shall we say native version. They

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find their own direction, influenced by their culture, but still using the very strong basic elements of jazz' (Nicholson 1995, 325–6).

Garbarek evolved his approach against a background of Nordic cultural revival. Self-taught from the age of 14, he was invited to record with George Russell in Stockholm as a 17-year-old. In 1968 he became a 'saxophone sensation' when he backed singer Karin Krog at the Montreux Jazz Festival and shortly afterwards formed his own group with guitarist Terje Rypdal, bassist Arild Andersen and drummer Jon Christensen. In 1969 he formed an association with producer Manfred Eicher, then about to set up his own record company, Edition of Contemporary Music (ECM). Garbarek's first record, *Afric Pepperbird*, was among the very first albums released by the new label. From the outset, ECM professed a subtle 'aesthetic of atmospheres' that proposed a 'sound scenario of nature and history' (*ECM: Sleeves of Desire* 1996, 14). Despite the presence of several American musicians on his label (the first ECM album was by Mal Waldron and in the 1970s ECM produced a bestselling album by Keith Jarrett), Eicher consciously sought out European musicians who projected a specific European identity in their playing. In Garbarek he found a musician who at the very beginning of his playing career had won an amateur music contest playing his own original music after just two years' playing experience, and who had no desire to play compositions associated with the standard jazz repertoire. 'It's not really my tradition', asserted Garbarek. 'The so-called "standards" are not *my* standards. I don't feel a close attachment to that music, music that's made for Broadway shows. They're great compositions, but I've never had an urge to use that music as the basis of my playing.'[35]

Garbarek's music represented an ordered calm in the often frantic world of jazz, projecting the stark imagery of nature near the Northern Lights: 'I can't say what extent growing up in Norway would influence you, but I imagine deep down it must have some influence. There are very dramatic changes of the seasons and the landscape is also dramatic.'[36] Rigorous and highly disciplined, he created an evocative tranquillity strongly rooted in Nordic folk-forms that gave prominence to his saxophone tone as the main expressive force. Creating a context in which his haunting saxophone appeared to commune with nature, an effect heightened by his use of a wind harp on the album *Dis*, his working groups in the early 1980s included Bill Frisell on guitar, Eberhard Weber on bass and Michael Pasqua on drums, and a quartet with Keith Jarrett. Later work included a group with pianist Rainer Brüninghaus, solo recordings against electronic backdrops and a collaboration with the Hilliard Ensemble that produced *Officium* (which had passed one million sales by 2002). Garbarek's approach to saxophone improvisation was widely influential, British saxophonists Tommy Smith and Andy Sheppard being among many who adopted a less excitable approach to

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improvisation, giving prominence to the saxophone tone as the main expressive force in their playing.

The 'Nordic tone' can also be traced in the work of Rypdal and pianist Bobo Stenson, who co-led the Rena Rama group in the early 1970s with bassist Palle Danielsson. Both Danielsson and Stenson cite the music of Borje Fredriksson as an influence on their 'Nordic' outlook to jazz. Among some of the remarkably talented younger Swedish musicians are pianist Anders Widmark, trombonist Nils Landgren, drummer Per Lindvall, vocalist Jeanette Lindström and pianist Esbjörn Svensson, whose albums *Winter and Venice* and *From Gagarin's Point of View* both won Swedish Grammy awards. Full of complex motifs and thoughtful stylistic allusions, Svensson's trio was one of the most original of Sweden's crop of young jazz musicians. Svensson also collaborated with Nils Landgren in his funk unit and on *Swedish Folk Modern*, reflecting the continuing use of folk themes within Nordic jazz. Keyboard player Bugge Wesseltoft, who appeared on Garbarek's albums (including *Rites* from 1998), took the moody electronic soundscapes that evoked the Nordic climate and mixed them with rhythms from contemporary dance culture. *Sharing* (1998) included turntable scratches and dancebeats but was imbued with distinctly European hues. Conceptually, it sounded far in advance of American fusion of the period. 'In Norway, once you reach a certain point you are encouraged to find your own voice', said Wesseltoft: 'I was taught it's no good copying McCoy Tyner or Bill Evans or whoever. There are already hundreds of musicians in America who do that.'[37]

In 1973, the group Garbarek co-led with Stenson recorded *Witchi-Tai-To* with Palle Danielsson on bass and Jon Christensen on drums, and included a 20-minute version of trumpeter Don Cherry's *Desireless*. Cherry, who established his reputation in Ornette Coleman's quartet in the late 1950s, recorded under his own name for the Blue Note label before embarking on a peripatetic existence that brought him in touch with a variety of cultures from Africa, the near East and the Far East. *The Sonet Recordings* from 1969, for example, were made in the US Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, and include improvisations using a wide variety of ethnic instruments. Resident for a long while in Sweden from 1970, Cherry's role in the development of improvised music in Europe in general, and Scandinavia in particular, is a subject not adequately addressed by jazz history. It was Cherry, for example, who suggested to Garbarek that he investigate Norwegian traditional music.

In later years, Cherry's collaboration with Collin Walcott on sitar and percussionist Nana Vasconcelos produced *Codona*, *Codona 2* and *Codona 3*. His last superior recording before his death in 1995 was *Multikulti*, primarily a collaboration with tenor saxophonist, pianist and percussionist Peter

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Apfelbaum in 1989–90, made after touring with Apfelbaum's Hieroglyphics Ensemble. Born and raised on the West Coast of America, Apfelbaum was a musical prodigy and by the time he was 16 was already working on concepts that united a wide variety of World Music elements with jazz. His debut album from 1990, *Signs of Life*, drew on elements of Yoruba praise singing, scales found in the Gnawa music of Morocco and Bambara music of Mali, the Rhumba Obatala of Afro-Cuban origin, reggae, African rhythms and free jazz as well as incorporating his own method of writing for a large ensemble that he calls 'rhythm block'. The integration of these elements into a cohesive whole, the sure handling of simple forms, detailed part writing, use of tension and release, and integration of the improviser into the rhythmic complexity of the compositions made this one of the finest albums in jazz during the 1980s and 1990s.

Apfelbaum's ensemble included several musicians who went on to record in their own right, including Josh Jones, Will Bernard and Jai Uttal who brought a distinct Indian flavour to the band. Uttal led his own Pagan Love Orchestra, swept with sounds of Indian culture, the sitar, dotor, kartals, dubdubbi and raga-like sequences set against contemporary rhythms. But Indian music was hardly a novelty in jazz: Coltrane had applied some of its precepts to his music and the Joe Harriott/John Mayer Double Quintet successfully adopted Indian ragas (scale-like patterns of selected notes from which melodic material is derived) for jazz improvisation in London in 1967 and 1968. *Indo-Jazz Fusions* and *Indo-Jazz Fusions II* seemed to point jazz in a new direction in the late 1960s, although the potential was not fully realised until the formation of McLaughlin's Shakti in 1974. The latter's eponymously titled first album, recorded in 1975, revealed the guitar virtuoso's playing *en règle* with the conventions of Indian music. The band recorded three albums during their three-year existence, but left the question of achieving a larger synthesis between World Music and jazz moot. When the band was reformed in the 1990s, McLaughlin allowed allusions to western harmonies to illuminate his improvisations, bringing that larger synthesis closer to realisation: see *Remember Shakti* (1997).

Less subtle than Shakti, Trilock Gurtu aimed for a more forthright fusion of Indian, World Music and jazz. His albums on the German CMP label included guests Cherry, L. Shakar (formerly of Shakti), Ralph Towner, Garbarek and (on *Crazy Saints* from 1993) Metheny and Zawinul. Yet despite the romance and deferred promise of the 'east-meets-west' fusions, it was primarily European musicians who seemed to be extending the boundaries of jazz in new and interesting ways. Edward Vesala was one of the key musicians in the burgeoning Finnish free-jazz scene of the late 1960s and early 1970s with the likes of Juhani Aaltonen, Eero Koivistoinen and Pekka Sarmanto, and came to international attention in 1973 as a member of

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Garbarek's trio on *Triptykon*, which stands as the saxophonist's most abstract recorded statement. Subsequently, Vesala toured extensively as a co-leader of the Tomasz Stanko–Edward Vesala Quartet which was wound up in 1978 after recording five albums.

Stanko, a highly original Polish trumpeter was, with Zbigniew Namyslowski and Krzysztof Komeda, one of the three most significant influences on Polish jazz. Komeda, a self-taught pianist and composer, became a legend and cult hero after his early death in 1969. Komeda provided the music for more than forty films, including classics of the Polish cinema by Roman Polanski and Andrzej Wajda. While improvisation was central to his film music, he regarded the latter as a separate activity from his career in jazz. His 1965 album, *Astigmatic*, with Namyslowski and Stanko, was one of the most important contributions to the shaping of a European aesthetic in jazz composition. Stanko continued to have a distinguished career on recordings after Komeda's death and in the 1990s recorded for ECM, including *Litania: Music of Krzysztof Komeda* (1997), widely acclaimed on release, and *Leosia*, *Matka Joanna* and *Balladyna*.

Vesala, as well as his involvement in free jazz, also played blues, rock tango, classical and film music. He began his career with two years of study at the Sibelius Academy, concentrating on music theory and orchestral percussion that helped establish him as a drummer while developing a parallel reputation as a composer in a variety of multi-media projects. His music for theatre included settings of the Finnish national epic *Kalevala*, which drew on very old folk ballads, and his experiences growing up in the remote forests of eastern Finland, where he became conscious of Finnish folk music's magical/religious function and the role music and myth played in the lives of the rural community. In 1974 he recorded *Nan Madol*, a mixture of brooding Scandinavian melancholia, freely improvised episodes and sinister folk-dance imagery that established him as one of a handful of European jazz composers to make sense of his cultural heritage alongside the dominant African-American ideology of jazz expressionism.

Satu (1977) continued Vesala's restless experimentation with a larger ensemble, this time built around the Vesala–Stanko Quartet with some impassioned playing from Rypdal. Vesala entered the 1980s heading his Sound & Fury music workshops, part percussion clinics and part music school, from which emerged his experimental ensemble Sound & Fury: see *Lumi* (1986). As Vesala observed the American jazz renaissance during the 1980s he became disturbed at what he saw as glib revivalism with its surface slickness, he believed, masking the music's loss of faith. His opposition to this perceived emotional sterility was voiced most forthrightly on his next album, *Ode to the Death of Jazz* (1989), a denunciation of the status quo that he felt had come to prevail in jazz. In the liner notes he wrote: 'This music is

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first of all about feeling and the transmission of *feeling*. This empty echoing of old styles – I think it's tragic. If that is what the jazz tradition has become then what about the tradition of creativity, innovation, individuality and personality?'

The Netherlands has a long tradition of adapting the impulse of the jazz improviser within new and challenging musical environments, and although *Machine Gun* (1968) by Peter Brötzman may not have been the first album by European 'free' improvisers to move away from the American model of jazz and attempt to establish their own specific identity, it remains the most famous and most memorable: a landmark album that has come to represent a seismic shift in the thinking of the European free movement. But while England, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden all produced important free-jazz musicians, it was the Dutch jazz scene that came to epitomise the diverse ways in which 'freedom' could be managed. Gaining momentum in the late 1960s, the Dutch musicians embraced political issues, blurred the boundary between theatre and music, replaced the seriousness of the American avant-garde with humour and parody, embraced classical influences such as Terry Riley and Charles Ives, and drew on a variety of cultural influences including elements that reached back into Dutch colonial history. The separateness of the Dutch jazz scene is illuminated by the resolute individuality of players like Willem Breuker, Han Bennink and Maarten Altena, who in 1978 had proclaimed his independence from American jazz, and Peter Kowald, who called his music 'Kaputt-play', the main objective of which was 'to do without the musical influence of most Americans'.[38]

Drummer Han Bennik emerged as one of the most important figures on the Dutch jazz scene. His first recording was with Eric Dolphy and in the 1960s he was the first-choice drummer for many touring American musicians, including Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon and Hank Mobley. At the same time he was immersing himself in the European improvised-music scene and was quickly recognised as one of its most original exponents. One of the first drummers to assemble a drum kit from all manner of 'found' percussion (i.e., almost anything from hub-caps to kitchen pans that could be banged, shaken or rattled), his recordings include work with Cecil Taylor, Derek Bailey, Peter Brötzman and during the 1990s the Clusone Trio (sometimes Clusone 3) which revealed a perfect context for his talents, not least in providing a forum that gave vent to his reputation as a 'performance' artist.

The Clusone Trio brought together cellist Ernst Reijseger and American saxophonist/clarinettist Michael Moore. A graduate of the New England Conservatory, Moore moved to Holland permanently in 1982, observing, 'In America there's more pressure to be conformist and players who were once pioneers of new music can work a lot more if they play tunes in a

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traditional way. In Europe there's a larger audience that grew up listening to guys like Han over a 25 year period, and they appreciate not hearing the same thing every time.'[39] A fluid mixture of pre-arranged forms and free expression, the Clusone Trio broadened the emotional range of jazz through humour, parody and visual theatre, elements conspicuously avoided in the American model. Such elements were not displayed so conspicuously in the work of tenor saxophonist Yuri Honing, one of the most influential of the young players in Holland. Artfully deconstructing songs associated with popular culture from the likes of Sting, Abba, Prince, Blondie and Björk, he succeeded in disentangling each tune from the memory of the original hit to create something new and subversive beyond the pop artifact: see *Star Tracks* (1996) and *Sequel* (1999).

That the national sensibilities of European jazz musicians could broaden the emotional range of jazz improvisation in new and fresh ways was increasingly felt in jazz after the 1970s. The success of ECM in building a catalogue of some of Europe's finest jazz musicians who brought elements of their own culture played a significant role in broadening the expressive range of jazz at a time when the American model had become increasingly inward-looking. The British saxophonist, John Surman, evoked English atmospheres on albums such as *The Biography of the Rev. Absalom Dawe*, *Road to St Ives* and *Proverbs and Songs*. Indeed, ECM's success helped shift the centre of jazz innovation ever closer to Europe. The low-key ardour of precisely articulated, rigorous yet emotionally intense improvisation was in contrast to the prevailing American approach which favoured a technical display increasingly seen, in Europe at least, as excessive.

Elsewhere on the Continent, Austrian Max Nagl combined the sensibilities of jazz and chamber music with the Viennese tradition of folk and café music on *Café Electric* (2000). The Vienna Art Orchestra under the direction of Mathias Rüegg has, since its formation in 1977, revelled in affectionately disrespectful adaptations of American jazz and has long taken pride in its particular European stance. Rüegg's compositions are often missions into uncharted territory for jazz improvisation, with beguiling titles like 'Nightride of the Lonely Saxophone Player', 'The Innocence of Clichés', 'Freak Aesthetics', 'Concerto for Voice and Silence' and 'Blues for Brahms'. There is an openness in which Rüegg embraces other musical forms, from classical to folk, Ellington to Erik Satie, that makes American jazz of the 1980s and 1990s seemed narrow and blinkered.

As Reinhardt revealed, lusty camp-fire rhythms and gypsy extemporisation are but a small step from jazz. In contemporary times, the work of violin virtuoso Roby Laktos and his ensemble moves convincingly between the two idioms without incongruity; the virtuostic Laktos inhabited the twilight zone between European folk music, classical music and jazz, and

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succeeds in showing the close interrelationship between all three, suggesting a continuation of the gypsy tradition that looked back to both Reinhardt and the gypsy flavours that once coloured the music of Haydn, Liszt and Ravel. The Dresch Quartet from Hungary represent a small touch on the tiller to bring these elements more directly into the forum of jazz. Led by Dudás Mihály Dresch on saxophones, with Ferenc Kovács on violin, Mátyás Szandai on bass and Jstvan Balo on drums, the quartet successfully invokes Coltrane's intensity and spirituality in themes inspired by Hungarian/gypsy folk songs. The step from Laktos to the Dresch Quartet may be small but, as *Riding the Wind* (2000) illustrates, it enriches jazz with exciting tone colours, rhythms and folk forms as the basis of improvisation.

Similar principles are used by Yugoslavian pianist (now resident in Paris) Bojan Zulfikarpasic, who combined a wide range of contemporary jazz idioms with ethnic Bosnian and Serbian folk melodies. On *Bojan Z Quartet* (1994) the fusion of these idioms suggested potential rather than a complete realisation, but with *Yopla!* (1995) Zulfikarpasic's well-rounded contemporary piano technique and conceptualisation produced moments of genuine musical excitement that on *Koreni* (1998) included 'La Petite Gitane', moving from free jazz to Balkan rhythms to straight-ahead jazz and the sound of an overdriven electric guitar. Native French musicians such as Louis Sclavis, Michel Portal, Aldo Romano and Henri Texier all imported quintessentially French elements into their music. At a time when the Lincoln Center Jazz Band and the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band were turning to the jazz repertory with re-creations of the likes of Ellington, Sy Oliver and Benny Carter, the Cartatini Ensemble's masterful deconstruction of Louis Armstrong offered something that was new and fresh in a way that the American note-for-note reconstructions did not: see *Darling Nellie Gray* (2000).

Today, without the dominant figures who have providentially appeared in the past to provide the catalyst for change, American jazz has increasingly turned in on itself. As Scott DeVeaux has pointed out, there is 'a revolution under way in jazz that lies not in an internal crisis of style, but the debate over the looming new orthodoxy: jazz as "American classical music"' (in O'Meally 1998, 505). The terms in which jazz was being appropriated to form part of the nation's cultural heritage suggested that the role of many American jazz musicians was increasingly becoming that of custodians of a music with clearly proscribed parameters.

As colleges and universities produced more and more students conscious of a limit to their art, usually terminating in the hard-bop era of the late 1950s and early 1960s, musicians appeared less eager to participate in staking out new ground. As American jazz paused in the 1980s and 1990s to move towards 'an alternative conservatory style for the training of young musicians' and 'an artistic heritage to be held up as an exemplar of American

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or African-American culture' (*ibid.*), it seemed apparent that academicism was breeding revivalism. With the 1990s and early-millennium New York scene given over in the main to neo-conservatism, and major recording companies fulfilling their commitment to jazz via young neo-conservative jazz musicians, a belief was being widely expressed among European jazz musicians[40] that the evolutionary zeal that had carried American jazz forward for almost a century had now burnt itself out; the task of carrying the music forward had crossed the Atlantic to Europe – Holland, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, Spain, France and Britain – and eyes turned elsewhere in search of the evolutionary continuum. Held in check for almost two decades, the momentum for innovation, the *sine qua non* of modernism, had become irresistible – not least as evidence that the music was continuing to evolve as an art form.

With American jazz's preoccupation with its past came a failure to acknowledge that the music had become so big it had finally outgrown its country of birth, and that its stewardship was no longer an exclusively American preserve. The centre of jazz had failed to hold and had shifted. As critic Kevin Whitehead has pointed out, in America there was 'a touching naivete about the impact the music was making around the world' (vi) and an apparent unawareness that, in relinquishing its pathfinder role, others would jump into the void. It raised the hitherto unimagined possibility of the vanguard of jazz, its cutting edge, no longer resting in its country of origin but in Europe.

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