

Syncopating Rhythms: Jazz and Caribbean Culture

Herbie Miller

When heavyweight jazzman Sonny Rollins includes a calypso in the order of his set—as he has for decades—then closes it with yet another extended Caribbean number, most recently “Don't Stop the Carnival,” one is compelled to reexamine the jazz aesthetic, its history and development. Randy Weston also infuses rhythms of the Caribbean, Africa and Asia into his lifelong engagement with jazz outside national borders. Unlike other explorative jazz musicians who — some have argued — embrace a European sensibility to develop ideas of what the avant-garde represents, Rollins and Weston must be appreciated for imagining jazz in a contrasting way. They do this by inventively incorporating distinctive Caribbean inflections to expand and animate jazz's language and its personality. What Rollins, Weston and other musicians embracing a Caribbean ethos present are questions of identity. They bring historical, sociological and aesthetic dispositions that have informed and expanded jazz beyond the claim of a unique American art form. This is so in spite of the many critics and musicians who represent an insular way of thinking when expressing opinions about music as diversified and democratic as jazz. There is an idea that espouses and perpetuates a narrowing or closing of borders, which jazz by its very democratic nature seeks to broaden. This episode is at the center of jazz's narrative, always suggested, but not expanded within the Caribbean context. And this is a Caribbean in which it is more realistic to geographically and culturally locate New Orleans, the perceived birthplace of jazz, rather than its connection to the American mainland.

Caribbean and African American cultures have embraced one another since the epoch of slavery. This embrace has not always been comfortable, nor should it be expected to be since African culture was, and remains, multifarious. The wide range of areas that Africans were taken from meant they were as different as they were similar. New World plantation experience, as well, was not homogeneous.

Accordingly, each society, like the ones they left behind, exhibited distinct cultural identities, while at the same time, displayed obvious overlapping. Africans in the Americas therefore, were, as suggests historian Michael Gomez, a “polycultural rather than syncretic” people.¹ Their shared sensibilities, common characteristics or similarities were sufficiently emblematic to the African way of life that the differences did not preclude the concept of collective values. Indeed, it was primarily the multiplicity of ideas that was maintained and embraced by New World Africans and their descendants that can explain an African American

culture. Historians Linebaugh and Rediker were clear in their statement regarding the black and enslaved population on the east coast:

During the first half of the eighteenth century, New York's [slave] trade was a shuttling from Manhattan down the North American coast to the West Indies and back. In the first half century surrounding 1740 (1715 and 65), roughly three out of four voyages followed the coastal/Caribbean route, [and] destinations ... especially the English and Dutch islands, Jamaica and Curacao in particular, and to a lesser extent French and Spanish colonies ... The primacy of the West Indies in New York's trade meant that the islands provided the vast majority of the city's slaves.... Four out of five slaves (79.5 percent) came to New York from the Caribbean (the bulk of them from Jamaica).²

From that early introduction and trading of Africans in the Atlantic World and the maritime shuttle between ports in the West Indies and America, African-Americans and their Caribbean counterparts established relationships based on what Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. refers to as "shared African and African derived tendencies."³ West Indians were active in the northern work force, plowed southern plantations, interacted in the cultural dialogue of the time, and participated in the struggle for American Independence. Consequently, towards the end of the revolution on the mainland, American blacks loyal to the British were transported to the Bahamas and Jamaica. Then, following the establishment of the republic of Haiti, vast numbers of newly liberated blacks migrated to the then French colony of Louisiana consolidating further the shared and diverse traditions between them.⁴

As a result, both American and Caribbean black communities have benefited from and influenced each other in nearly every aspect of social, political and cultural survival.⁵ In the American Revolution, the Civil War and in every major conflict in defense of The United States thereafter, blacks from both lands fought together in the name of a freedom they understood, perhaps, as a concept more complex than whites could imagine. In the various areas in which they have engaged, the West Indian presence has functioned towards the formation of a larger African American, hence American culture, one based on the principles of freedom. People of African descent, forced to labor throughout the Americas, constructed ways to free their souls, if not themselves, from bondage.

From ring shouts to ancestral worship, from field hollers to jazz, dance and music were pivotal in the struggles for liberty. These cultural devices that represent expressions of free will are enmeshed into what has become popular African American culture. It is a culture, however, that is not without Afro-Caribbean influences at its root. As I will demonstrate in this essay, jazzmen Sonny Rollins and Randy Weston are not alone in embracing the Caribbean sensibility as a primary source of their identity. I suggest that they are among a group of musicians whose

music challenges the clam for jazz as exclusively American. Much of the music they create debunks the idea held by jazz purists, who espouses and perpetuates a narrowing or closing of cultural borders. These are ideas, which threaten the democracy invested in jazz, an ideal emblematic to its character, and to its sense of freedom. These are among the paradigms I will address while exploring the thought that jazz and Caribbean culture are inextricably linked to a similar historic plantation experience. Yet in the sphere of jazz (with the exception of the Cuban element particularly during the bebop period around the 1940s), little has been acknowledged regarding a West Indian component.

That oversight will also be addressed in this paper. As such, my argument will make a claim for the West Indies as a seminal territory, particularly for early jazz, as much as New Orleans, Kansas City, Chicago, and New York, and that the region has, since jazz's beginnings, been a source of inspiration and supplier of ideas and personnel to the form. This is probably so because it was on American plantations that various African and Caribbean strains at the root of jazz first merged; it was in America that it climaxed and coalesced into what we call jazz. However, let it be acknowledged that within the mainland, a diverse community of African Americans, or Africans from within the Americas, collaborated consciously and serendipitously in the transformation of African characteristics into an African American identity.

While remaining cognizant of the fact that Francophone Islands, formally the French West Indies, have had as much as any to offer at jazz's inception, for this discussion I will focus primarily on the otherwise neglected phenomenon that the Anglophone Caribbean, formally the British West Indies, have provided ingredients –rhythms, personnel, attitude - to the flavor and making of jazz no less than American blues, country, R&B and jazz have influenced reggae, calypso, merengue, including bossa nova and other forms of Caribbean popular music developed around the coast of the Americas. Indeed, the root of these musical expressions is Africa. The influential musician, pianist, composer, and advocate of Africanist thought Randy Weston refers to the music called jazz as “African Rhythms.” “For me, the most compelling aspect of African culture, North, South, East or West is its music.” He continues, “All modern music, no matter what its called - jazz, gospel, Latin, rock, bossa nova, calypso, reggae, samba, soul, the blues, even the ‘freedom’ music of the avant-garde- is in debt to African rhythms.”⁶

As the shaping of America throughout its history relied on the labor and technology of enslaved and free Africans and Africans in the Americas, so too has its culture; its rhythms, benefited from the African presence. From the heart of the Kongo, can be traced the origins of Argentinean tango, Cuban mambo, Jamaican Kumina, and in New Orleans, the cultural significance of Congo Square.⁷ In today's music world, it is the musician who comfortably

interacts with multiple cultural approaches in his/her relationship with jazz in particular, who best expresses the idiom's history and expanding range. Among this community of musicians, jazz can no longer be solely associated with a quick glance at Africa, the notion of New Orleans and Kansas City as its earliest incarnation, nor, can Afro-Cuban and Latino influences be regarded as the primary paradigm in the shift to modern jazz. The new jazz history must include personnel and musical expressions from the Anglophone (and Francophone) Caribbean, which influenced its earliest beginnings and increasingly permeate performances of the present. In his essay *Black Music in New Orleans*, Curtis Jarde affirms:

The Caribbean connection represents an especially vital linkage for black musical development in New Orleans. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, the arrival of a substantial number of West Indians, both slave and free, had mushroomed the black population in the crescent city substantially. Situated as it is on the northern rim, New Orleans actually counts as a Caribbean community, and the transit of musicians back and forth has left a considerable impression upon the city's vernacular musical style. Both the jazz and rhythm and blues traditions endemic to the city convey rhythmic elements suggestive of West Indian influence.”⁸

Newspapers advertising the sale of persons in bondage, or for the return of former enslaved Blacks who liberated themselves, so called “runaway slaves,” confirm the West Indian presence in northern and southern states. Often they were described as from the British Isles. Additionally, many were identified as musicians. Skilled bondsmen were considered more valuable than ordinary field workers, therefore they commanded higher premiums.⁹ Here, the musicologist Eileen Southern provides some examples. Upon the pages of the *South Carolina Gazette*, of April 15, 1745 appeared this advertisement, “RUN AWAY from the Pelham Privateer – Thomas Ebsary, born in Jamaica, a tall slim Fellow hard of Hearing; he beats a Drum very well and is well known amongst the Negroes in Charles town having been here before with captain Brasher. Whosoever apprehends the said Negro shall have 5 lb. reward by applying to Reid and Kennan.”¹⁰ Another advertisement appearing in the April 17, 1776 edition of the *Virginia Gazette* read, RUN AWAY ... a likely Negro Man named Damon ... was born in the West Indies, beats the drum tolerably well, which he is very fond of.” *The New York Gazette-Post-Boy* on June 21 1748 read, TO BE SOLD, A Negro [West] Indian man slave, about forty years of age well known in town, being a fiddler. Likewise, the court records of the New York City slave revolt of 1741 chronicles the activities of a Negro named Jamaica, who was “frequently at Hughson's tavern with his fiddle.”¹¹

Descendants throughout mainland America succeed both enslaved peoples and self-liberated or “runaways” from the West Indies. As evidenced by the examples cited, slave era

newspapers like the *South Carolina Gazette* frequently identified fugitives from bondage by specific nationality as well as by general place of origin. They also described their special skills, individuality and musical affinity. Without doubt, among African-Americans from the recently liberated Haiti, who, immigrated to the then French colony of Louisiana, there must have been musicians. “These black settlers were allowed to participate in the everyday lives of their respective societies whether North or South –free of legal constraints, even if they were considered to be of a lower social level than their white counterparts.”¹²

Over the next two centuries, free blacks from the Caribbean who settled in New Orleans added to that city’s complex mix of Native American, Euro-French and Creole sensibilities and Afro-diasporic traditions, particularly those with a Caribbean ethos. Jazz historian John Szwed tells us that “the clue to West Indian relations to jazz lies not in New York, but in New Orleans, America’s Caribbean city.”¹³ With their exposure to the West Indian presence on the mainland, and in particular New Orleans, it is therefore not surprising that calypso was a genre for which jazz musicians displayed tremendous empathy. The New Orleans clarinetist and soprano saxophonist Sidney Bechet exhibited this influence. One of the earliest stars of jazz, Bechet teamed with Bob Wilbur to record calypsos with Trinidad’s Duke of Iron. He also played in the “Haitian Orchestra” in 1939 with Willie “The Lion” Smith. Of the tune “Sous les Palmiers,” Szwed observes, “the melody may be Haitian but the style is Pan-Caribbean.”¹⁴

Not only were players, and the lifestyle of some of jazz’s earliest contributors informed by a Caribbean aesthetic, but its influence on rhythm and blues is also noticeable. Pianist “Professor Longhair,” whose real name is Roy Byrd, ... described his own playing variously as ‘a combination of offbeat Spanish beats and calypso downbeats,’ and ‘a mixture of rumba, mambo, and calypso.’”¹⁵ In New Orleans, West Indian sensibility asserted itself in early American culture; it migrated with the riffs of jazz not only along the northern path, via the Mississippi to St. Louis, then on to Chicago and New York, but the international trajectory as well. In time, from among both the enslaved and free, “... a veritable honor roll of internationally recognized musical figures would derive from their midst, including such illustrious names as Edmond Dédé, Basile Bares, Lucien Lambert, Eugene V. Macarty, and in the jazz period, Ferdinand Joseph Le Menthe (Lamonthe?), better known as Jelly Roll Morton.”¹⁶

By the early twentieth century, Jelly Roll Morton, the noted self-styled originator of jazz, whose New Orleans also connected him to Haiti, and possibly Cuba, coined the phrase the “Latin Tinge” to explain the Caribbean inflection of early New Orleans jazz.¹⁷ He might have called it a “Caribbean lilt,” since both freed and enslaved West Indian musicians of the day lent their accent to the creolization of what would emerge as a distinct African American culture. “We had every

different kind of a person in New Orleans . . .” Morton told Alan Lomax in his legendary Library of Congress recordings on a hot May day in 1938. “ . . . We had French, we had Spanish, we had West Indian, we had American, and we all mixed on an equal basis . . .”¹⁸ Lawrence Gushee, concurs. He states that jazz was a product of “ the peculiar and idiosyncratic social structure of new Orleans, in which the usual U.S. polarity of black and white was much complicated by a Caribbean – derived third caste of free black persons and their descendants.”¹⁹ If we must acknowledge New Orleans as, in fact, the cradle of jazz, then it must be recognized as a cradle in which multiethnic and poly-cultural players were fed a stew of gumbo which of course was blended with a healthy sprinkling of West Indian rhythms. Lomax informs us:

African drumming. . . Haitian rhythms and Cuban melody, native Creole satiric ditties, American spirituals and blues, the ragtime and the popular music of the day – all these sounded side by side in the streets of New Orleans and blended in the rich gumbo of New Orleans music.²⁰

Supervising the playback of recordings on a trip to the Crescent City, Lomax describes the atmosphere in the studio while listening to “The Depression,” a song he had just taped. “ During the playback of his ironic ballad, Ulysses’ wicked old eyes popped with delight. He slapped his withered and flapping thighs and cheered himself passionately. The neighborhood apparently concurred, for the house debouched [sic] Creole ladies of all ages who shrieked with laughter at every Calypsonian turn of the song.”²¹ These turns on song continue to be heard wherever Blacks throughout the Diaspora have settled. When required to perform court songs on Caribbean plantations, black musicians would add an extra line, or break, called a fifth figure. This break would depart from the straight European rhythmic style and introduce an approach that was more syncopated and polyrhythmic. These rhythms provide musical accompaniment to the various ceremonies across the Americas celebrating aspects of black life as peoples of African descent have maintained the festival or carnival traditions witnessed by European explorers when they first arrived there. These are traditions still alive in Africa, New Orleans and the Caribbean, as well as throughout the Diaspora.²²

The “calypsonian turn of the song,” was probably what the party crasher at Louis Armstrong’s barbeque celebration must have had in mind. On his seminal 1926 recording “King of the Zulus,” a song about the traditional Mardi Gras Festival procession celebrating African culture in New Orleans, Armstrong suggests an appetite for barbequed chitlins. However, another taste is added to the menu when a West Indian crashes the party with a lilting shout. The interloper demands that the proceedings cease. “ Wait man, wait. Stop, stop, wait man, because a

from Jamaica, an a don't mean to interrupt the party. But one of me countryman tell me dere is a chittlin rag going on here. Madam, fix me one order of dose tings yu cal chittlins, but I call it in a tube, an I play one of me native jazz tune."²³ A calypso? If not, the encounter portrayed by Armstrong's allegorical statement betrays a Caribbean presence, at least at this crucial moment of jazz's development. It is an acknowledgement of the West Indian, or specifically, Jamaican presence in the formative years of jazz. Indeed, in the first recording of this tune, the intruder is identified as Jamaican.²⁴ In a second rendition, Armstrong simply identifies the self-invited guest as a West Indian. Of that moment in the setting of jazz's textual history, Norman Weinstein comments, "The Caribbean interruption to a narrative of mainly U.S. jazz musicians has a distinguished precedent. . . . A more uncanny reminder of how the New Orleans creation of jazz was sharply seasoned by Caribbean musical influences would be hard to imagine."²⁵ At the same instant Armstrong was experiencing his Caribbean interruption, Sam Manning, also from the islands, was fully integrated into the wider New York socio-political and cultural scene. To be sure, the best-known West Indian in America during the early twentieth century was the Jamaican-born Black Nationalist Marcus Garvey. And one of Garvey's many associates was the Trinidadian Manning, who was an events promoter, bandleader and vocalist who was considered one of the most successful calypso musicians around. Music producer/ historian Donald R. Hill reports that " . . . West Indian stage performer Sam Manning seemed to have a corner on the West Indian music scene in New York in the 1920's."²⁶ However, listening to Manning's recordings, in addition to his calypso phrasing and topical observations, one is obliged to acknowledge the more than subtle impact jazz had on his musical thinking. Manning was associated with figures like Fats Waller, so his relationship to jazz is understandable. Nevertheless, it was his band that exhibited the most profound absorption of the jazz idiom. In their dexterity and swing, features some would argue that's more associated with American bands than with foreign ones, his musicians were no less adept than American jazz musicians. "For West Indians in the United States, jazz rhythms and bands that could also play West Indian tunes were more in order . . ." wrote Hill.²⁷ Music historian Colin J. Bray was surprised by the music he encountered on old 78s of Manning's. In the liner notes to the CD *Sam Manning, Volume 1*, he declares:

I was struck by Manning's exuberant vocals but also by the extremely hot accompaniments . . . Unfortunately, we may never know for certain the identity of these wonderful musicians. It might surprise some collectors to see West Indian music issued on a jazz label . . . but I offer no excuse. To my mind, for music to be described as jazz, it has to be hot, emotional and swing. Make no mistake, some of the tracks on this CD contain some very hot jazz indeed; the clarinetist and saxophone players in particular are far hotter players than many well known jazz names.²⁸

Manning used his popularity to promote Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, extending the influence of West Indian musicians beyond jazz and into the social and political fiber of America. He performed at rallies, wrote the music for theatre productions, and recorded songs exalting the Garvey philosophy. One poster for a Garvey fundraiser announced "Porter Grainger and Sam Manning present... MONSTER BENEFIT for U.N.I.A. At Liberty Hall, 138th Street. TUESDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 16, 1924. ..." ²⁹ Two other posters advertised the Hey-Hey and Brown Sugar presented by Mrs. Amy Ashwood Garvey at the Lafayette Theatre in 1926 and 1927 that featured Manning, along with Fats Waller and his Harlem Serenades.³⁰ Also in 1924, Manning recorded "African Blues," which Bray suggests is probably the first blues-based song to establish continental repatriation as an objective for some West Indians," and of course blacks in general). "Engleton Blues" is another homily on the Garvey movement," he further stated.³¹ Andrew Simmons, Jazz Curator at the British Library National Sound Archive, further informs us that Garvey "featured jazz heavily in his events and UNIA-related music was played by such jazz instrumental greats as Fletcher Henderson, Coleman Hawkins, Don Redman and even Fats Waller and his 'Jamaica Jazzers.'³² Indeed, on May 10, 1924, Waller and the Jamaican Jazzers recorded "West Indian Blues," a tune with striking resemblance to Manning's "Engleton Blues."³³ Writing for *The Potomac River Jazz Club*, Don Rouse in "Roots of Jazz: New Orleans and Caribbean Music, provides additional examples: "On the "Original Tuxedo Rag," after the first strain, the composition is the same as "West Indies Blues" (both first and second strains). Although "West Indies Blues" was published by New Orleans musicians Spencer and Clarence Williams, it has a first strain melody similar to "The Bergee" (Sam Manning, accompanied by the Cole Jazz Trio, Okeh, 1925)." Rouse's other examples include "Blanche Touqoutoux" (Kid Ory, Decca, mid-40's), and its similarity to "Why Me Neighbor Vex" (Lionel Balesco, Banner, 1933); the similarity of the first strain of "Blanche Touqoutoux" to "Belle Madame" (first strain) (Orchestre Creole Delvi, 1932), as well as to "En Sens Unique SVP" (first strain) (Stellio, Odeon, 1929), "Why I Run" (second strain) (June Nelson, Jubilee, 1949), and to "Lignum Vite" (Sam Manning, Okeh, 1927). Another example is the first strain of "Aurora Bradaire" and "West Indies Blues" (first and second strains). "Rum and Coca Cola" (first strain) (Houdini, Decca, 1940's), and "Moussieu Dollar" (second strain) (Alexander Stello, Odeon, 1929).³⁴

Rouse uses these illustrations to argue that the close similarity between New Orleans jazz and what is known as "West Indian, Caribbean and/or Calypso music," share distinct melodic and harmonic ties. They also share rhythm patterns, not just one specific rhythmic phrase, but also the

overlay of rhythmic phrases, as in West African music, in which the accents fall in different places. “In fact” he states, “exactly the same rhythmic patterns, and combinations of rhythmic patterns...are to be found in both geographic areas.”³⁵

It is instructive to note that no less a person than Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington places the West Indian in the middle of the creation of jazz. Addressing the origins of that art form Ellington asserts, “Before ...it reached New Orleans, the original African element had made itself felt in the West Indies....”³⁶ This statement supports Rouse’s hypothesis and agrees with Randy Weston’s assertion that jazz and calypso share a common origin – Africa.³⁷ However, Ellington’s chronology of jazz’s connection to its origin marks the Caribbean as the central link. He demonstrated this concept in one of his many epic recordings, *A Drum is a Woman*, (1956). Ellington called it a “musical fantasy or allegory, [which] told the story of jazz in terms of the adventures of Madame Zaji and Carribee Joe, from the Caribbean to the moon via Congo Square and Fifty Second Street.”³⁸ In other words, from jazz’s inception to the stratospheric orbiting of Sun Ra.

In his own compositions, Ellington further highlighted that connection. For example, he introduced “Carnival” in 1942. “West Indian Dance,” a dedication to the heroics of free Haitians who helped liberate Savannah, was recorded in 1945 as part of the suite *Black, Brown and Beige*. The aforementioned *A Drum is a Woman* recorded in 1956, contains “Carribee Joe,” “Rhumbob,” and “Rhythm Pum Te Dum.” Additionally, there are “Limbo Jazz,” 1962 (aka “Imbo,” 1966), “Virgin Island Suite,” 1965, and “West Indian Pancake,” 1966. Still, Duke went even further in supporting his claims. In his autobiographical diary, *Music is My Mistress*, he explains the uniqueness of his band’s sound and tells why he selected certain musicians. Speaking of the innovative trombonist Tricky “Sam” Nanton, Ellington said:

What he was actually doing was playing a very highly personalized form of his West Indian heritage. When a guy comes from the West Indies and is asked to play some jazz, he plays what he thinks it is, or what comes from his applying himself to the idiom. Tricky and his people were deep in the West Indian legacy of the Marcus Garvey movement. A whole strain of West Indian musicians came up who made contributions to the so-called jazz scene, and they were all virtually descended from the true African scene. Bop ... is the Marcus Garvey extension [into modern music].³⁹

Compositions co-authored with Puerto Rican trombonist Juan Tizol including “Caravan,” (1937) “Jubilesta” and “Pyramid,” (1938), “Conga Brava” (1940), and “Perdido” (1942) further demonstrate the impact of Ellington’s point. The pertinence of Maestro Ellington’s observations

is informative, for they suggest that other bands of the period might have employed West Indians as well.

Certainly before, but unquestionably through the 1920's Harlem Renaissance, through the swing era, and to the period that bebop revolutionizes jazz, West Indians were mingling with African Americans at every level of society. Among these immigrants many were aware of Garvey's speeches on self-reliance through education, craftsmanship and entrepreneurial endeavors. They included people who shared a humble existence, politicians, educators, undertakers, doctors, preachers, numbers runners, pimps, prostitutes, gangsters, musicians and club owners.

One such club owner was Henry Minton, a Jamaican, who ascended to the office of delegate in the local 802 musician's union. He was the first Black person to hold this title. His club, Minton's Playhouse, which was located at 210 West 118th Street, was a heaven for the beboppers on the threshold of revolutionizing jazz. It was there between 1939 and the early 40's that Thelonious Monk, Kenny Clarke, Mary Lou Williams, Dizzy Gillespie and the Oklahoma guitarist Charlie Christian met to work through the treacherous chord changes and harmonic contours of bop. "Musically, bebop expressed strong influences of musical idioms originating in Africa via the Caribbean islands."⁴⁰ The importance of Minton's to the development of bop, or modern jazz as it was sometimes called, can't be overemphasized. William P. Gottlieb gives some perspective on the club's legendary status: "...Minton's Playhouse, [was] an undistinguished-looking night club in Harlem. Probably never before in history had a complete art movement been created in a single room."⁴¹ Roy Carr calls it the "Crucible for the biggest-ever shakeup in jazz, ... [with] a house band led by trumpeter Joe Guy that included Thelonious Monk and Kenny Clarke."⁴² Mr. Minton provided a venue for musicians to work on ideas, compositions and rehearse their music while patrons ordered drinks and cheered them on. These were musicians who had grown weary of the swing music that limited their innovative opportunities, and who sought newer avenues of expression. Teddy Hill, the club's manager, realizing that out of town musicians would often stop by to "jam" with the house band, began to actively encourage these encounters, which resulted in all night "cutting" sessions. The recording ban during the period of 1942-44 virtually denied the preservation of bop's earliest vocabulary. Carr states that "while a plethora of both studio recordings and 'live air shots' accurately document Charlie Christian's dazzling work with Benny Goodman's sextet, were it not for the informal swing-based sessions featuring Dizzy, Monk, Christian and Clarke that obsessive fan Jerry Newman privately captured on his portable recording machine at Minton's during the early

40's then little hard evidence would remain of bop's birth pangs."⁴³ Thelonious Monk sums up the atmosphere of Minton's playhouse:

While I was at Minton's, anybody sat in who would come up there if he could play. It never bothered anybody. It was just a job. I had no particular feeling that anything new was being built. It's true modern jazz probably began to get popular there. But as for me, my mind was like it was before I worked Minton's. It got a little glamorous maybe on Monday nights when Teddy Hill, the manager, would invite the guys who were at the Apollo that week. As a result, all the different bands that played the Apollo got to hear the original music, and that way it got around, talk started going around, about the fellows at Minton's.⁴⁴

Henry Minton, like Monk, might not have realized he was making history when he opened this small club in Harlem and making it available to what must have seemed a group of eccentric musicians. A group, nonetheless, that included African Americans and West Indians whose creative efforts changed the direction of jazz.

Charlie Parker one of the main architects in that change, had the West Indies on his mind in his performance of "Estraleta," "Little Suede Shoes" and "Sly Mongoose," the Jamaican mento song popular around 1921 that ridicules Alexander Bedward, a turn of the century preacher and anti-colonial advocate.⁴⁵ These calypso recordings testified to his recognition of south of the border riffs. The important tenor saxophonist, Sonny Rollins, reflecting on Parker's calypso recordings, points to the open-mindedness of the alto saxophonist and bebop innovator. "Well, he also recorded "Barbados" . . . and that would just show that he was an artist that would have enough recognition that this was part of his culture, of his heritage if you will. So, that's not surprising. . . . He was able to relate to world music, . . . being the musician that he was, I think he heard something in Caribbean music which was more like his heritage, which he felt in a different way."⁴⁶

Probably no modern jazz musician had a better feeling for Caribbean music than Dizzy Gillespie. Dizzy's 1940's big band employed Caribbean musicians and during the late 1950's, Barbadian descendant Chris White was the bassist for the quintet that toured the Caribbean producing the record "Jambo Caribe."⁴⁷ However, while Dizzy's landmark association with the Afro-Cuban percussionist Chano Pozo receives acknowledgement for its legendary achievements, and so it should, his association with Anglophone Caribbean musicians seem to be discussed only in passing. Music aside, though Sam Manning's efforts in the 1920's to influence African American socio-political thought through his artistic relationships prefigure the strong political identity of later jazz artists, other Caribbean jazz musicians such as Talib Dawud, an Antiguan, and Trinidadian Sheik Daoud Faisal, both of whom through their association with Dizzy

Gillespie's big band were instrumental in initiating the conversion to Islam among some jazz musicians during the 1940's and early 1950's.⁴⁸ Their efforts bear further evidence to the importance of Caribbean immigrants, and musicians in particular, to jazz. Among the early converts to Islam were Kenny Clarke, Art Blakey (Buhaina), Hasaan Ibn Ali (whose only recording is with Max Roach), Yusef Lateef and Ahmad Jamal.

Other jazz notables like Trumpeter Clifford Brown, recording with Chris Powell's Blue Flames on March 21, 1952, recorded, "I Come From Jamaica." A calypso tune with the refrain "I come from Jamaica, Jamaica she's my home" on which Brown solos for a full chorus followed by what his biographer Nick Catalano calls "jungle sounds and noise." Here, Brown and the band are doing what they think they are supposed to be doing – much like Duke said Caribbean musicians did when they tried to play jazz. At the same session another calypso-tinged tune "Ida Red" was recorded.⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, calypso was a genre for which jazz musicians displayed tremendous empathy since they too would have been exposed to the West Indian presence on the mainland, and in particular New Orleans where convincing Caribbean contact was established. West Indian sensibility asserted itself in early American culture; it migrated with jazz from New Orleans along the northern path, via the Mississippi and railroads to St. Louis, Chicago and New York.

Immigration laws made it easier for Caribbean citizens to move to England. However, a great many made their way to North America, settling in Toronto, Canada, and particularly New York. "In the nineteen- thirties," writes Jervis Anderson, "more than twenty per cent of Harlem's black population were people from the West Indies."⁵⁰ Caribbean immigrants assimilated well with the African American community, but unlike their black brethren, the West Indians had a different position in relation to whites. Following their compatriots of the previous decade, the new immigrants maintained a sense of pride and dignity in their West Indian heritage. They continued to represent what, according to the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1925, some consider a West Indian trait. "West Indians were 'notably lacking in the Southern Negroes' diplomacy.' Made 'lots of noise about their rights.' And were 'very quick to go to court – the last place on earth the Southern Negro seeks.'⁵¹ Coming from countries whose black population vastly outnumbered whites, it was natural for the "foreigners" to exhibit such attitudes. Likewise in their homes, they continued to practice and pass on to their children a Caribbean aesthetic. In these homes, Caribbean customs - history, foods, language, dress, ceremonial occasions and music- were integral to preserving identity.

Many jazz musicians, including Leonard Gaskin, Cecil Payne, Roy Haynes, Walter Bishop Jr., Randy Weston, Wynton Kelly, and Sonny Rollins came from such homes. These are among jazz musicians who have acknowledged their Caribbean identity and embraced family roots extending to the very epicenter of their island heritage. Each has established his West Indian personality by creating compositions that affirm Caribbean tradition. In addition to Rollins with his penchant for traditional Caribbean songs and compositions like “Duke of Iron,” and Weston with “Fire Down There” and “Jamaica East,” an array of modern jazz musicians have continued the trend of consistently recording and performing jazz with a West Indian effect.⁵² Without a doubt, the climax of a Rollins performance over the past twenty-five years has been his show-stopping rendition of traditional calypso songs like “Hold Im Joe,” “Brown Skin Gal,” “Don’t Stop the Carnival,” and particularly “St Thomas.”

Sonny Rollins was the only one of three children born in America to his Caribbean parents. “I was born in Harlem.” Rollins states, “but my father was born in St. Croix. My mother was born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, and her father came from Haiti.”⁵³ Rollins is one of the world’s most celebrated musicians, and his role in jazz is legendary. Because of his high profile, it is significant that Sonny Rollins has consistently included island rhythms in his recorded and live performance repertoire. Rollins’ affinity for jazz and calypso was inculcated at an early stage of his development. A solid grasp of the jazz tradition was evident early in his career, and by the time he was nineteen years old he had developed a reputation that led to associations with innovators Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, J. J. Johnson, Max Roach and Charlie Parker.

Always aware of his Caribbean roots, Rollins returned to his heritage in the mid-1950’s with fervent creativity, culminating in the studio session that produced the album *Saxophone Colossus*, a recording that included the tune “St Thomas.”⁵⁴ Jazz historians agree that “in 1956 came the first of a series of landmark recordings issued under Rollins’ own name, and ‘St. Thomas’ initiated his explorations of calypso patterns.”⁵⁵ His comments to biographer Eric Nisenson regarding this song are informative:

“St. Thomas” was a song my mother used to sing. It’s a traditional tune. Its etymology is very interesting. I called it “St. Thomas” because it was just a tune that I knew and since my mother was from St. Thomas I called it that. In the Virgin Islands, it had different names. The Virgin Islands were Danish. And there was a Danish song I heard song by Lauritz Melchior in an old Hollywood movie. So I just arranged that tune and gave it the title “St. Thomas.” It actually originated as a Scandinavian folk song.⁵⁶

Caribbean music was a fact of Rollins's youth, and "St. Thomas" is just one example:

Oh yeah. I heard ... a lot of Trinidad calypso music. I think that a lot of that music was from Trinidad. Some of the people that I remember on those records were Trinidadian... also, my mother used to take me to some of those dances, you know. So, I saw people like Macbeth the Great, Duke of Iron, Atilla the Hun, and I had some records by Gerald Clarke and his Caribbean Serenades. Well it made an impact on me because, as a child, I heard that music. You know. So, at a certain point I wanted to express my Caribbean heritage in my music, . . . which, is something that a lot of people of the Caribbean, those who became prominent in some way in jazz didn't do, to my knowledge. But you see, before I could do that [Caribbean music], I had to establish myself as a jazz player. I couldn't do that until I had gotten enough credentials [so] that the clannish jazz people over here couldn't dismiss me that easily.⁵⁷

Rollins' calypsos riff and jibe like the arguments of fishermen, market women, and revivalist preachers in rural tabernacles across the islands. He displays an understanding of "picong," a style used by calypsonians for engaging in verbal duels with opponents, which he utilizes to startling effect. Picong provided the proving ground for calypso singers. It involved on the spot improvised dialogue between calypsonians, leaving the most creative participant to continue unaccompanied and unchallenged. This "verbal dexterity and the ability to compose verses ex tempore," forever popular among calypsonians, is neither dissimilar from the cutting contests, nor trading of fours and eights engaged in by jazz musicians, nor "signifying," "the dozens," and "snapping" in African- American vernacular.⁵⁸ In this setting, Rollins engages in a series of calls and responses, trading "licks" with his band mates, jabbing and discharging bursts of rhythmic phrases, pivoting on harmonic suggestions and teasing out melodic ideas before climaxing in a series of monolithically challenging passages, as if the highest challenge comes from conversations with oneself. By the mid-1960's Rollins "focused increasingly on unaccompanied playing, and by the end of the decade he had become famous for his extended 'stream of consciousness' extemporizations on traditional tunes and his own calypso songs."⁵⁹

Sonny Rollins' unaccompanied solos became an anticipated feature for audiences the world over and the pinnacle of his performances. This understanding was not arrived at solely by osmosis. Surrounded as he was by West Indian culture during his youth, Rollins consciously embraced and absorbed the influences of his island legacy. Explaining his exposure to the musical culture of Harlem during his formative years, Rollins said, "My older brother and sister were born in the Caribbean. They had Caribbean records and I would go to these Caribbean dances when I was a little boy. We had the popular music of the day – Fats Waller and Duke

Ellington and all that stuff. So ...as a kid growing up I heard a lot of that music and I sort of just was right in the middle of it. So I guess I got a lot of it just by being around.”⁶⁰

One of the most recognized and influential of all jazz musicians during the nineteen-fifties and sixties was pianist Wynton Kelly. His extraordinary all-round musicianship made him sought after by the finest jazz musicians and vocalists of his time. Although correctly identified with the West Indies, like Rollins, Kelly was not Caribbean-born, a fact not commonly acknowledged. Until recently, for example, biographers listed Kelly as having been born on December 2, 1931 in Kingston, Jamaica. Most reported that “His family moved to the USA when he was four years old, settling in Brooklyn, New York.”⁶¹ However, speaking with family members, they establish that Kelly’s birthplace as in fact Brooklyn, New York and not Kingston.⁶²

On his first trip outside America, a short dossier on the band while on a concert tour in the West Indies appeared in a Trinidadian newspaper. *The Port of Spain Gazette*, dated Wednesday August 11, 1948 states, “ Wynton Kelly, 19, the youngest member of the band also hails from Brooklyn. His mother was a native of Trinidad and before marriage was Miss Ethel Miller.⁶³ His father was born in Kingston, Jamaica.”⁶⁴ This information does not negate the fact that Kelly grew up primarily within a West Indian cultural milieu. Revised biographies highlight the reality that his parents were from the Caribbean and that the family resided in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, as heavily populated a West Indian neighborhood during the nineteen forties as it is today. The late Brooklyn musician and cultural custodian Bidal Abdurahman wrote in his self-published account of jazz in Brooklyn that while “Our immediate community in Bedford Stuyvesant at the time consisted mostly of African Americans and West Indians, our tightly knit group of musicians did not recognize such differences, the music and related studies were all that mattered.”⁶⁵

Brooklyn during the 1940’s was littered with clubs and halls like the Putnam Central Club, the Elks Ballroom, Club Continental, and Crawford’s Ballroom at which dances and concerts were held. At these socials, wrote Abdurahman, “We played African, Caribbean and related rhythms...Different families attended these socials often bringing delicious foodstuff of their choice and the music played ran the gamut from blues, rhythm and blues, standards to Bebop and Calypso.”⁶⁶ In such an environment, Kelly would have lived an experience linking him not only to his place of birth in Brooklyn, but particularly to his parents’ countries of origin, Jamaica and Trinidad. He would also have established relationships with the broader African American, Caribbean and African residents of his community.

It is out of this diasporic background that Wynton Kelly's music developed. He, like so many other musicians of that period, played in a variety of musical settings. New York's growing Caribbean population meant that calypso dances were a regular pastime for revelers, and they required live music, thus providing a steady source of work for many jazz musicians. To play in rhythm and blues groups, jazz combos, and calypso bands as a young aspiring musician was to be acknowledged among the most musically developed. These neighborhood bands were constantly in demand to perform at events within a black community enriched by cultural diversity, and in fierce but good-natured competition with one another. "Audiences and musicians worked off each other, . . . all members of the family [community] enjoyed calypso, jazz, blues and probably a soulful singer."⁶⁷ It was in such bands that Kelly first played as a youth.

By the mid 1940's, calypso music had entered the national consciousness of the American people, a trend that would continue into the late fifties. Artists as diverse as Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Jordan, Nat "King" Cole, Maya Angelou and Robert Mitchum recorded their versions of this genre of island music. In 1948, the internationally famous calypsonian Lord Invader, whose song "Rum and Coca Cola" became a national hit after being covered by the Andrews Sisters, played Carnegie Hall. Invader was accompanied by the Ray Nathan quartet. Bassist Leonard Gaskin also of West Indian parents recalls:

Ray Nathan, a popular Brooklyn musician, headed a quartet at The Putnam Central, a local spot in Brooklyn. At some point during the engagement, Ray's group joined Lord Invader, the calypsonian at Carnegie Hall for a concert. Lord Invader, who was well known in the Caribbean, put Ray in touch with Frank de Souza, a promoter in British Guyana. De Souza contacted Ray to tour the Caribbean. Ray chose Ray Abrams, Wynton Kelly and me to go on tour primarily because of our Caribbean heritage. Our parents had remained in close touch with relatives back home and constantly discussed what was happening, the streets on which they lived, and what they used to do when they were young. We were anxious to explore the places we had heard of all our lives so we jumped at the chance to go.⁶⁸

The cross cultural influences between the American and Caribbean peoples were as evident in the borrowings and innovations between calypsos and jazz in the 1940s as they currently are between rap, hip hop and reggae. Not only are many contemporary chart toppers in America today from the Caribbean or first generation immigrants, but many jazz musicians in the past found themselves straddling both American and Caribbean culture as well. With the advent of vastly improved technology, today's Caribbean-American is able to communicate more easily with relatives and friends "back home."

When Wynton Kelly and his contemporaries were coming of age, travel and communications were not as sophisticated and readily available to the general public. Consequently, their tour to the Caribbean was a major event since it facilitated direct contacts with relatives and a sense of connection to home. It was a trip lasting close to four months, and one in which heritage was embraced in more than an ephemeral manner. One local newspaper in Grenada, *The West Indian Sunday*, reported that the band had already been almost two months from home.⁶⁹ The same paper in a feature on the quartet reports, “This is the first time they have come out to the land of their parents’ birth. The luckiest of them . . . was Leonard Gaskin, bassist, who met his grandmother and other relatives for the first time in Trinidad. The tour itinerary in addition to Grenada and Trinidad extended to Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, and Cuba as well as Mexico and Brazil.”

Wynton Kelly is usually considered an American jazz musician. Hence, casual listeners or fans, including most people from the Caribbean community, are unaware of his “West Indian” roots. Nevertheless, what he contributed to jazz and popular music was as much informed by a West Indian personality as a thorough grounding in the blues. His composition “Little Tracey,” written for his niece, finds the pianist exploring the dancing buoyancy of the calypso rhythm.⁷⁰ And with his finely-honed sense for difference, historian and chronicler of cultural trends Robin Kelley suggests, “Check out the recording with Steve Lacy and Dennis Charles (St. Croix!!) They do at least one calypso tune [“Little Girl Your Daddy is Calling You”], and it rocks.”⁷¹ It is an ingredient that subtly imbued his more straight ahead jazz approach, helped inform his individuality, and endeared him to bands of various musical genres.

Among the outstanding artists who recognized Kelly’s early talents, musical character and unique conceptual approach were Dinah Washington and Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, who gave him his earliest exposure. He gained further recognition working with Lester Young and Dizzy Gillespie, a leader who enjoyed hiring Caribbean and Latin American musicians. But as stated in the *New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, Wynton Kelly “was most widely known as a member of Miles Davis’ quintet (1959-1963).”⁷² It was during this period that he participated on Davis’ *Kind of Blue*, a recording that is considered by experts the most influential jazz record to date. At the same time, drummer Jimmy Cobb and bassist Paul Chambers were participants in a group led by Kelly that was regarded as one of the most advanced jazz trios of its time. As a pianist, Wynton Kelly was considered “a consistent and sometimes brilliant improviser, [who] had exceptional skill as an accompanist, though this often overshadowed his rhythmically infectious solo style . . . [His] influence is clearly evident in the early work of Victor Feldman, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner and other young pianists of the 1960s”⁷³ Kelly was also the cousin to another Brooklyn

musician with West Indian heritage, Randy Weston, a pianist with a singular approach to jazz, or as he calls it, African rhythms.

Randy Weston was born in Brooklyn to a Panamanian father who maintained his family ties in Jamaica, and a southern mother from Virginia. Weston came of age in a predominately West Indian community. Among his childhood friends were the jazz musicians Max Roach, Cecil Payne, Ernie Henry, and bassist Victor Gaskin, some of whom were either from the islands, or whose parents were West Indians. Though he is American born, Weston takes hold of every opportunity to proclaim his Caribbeaness and specifically his Jamaican heritage. Speaking to him at a function in spring, 2003, he mentioned that he had to go to Jamaica the following day, but quickly made it clear he meant Jamaica, Queens, “not home.”

In 1973, Weston traveled to Jamaica accompanied by his friend and long time musical collaborator Melba Liston. Miss Liston had been ill and it was suggested a warmer climate would best suit her full recovery. Weston felt he should take her “home” to Jamaica where he helped her establish residence in Kingston. Her visit resulted in a stay of over fifteen years during which time Ms. Liston facilitated the social and professional visits of countless American jazz musicians. She headed the African-American music program at the Jamaica School of Music, arranged hits for two of that island’s most popular entertainers, Peter Tosh and Bob Marley, wrote the score for two films and graduated some of the region’s brightest instrumentalists of that era.⁷⁴ So conducive was the tropical climate to her recovery that Melba was able to abandon the walking stick that seemed an extension of her person when she arrived. Her work in Jamaica and affinity for its people and their culture is a testimony to the shared cultural history between Caribbean peoples and African Americans. Melba Liston, like Randy Weston, considered Jamaica home.

That relationship to “home,” the concept of a Jamaican and West Indian sensibility, is recognizable in Weston’s compositions and pianistic touch. His percussive approach to the piano remains one of the most distinctly recognized. Like other successful jazz musicians not of an American lineage, including Abdullah Ibrahim, Johnny Dyani, Monty Alexander, and Sonny Rollins, Weston’s most striking identity remains the cadence associated with home. He is steeped in African and Caribbean traditions, philosophy and spiritual aura. His performances are an impressionistic display of an Afro-American amalgam drenched in diasporic sensibility. Langston Hughes’ liner notes to Weston’s *Little Niles*, a long playing album recorded in 1958, focus on the style of the piano player:

Weston's pianistics have an individuality all their own. When Randy plays, a combination of strength and gentleness, virility and velvet emerges from the keys in an ebb and flow of sounds seemingly as natural as the waves of the sea. And like waves breaking against the craggy coastline, there is a great variety of musical sound over the steady pulse of a rhythmical tide, like the regularity of sea touching the shore."⁷⁵

The sound of the "sea touching the shore" remains an aural experience that is as pleasing as it is powerful and alarming. The "combination of strength and gentleness, virility and velvet" of which Hughes speaks can be associated with the mood of the ocean. Its variety of sounds depends on climate and weather that change the characteristics of the sea. On occasions, it is calm and soothing, it gently caresses the shore; at other times, it produces a virile onslaught, viscously thrusting powerful waves against the "coastline." Given the geographical landscape of the Caribbean, these sounds are as familiar to its people as are the sounds of the "big cities" to North Americans. These are environmental images many artists, whether working at home or abroad, at various times, intuitively or consciously infuse in their work.

Though participating within the jazz idiom, some foreign jazz musicians (like English speakers in a foreign land whose accent betrays nationality) can be identified by distinct inflections evident in their playing. This palpable characteristic, the accent, the twang, the lilt, the melodic sing-song intonation like the speech of the islanders, that unmistakable inflection that suggests the rhythm of home is what distinguishes musicians like Ibrahim, Alexander, Dyani, Rollins and Randy Weston from their thoroughly home-grown American counterpart. Their syncopation saunters with a propulsion that swings in spite of its indifference to the typical walking 4/4 associated with the foot tapping American version. It might be said that the music of Caribbean jazz musicians, rather than walking, prances to the 4/4. Hughes' description of Weston's composition "Little Susan" states that it "is musically . . . a calypso child shaking calypso curls as she prances in a carnival of her own imagining."⁷⁶ Weston's composition "Jamaica East" also aptly reveals this quality.⁷⁷

Long before the popularity of African Diaspora studies took hold, Weston propagated an approach to culture, and music-making in particular, which reflected this consciousness. His father was a Garveyite who while working in Panama became aware of the teachings of the Jamaican back-to-Africa advocate. The elder Weston, though not a registered member of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, nonetheless, followed the activities and philosophy of the organization and instilled Pan-Africanist values in his family. Weston recalls: "My father told us about Africa and Africans. He bought us books with pictures of African Kings and African families, not the kinds of things you see in the Tarzan movies. He taught us about African kingdoms and ancient cities of learning, he exposed us to the art, music and culture of

Africans.”⁷⁸ These lessons have remained with Weston. This important jazz composer/musician has consistently woven into his art the broader sensibilities of the black experience. He has habitually employed non-American musicians to interpret his music and his compositions have utilized African and Caribbean musical forms.

Uhuru Afrika, Weston’s 1960 homage to the emerging African independent states, is a collaboration between American, African and West Indian musicians, poets, singers and actors.⁷⁹ Uhuru Afrika is informed by the heritage of each performer whose interpretation illuminates the composition, elevating it beyond being merely an American jazz recording, to being a jazz recording made by Africans and African descendents in the Americas. To experience the initial sound or touch of Weston’s piano is to recognize a tone, timbre and texture that owes as much to Ellington and Monk as to the rhythm and tenor of the market place of an African village, the cascading reverberation of the ocean waves against the tropical shores, or the sauntering of hagglers laden with hampers, buckets or jars as they navigate the hills, gullies and island dirt roads. It remains a daunting task to identify a working unit fronted by Weston that does not retain someone from outside the mainstream of jazz and African American music. For example, band alumni and guests have included the Jamaicans Montego Joe and Ernest Ranglin, while the oud and double bass virtuoso Ahmed Abdul Malik was likely Sudanese. Weston employed African percussionist Rebop, the Nigerian master drummer Olatunji, Candido from Cuba, Bahamian Big Black and even had as a guest the enigmatic Ghanaian ceremonial drummer Kofi Ghanaba “Guy Warren.” Currently, alto saxophonist, Talib Kwebe, an American whose parents are from the Caribbean, and Panamanian bassist Alex Blake are among the wide personnel drawn from the African diasporic experience that Weston has relied on for the interpretation and resonance of his music. In 1973 after visiting and witnessing the performance of the Jamaican Rastafarian group The Mystic Revelation of Rastafari, Randy invited them to augment his ensemble at the New York Newport Jazz Festival. This highly anticipated collaboration never materialized, as the Rastas weren’t granted American visas. This however was not the case when Weston almost thirty years later extended a similar invitation to the Gnawa musicians from Morocco to join him in performance in Brooklyn, New York.

At some point being of West Indian heritage became stigmatized, and may have contributed to further complicating the reasons that have obscured the Caribbean’s impact on jazz. With the immigration boom of the 1940’s, there persisted a perception that engendered a sense of resentment among some African Americans, in spite of the fact that communities inhabited by Caribbean and African Americans who migrated from the south coexisted in harmony. “...[T]he majority of black Americans in Harlem...viewed the West Indians with a

mixture of reserve and resentment. ...They were attacked as foreigners and outsiders... As a writer from the *New York Herald Tribune* observed in 1930, the native-born black was 'a distinctly American product,' and shared 'the white American scorn for foreigners of any kind.'⁸⁰ Workers, including musicians, were affected by these prejudices. "There were many musicians from the islands around," affirms Max Roach, "but some wouldn't let on that they were West Indians since most of the American guys hired other Americans."⁸¹ This is an observation with which Jamaican trumpeter Dizzy Reece -- who arrived in the States toward the end of 1950's -- concurs: "You had to call out some of these cats, some of them were born over there, the West Indies, and some went home to West Indian families, Brooklyn was all West Indians, Max [Roach], Ernie Henry, Cecil Paine, Randy [Weston], Scooby [Stroman], they all had West Indian connections. In Brooklyn, they had their own thing going."⁸² But the West Indians had their own thing going elsewhere as well, as we will see; their path followed an international trajectory as well.

West Indian migration was especially easy to England, and this meant many musicians were among those who left home and settled "across the waters." As colonists of Britain, West Indians served in the British forces during the First World War, and were encouraged to migrate there especially after world war two. Between the wars, a proliferation of black British jazz musicians made an impact in big bands and at one point, at least a couple of all black swing orchestras -- Ken "Snakehips" Johnson and his West Indian Dance Band (1938), and Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson and his Coloured Orchestra (1944) -- were made up almost exclusively of West Indians. It is out of that contingent that touring Americans augmented their bands. Among them was Coleman Hawkins. Back in the states he participated in performances that benefited Marcus Garvey's UNIA, and he also recorded two masterpieces in 1933, and one was called "Jamaica Shout." Like his countryman and fellow expatriate Benny Carter, Hawkins while in Europe in the 1930's employed outstanding Jamaican alto saxophonist and clarinetist Bertie King for performances and recordings. King's compatriots, trumpeter Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson, pianist Yorke deSouza, and bassist Coleridge Goode, along with fellow Caribbean musicians like reed specialist Carl Berreteau, and guitarist Lauderic Caton, were favored by Americans such as Mary Lou Williams, and the pair of Hot Club de France stars, Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grapelli, all of whom found the Caribbean musicians as swinging as any American.

The trend of West Indian exodus continued after the war, when even larger numbers of immigrants from the islands sailed to seek employment and help rebuild Britain. They included the popular calypso singers, Lord Kitchener and the Roaring Lion. Among jazz musicians, Alphonso "Dizzy" Reece was among the most notable to have migrated. "He traveled to Europe

in 1948, gaining valuable playing experience in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany,” before settling in Britain in 1950.⁸³ During his time in the United Kingdom Reece established himself as that country’s finest trumpeter. There, he recorded and performed with touring American jazz musicians and recorded several albums of his own before deciding to take his chances in America.

Reece arrived in New York in October, 1959 after a splendidly successful career in England and continental Europe. At Miles Davis’ behest, he secured a recording contract with Blue Note Records and was greeted immediately with the highest acclaim from critics and musicians alike. Trumpeter Donald Byrd said: “ We’d heard about Dizzy from Miles and Sonny (Rollins), so we were looking out for him. He came into the club one night . . . sat in and blew like mad. It was a good session.”⁸⁴ Critic Kenneth Tynan of the *New Yorker* said: “ It took London a long time to find someone who had moved with the times on trumpet. In Dizzy Reece we found him – and as soon as we discovered what we had amongst us, he left us. We miss him, but our loss is America’s immediate gain.”⁸⁵ Reece recorded with Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, Hank Mobley, and the British tenor saxophonist Edward Brian “Tubby” Hayes. He has performed live with some of the most notable musicians in New York and around the world. In a recent interview he said: “On a couple occasions, Miles asked me to perform with his first classic quintet, the one with John Coltrane and Cannonball Adderley, when he was unable to make the gig.”⁸⁶ He played his own engagements at leading clubs in New York, including The Village Vanguard, Birdland, and Eddie Condon’s. Reece remains a singular musical thinker, one the British critic Michael James calls, “ the opposite of the performer who aims only for effects he is certain of attaining.”⁸⁷ Dizzy Reece had the distinction of introducing one of the most advanced musical thinkers to the London jazz scene before departing. That musician was his compatriot Joe Harriott, whose modernist ideas, cubist compositions and interdisciplinary performances with poets and modern dancers instigated controversy.

Joe Harriott is considered the father of European Free Jazz. He “was an incisive, salty saxophonist,” writes Val Wilmer, [whose] revolutionary new music “. . . [and] free form concepts, which he called ‘abstract’ and ‘free form’ - in an equally abstract way” paved the way for the European avant-garde.⁸⁸ He jammed at places like the Coleherne in Earls Court,⁸⁹ and was a fixture on the progressive club and festival scene in Britain and Europe. Harriott’s music inspired a generation of musicians and his working unit included fellow West Indians. In addition to Harriott, Vincentian Shakespearean scholar, poet and painter, Ellsworth “Shake” Keene and Jamaican bass virtuoso Coleridge Goode (who recorded and performed with the eminent pair of French jazzmen Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli) meant the quintet was

3/5 West Indian. Harriott's formative years were spent in Kingston where he was a Charlie Parker disciple and star soloist before boarding a ship to London. There he established himself among the elite of the British and European jazz performers. While his ideas, execution, stature and influence among the European jazz cognoscenti are of colossal proportions, he is equally important for challenging the perception that only in America was where the apex of jazz innovation was reached. Though he never visited America, Harriott's recordings received critical attention from mainstream periodicals, including *Down Beat*, which did a feature profiling the leader of the British avant-garde scene. Thus his reputation among jazz's most radical thinkers was established. Victor Schonfeld writes, "Free jazz in Britain has taken more than one direction, however, so let us start with the earliest. This was dubbed 'free-form jazz' by its best known and most recorded exponents -- the Joe Harriott quintet of 1960-5...I would define this approach to freedom as the retention of a vocabulary designed for working with chord sequences in a context where it is no longer necessary."⁹⁰ Along with Ornette Coleman, (with whom he is usually compared), Harriott was among the earliest to experiment with freeing jazz from the harmonic structure and timber with which it was then associated. Apparently the two men on either side of the Atlantic were unaware of the other and independently investigated newer trajectories that led to the "jazz revolution" of the 1960s.

Reviewing Harriott's album *Southern Horizon* for *Down Beat*, jazz critic Leonard Feather called this recording an "unmistakably modern LP." He further wrote, "Harriott, an alto player from Jamaica, B.W.I., is heard here with two groups, a 1959 one with Shaw on trumpet and a 1960 one on which [fellow West Indian] Keane played trumpet and flugelhorn . . . Harriott for some time has been acknowledged one of Britain's warmest and most fluent alto men, and on several of these tracks he is impressive."⁹¹ John Litweiler the author of *Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958*, a seminal study of the jazz avant-garde, elaborates:

One of the very first of all working Free jazz combos -- in 1960, when Ornette Coleman was making his first New York sensation -- was in London, England. This was the experiment-minded quintet of angular altoist Joe Harriott. They played some pieces without pulse, others in freely moving tonalities, and even at their most conservative they used freely modal settings at the least. Harriott and his players commented at impulse on each other's solo lines; collective improvisation came naturally to them, so they projected a prophetic ensemble unity. The group's high spontaneity and the lyricism of trumpeter Shake Keane are this music's most rewarding features; the twining of players in the free movements of "Shadows" (1961) shows that closely shared perceptions of line and sound colors were not the exclusive territory of Coleman's quartet in the early stages of the Free era.⁹²

Unfortunately Harriott never came to the United States. Though he was an outstanding performer of the traditional and standard jazz repertoire, as well as an innovator of the highest

order -- one reaching into the freer expressions of jazz -- with limited record distribution and by not performing in America meant that only the most discerning fans there knew of his achievements and collected his records. Meanwhile, by the end of the 1960's, Caribbean musicians looked increasingly to America for practicing their craft. A roll call would include trumpeter Roy "Bubbles" Borrows who played with musicians as diverse as Duke Ellington and Archie Shepp and recorded with Abbey Lincoln, among others. Pianist Monty Alexander has carved a niche for himself and remains quite visible over the more than thirty years since he first made America his home, and David Williams enjoys the status of being a first rate musician on call to the likes of pianist Cedar Walton.

David "Happy" Williams is a bassist whose jazz sensibility is without question. He arrived in New York as a young musician en route to England and was asked to sit in with a band he had gone to see, and, as fate would have it, their bass player failed to turn up.⁹³ When Williams was asked to join the band, he tore his airplane ticket to shreds and has since made New York his home. He has worked with jazz singers and first-rate instrumentalists, including five years with Elvin Jones and the last fifteen with Cedar Walton. Williams, at the same time, enjoys the envied position of being among the first called for studio sessions. The Trinidadian-born Williams, when working in a situation that allows free interaction with the music, does not hesitate to assert a Caribbean rhythmic awareness.

Listening to the Pianist Cedar Walton's band at the Village Vanguard in December of 2002, which featured Vincent Haring, alto sax, and Kenny Washington, drums, Williams introduced a solid reggae bass line on the tune "Thirty Degrees to the Wind," to which Washington responded with a "one drop," accentuated by Channel One style rim shots.⁹⁴ Free to improvise on top of the reggae foundation, Walton and Haring complimented the groove by floating the song's pleasing melodic line over the undulating rhythm. This is a rhythm sensibility Williams uses effectively in other settings. At an engagement at Sweet Rhythm with South African singer Sathima "Bea" Benjamin two weeks earlier, he on at least two songs used lilting reggae and calypso nuances to great advantage. He succeeded in bringing to the music a fleeting buoyancy that was not inappropriate for the setting, as it established a Township atmosphere that got the house rocking, instead of the usual foot tapping. These forays into island rhythms, leads me to believe that Williams, if he is aware of West Indians in the house, will use this device as a means of acknowledgement to the Caribbean presence in more than only musical terms.

"Happy," as David is affectionately called, inherited his talents from his father, John "Buddy" Williams, also a bassist and one of Trinidad's best-known bandleaders of the forties and fifties. The senior Williams arranged and led jam sessions that attracted the leading

instrumentalists on the island, where they performed stock jazz repertory with a calypso tinge. Williams, in his father's footsteps, gravitated to the bass and his experience in America has expanded his knowledge of the instrument and increased his appreciation for the folk traditions of his native Trinidad.

The recent Ken Burns TV series *Jazz* reiterated the notion that jazz, even with its African and Caribbean antecedents, remains exclusively an American creation, one, according to writer Stanley Crouch, that could not be invented elsewhere. Yet, like Ellington's acknowledgement of the Caribbean's importance to the origins of jazz, one could heed Norman Weinstein's statement that

Just when Americans are most given to crow mightily about the 'uniquely' American creation of jazz, comes ... a rude Caliban... the Caribbean man clearing his throat, talking about his jazz roots, and reminding us that jazz, like the Middle Passage, has come via the Caribbean.⁹⁵

Afro-Caribbean musicians were present at jazz's inception, and even before. And migrant musicians from the Islands like Bertie King, Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson, Coleridge Goode, Winton "Bra" Gaynair, Harold "Little G." McNair, Monty Alexander, Carl Berreteau, David Williams, Douglas Ewart, Ernest Ranglin, and particularly Joe Harriott have distinguished themselves among jazz's most established innovators. Many of these musicians performed and recorded with Americans like Louis Armstrong, Mary Lou Williams, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins, Quincy Jones and Miles Davis. As well, modernists like the late Lester Bowie and ace session guitarist Eric Gayle lived in Jamaica during the 1970's, absorbing reggae rhythms. Both were among the first to introduce these rhythms into contemporary or modern jazz.⁹⁶

Sonny Rollins, certainly one of the most recognized musicians to express the sensibilities of a Caribbean cultural awareness in jazz, laments the omission of these influences. "Since jazz and Caribbean music has such a syncopation which wedged them together, I think, it's hard to pick up in my mind where one lets off...they're very close together in many ways.... So I think the Caribbean thing is very much overlooked as being part of the jazz – how should I say it? The jazz liturgy, you know. I know when I play in New Orleans there's something that people down there seem to respond to in my playing. I feel more at home when I play Caribbean music, or something more definitely Caribbean. It seems like the people in New Orleans have a closer affinity to it. I think that there's something Caribbean about the origins of jazz that's never really explored."⁹⁷

The early trade of Africans within the Americas and the various waves of migration from the Haitian Revolution to the present, suggest a more than casual sharing of cultural features

between Caribbeans and Americans of African descent. Tangible evidence supports the idea that African American culture and Caribbean sensibilities are bonded together by a common historic experience, particularly one that shuttled bodies from the outposts on the Islands to the plantations and cities of North America, and that among those who were its victims many were skilled, educated and sophisticated persons who were sometimes musicians. “The tie appears to be an historic one, rather than a recent occurrence or the result of recent cross-acculturation. In other words, people from the apparently same culture historically had handed down to them the same musical tradition, in two separate geographic locations, New Orleans and the Caribbean.” Maybe the time has come for jazz historians to respond to Duke Ellington’s insight that “Before...it reached New Orleans, the original African element had made itself felt in the West Indies....”⁹⁸

¹ Michael Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in The Colonial and Antebellum South*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 10.

² Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *Many Headed – Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 199.

³ Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. uses this term throughout his book, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History From Africa to The United States*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁴ John W. Pulis’ essay, “Bridging Troubled Waters,” from the book *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World* (NY: Routledge, 1999) documents the July, 1792 evacuation of black and white refugees from Savannah to Jamaica in the closing phase of the American revolution.

⁵ Many instances of West Indian presence and involvement with America’s development have been documented. Of utmost importance was the Haitian Revolution, but also included are figures like Denmark Vesey, Edward Blyden, Dr. Robert Love, Marcus Garvey, Claude McKay, Bert Williams, Kwame Ture, Shirley Chisholm and Malcolm X, and more recently, Patrick Ewing and Colin Powell. On the other hand, African Americans have settled in the Caribbean since Elizabethan times; Moses Baker, and George Lisle are significant.

⁶ Randy Weston, *African Cookbook*, Atlantic Recording Company SD1609, 1964. Randy Weston, Press Kit. “African Rhythms: Pianist – Composer.”

⁷ Scholars of African and African American cultures have established the connection between the music and other cultural practices of West and Central Africans. See Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History From Africa to The United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Michael Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and especially Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, New York: Vintage Books, 1984), and through his many lectures and curatorial projects on the Kongo in particular.

-
- ⁸ Curtis D. Jarde, "Black Music In New Orleans: A Historical Overview." in *Black Music Research Journal* (10:1 (1990), 20.
- ⁹ See Eileen Southern's *The Music of Black Americans* (New York: Norton, 1971), 27-29, and *Readings in Black American Music*: (New York: Norton, 1971). See also Section Five, "Slave Advertisements," for a more in-depth reading regarding slaves with musical skills.
- ¹⁰ Southern, *Readings in Black American Music*, 32.
- ¹¹ Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, 28-30.
- ¹² F. Donnie Forde. 2002, Introduction, *Caribbean Americans in New York City 1895-1975* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing), 7.
- ¹³ John Szwed, "When World Views Collide," *Village Voice*, February 26 (1986), 73-74
- ¹⁴ Szwed.
- ¹⁵ John Storm Roberts, *The Latin Tinge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 136
- ¹⁶ Jarde, 20
- ¹⁷ Lawrence Gushee, "Afterword" to Alan Lomax, *Mister Jelly Roll* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001 [1950]), 329-332.
- ¹⁸ Alan Lomax, *Mister Jelly Roll*, xxi
- ¹⁹ Lawrence Gushee, 322-323
- ²⁰ Lomax, 78
- ²¹ Lomax, 74.
- ²² See the work of the scholars cited in footnote 7.
- ²³ Louis Armstrong, "King of the Zulus," Disc 2, Track 6. *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* CD, Columbia Legacy, C4K57176, 1994.
- ²⁴ Louis Armstrong, "King of the Zulus, 2 CD set, Track 17. *Highlights From His Decca Years*. Decca GRD-2-638. 1994.
- ²⁵ Norman C. Weinstein, *A Night in Tunisia: Images of Africa in Jazz* (New York: Limelight, 2004 [1992]), 95
- ²⁶ Donald C. Hill, annotation to Lionel Belasco, *Good Night Ladies and Gents*, Rounder D 1138, 1999.
- ²⁷ Hill
- ²⁸ Colin J. Bray, Introduction to annotation of *Sam Manning: Volume 1, 1924-27*, CD Jazz Oracle, BDW 8028, 2002
- ²⁹ Bray.
- ³⁰ John Cowley and Steve Shapiro, annotation to *Sam Manning, Volume 1, 1924-27*, CD Jazz Oracle, BWD 8028, 2002
- ³¹ Bray.
- ³² Andrew Simmons, annotation to *Black British Swing: The African Diaspora's Contribution to England's Own Jazz of the 1930's and 1940's*, Topic Records Ltd/British Library National Sound Archive Records MCPS.TSCD 781, 2001
- ³³ Waller, Fats. *Fats Waller 1922 – 1926*, Classic Records 664, 1992
- ³⁴ Don Rouse, "Roots of Jazz" [in "New Orleans and Caribbean Music"] [Potomac River Jazz Club] www.prjc.org.
- ³⁵ Rouse.
- ³⁶ Duke Ellington, *Music is My Mistress* (New York: New York: Doubleday, 1973), 106, 416
- ³⁷ Weston, "African Rhythms: Pianist – Composer."
- ³⁸ Ellington, 191
- ³⁹ Ellington, 106
- ⁴⁰ Robert Dannin and Jolie Stahl, *Black Pilgrimage to Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press 2002), 58
- ⁴¹ William P. Gottlieb, *The Golden Age of Jazz* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1995), 126
- ⁴² Roy Carr, *A Century Of Jazz* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), 60

-
- ⁴³ Carr, 61
- ⁴⁴ Carr, 61
- ⁴⁵ Mento is a genre of Jamaican music that became popularly (and mistakenly) referred to as “calypso” following World War II.
- ⁴⁶ Herbie Miller, interview, April 2003.
- ⁴⁷ Gillespie, Dizzy, *Jambo Caribe*, Verve Records 34557429-2, 1964.
- ⁴⁸ Robert Dannin and Jolie Stahl. In the chapter “Be-Bop to Brotherhood and Beyond,” Dannin writes about the effect popular music and musicians had on the conversion to Islam during the post World War II era. He identifies these influences as extensions of religious and musical influences carried over from Africa.
- ⁴⁹ Nick Catalino, *Clifford Brown: The Life and Art of a Legendary Trumpeter* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 60
- ⁵⁰ Jervis Anderson, *This Was Harlem 1900 – 1950* New York: (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1981), 299.
- ⁵¹ Anderson, 299.
- ⁵² Duke of Iron was a Trinidadian singer/composer who was popular during the height of the calypso craze of the 1940’s.
- ⁵³ Herbie Miller, interview, Feb 15th, 2003.
- ⁵⁴ *Saxophone Colossus* (Prestige Records 7079) is widely considered Rollins’ breakthrough recording
- ⁵⁵ Barry Kernfeld, “Sonny Rollins” in *The New Grove Jazz Dictionary*, Barry Kernfeld, ed. (New York: St Martins Press, 1986), 1058
- ⁵⁶ Eric Nisenson, *Open Sky: Sonny Rollins and His World of Improvisation* (New York: St Martins Press, 2000), 89.
- ⁵⁷ Herbie Miller, interview, Spring 2003.
- ⁵⁸ Kenneth Bilby and Keith Warner, annotation of *Calypso Awakening*. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings: SFW CD 40453. 2000.
- ⁵⁹ Barry Kernfeld, “Sonny Rollins,” 1059.
- ⁶⁰ Miller, interview.
- ⁶¹ Bill Dobbins, “Wynton Kelly,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, Barry Kernfeld, ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1994 [1988]), 647.
- ⁶² I spoke with Kelly’s cousin Grace Metier who provided me with personal documents attesting to this fact.
- ⁶³ The Miller side of Kelly’s family continues the family’s musical trend. Popular bassist Marcus Miller, who also played with Miles Davis, is a nephew. Current hip-hop and R&B star Little Kim is a grandniece of Kelly.
- ⁶⁴ John D. “Trinidad Calypsonian Urged U. S. Quartette To Make WI Tour.” *Port of Spain Gazette*. August 11, 1948.
- ⁶⁵ Bilal Abdurahman, *In The Key of Me: The Bedford Stuyvesant Renaissance 1940-60’s Revisited* (Brooklyn: Contemporary Visions. 1993), pages not numbered.
- ⁶⁶ Abdurahman.
- ⁶⁷ Abdurahman.
- ⁶⁸ Leonard Gaskin, unpublished diary article: “A Visit to Kaieteur Falls,” October, 2000
- ⁶⁹ “Nathan Quartette Leaves Tuesday For Barbados.” *The West Indian Sunday*, September 5, 1948.
- ⁷⁰ Wynton Kelly, *Comin’ In The Back Door*. Verve Records: V/V6-8576, 1963.
- ⁷¹ Robin D. G. Kelley, email, December 6, 2003.
- ⁷² Kernfeld, 647
- ⁷³ Kernfeld.
- ⁷⁴ During her long residency in Jamaica, I was fortunate to be among Miss Liston’s social circle. My association with Marley and Tosh and my interest in the broader exposure for reggae music influenced my

decision to introduce her to both these artists. Not only was she an outstanding jazz arranger, but also Melba was an arranger at Motown Records where she worked with popular music. Her polished yet sympathetic arrangements illuminated Tosh's albums *Mystic Man* and *Bush Doctor*. She arranged *Natty Dread* for Marley's live performances, as well as other albums in the later 1970s. Among her students are Dean Frazer, Mickey Chung, Dezzi Jones, and Luther Françoise. Their talents have been recognized not only by Caribbean musicians but American R&B and jazz musicians as well.

⁷⁵ Langston Hughes, annotation for Randy Weston *Little Niles: Randy Weston's Music*, United Artists UAL – 4011, 1958

⁷⁶ Randy Weston, *Little Niles*, United Artists UAS 5011, 1958.

⁷⁷ Randy Weston. *Tanja*. Polydor PD 5055/CD (also Verve 527 778-2), 1973.

⁷⁸ Miller, interview.

⁷⁹ Randy Weston's *Uhuru Afrika*, Roulette (S) R 65001, employed a personnel that included among others, Langston Hughes, Brock Peters, Chief Bey, Big Black, Candido and Ray Copeland.

⁸⁰ Anderson, 299.

⁸¹ Herbie Miller, interview, April, 2003

⁸² Herbie Miller interview, March, 2003.

⁸³ Tony Hall, annotation to *The Dizzy Reece Quintet*, Tempo LAP 3.

⁸⁴ Donald Byrd, annotation to "*Blues In Trinit*". Blue Note 4006.

⁸⁵ Kenneth Tynan, *Star Bright*. Blue Note ST-8402.

⁸⁶ Miller interview

⁸⁷ Michael James, annotation to *Sounding Off*. Blue Note 34033.

⁸⁸ Wilmer, *Mama Said There'd Be Days Like This: My Life in the Jazz World* (London: The Woman's Press Limited, 1989), 107, 117.

⁸⁹ The Coleherne was a popular venue during the early 1960s trendy London club scene. Valerie Wilmer writes about this cutting edge club in *Mama Said There'd Be Days Like This*.

⁹⁰ Victor Schonfeld, "Rule Britannia?" *Down Beat*, 35:14 (1968),24-25,32.

⁹¹ Leonard Feather, "In Review" *Down Beat*, 28:17 (1961), 31-32.

⁹² Litweiler, John, *The Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1984), 245, 246.

⁹³ Miller, interview, May, 2003.

⁹⁴ "One drop" is a style of drumming associated with the Channel One Studio in Kingston, Jamaica. "You feel it on the one drop, and you still feel time to rock" – Bob Marley, "One Drop."

⁹⁵ Weinstein, 95.

⁹⁶ Lester Bowie was the trumpeter for the avant-garde collective the Art Ensemble of Chicago. He frequently played reggae and dub riffs in the band's free spirited montage of sounds. Bowie also performed with the legendary Jamaican ska band, The Skatalites. As house guitarist with Columbia and Atlantic studios, CTI Records, and a member of the influential fusion group "Stuff," Gayle played on numerous sessions. His reggae riffs can be heard to great effect on recordings by Grover Washington, Bob James, Aretha Franklin, Paul Simon, Hubert Laws, and Freddie Hubbard, and on his own projects.

⁹⁷ Miller, interview.

⁹⁸ Ellington., 416.