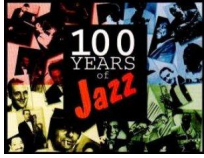


100 Years of Jazz - Disc 05: Swing into Bebop (1999)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 30 November 2018 11:58 -

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1. *The Benny Goodman Sextet – Blue Views (02:44)*
2. *Billy Eckstine and His Orchestra – Lonesome Lover Blues (02:46)*
3. *Billy Eckstine and His Orchestra – Oop Bop Sh'bam (03:05)*
4. *Cab Calloway and His Orchestra – Pickin' the Cabbage (02:47)*
5. *Delta Four – Farewell Blues (03:03)*
6. *Coleman Hawkins and His All Stars – Half Step Down Please (03:03)*
7. *Lucky Thompson and His Lucky Seven – Boppin' the Blues (03:00)*
8. *Sir Charles Thompson & His All Stars – The Street Beat (02:37)*
9. *Sir Charles Thompson & His All Stars – Mr. Big Horn (02:56)*
10. *J.C. Heard Sextet – Ollopa (02:53)*
11. *Charlie Christian All Stars – Swing to Bop (09:00)*
12. *Jay McShann & His Orchestra – Swingmatism (02:43)*
13. *Tiny Grimes Quintet – Tiny's Tempo (02:52)*
14. *Red Norvo & His Selected Sextet – Slam Slam Blues (04:27)*
15. *Dexter Gordon-Wardell Gray Quintet – The Rubaiyt (03:01)*
16. *Boyd Raeburn & His Orchestra – A Night in Tunisia (03:10)*
17. *Charlie Ventura Septet – Euphoria (06:57)*
18. *Les Thompson All Stars – Take the 'A' Train (04:40)*
19. *Duke Ellington & Jimmy Blanton – Pitter Panther Patter (03:07)*

The Swing Era spanned between the 1930s and 1940s and spawned an array of very talented and unique musicians. Swing was typically played by large bands with the bandleader mainly playing upfront, and because of this, the Swing Era was also known as the Big Band Era. During this time period there was a growth in solo playing done by individuals that would generally play upfront and in some cases as the bandleader; notable musicians of swing include Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Roy Eldridge, Fats Waller, and Art Tatum. The swing style of jazz is notable for being more structured meaning that jazz was mostly written down; furthermore, swing has more emphasis on the smooth sounding saxophones with the drums, bass, and piano mainly forming the rhythm. Swing songs such as Cab Calloway's "Minnie the Moocher", Benny Goodman's "Sing Sing Sing", and Duke Ellington's "Take the A Train" have the prominent smooth sounding saxophones that are generally played in the introduction of the songs and played for when the melody is quieter and calmer. Furthermore, in all three songs, the trumpets are given prominence as well in terms of commenting on the saxophones along with riding the overall pitch up as though to add an element of half cadence; this is more noticeable in Goodman's and Ellington's songs. Vocals are used in both "Minnie the Moocher" and "Take the A Train", and in both cases there is a lead vocal backed up by supporting vocals

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that would repeat or comment on what the lead vocals would sing. However, the singing is more prominent in Calloway's as he plays as lead vocals and bandleader.

Moving from swing, we now have the transitional period, that is, a transition into bebop. Coleman Hawkins was a musician notable for being a transitional figure; Strongly associated with swing, Hawkins later became a prominent figure in the growth of bebop. Hawkins played as a tenor saxophonist and was known to be more theoretical. If one were to listen to his songs, and compare swing with bebop, it's quite interesting to hear that with swing, Hawkins is more melodic, and not as fast paced, whereas with bebop, he plays with a higher tempo and sounds more complex. The smoothness of swing can be heard in his songs "April in Paris", and "Body & Soul". With the case of "April in Paris" he repeats the process of moving up the scale to reach a higher note and then moving down in replying to what he did before. The same goes with "Body & Soul", however, this song is different in that the introduction is played with a mini piano solo followed by Hawkins playing the saxophone. The bebop transition can be heard in a song he did with a quartet of which the pianist was known bebop player Thelanius Monk. The song is called "On The Bean" and the saxophone play has a much faster tempo and sounds quite unpredictable compared to his swing styled jazz songs.

Bebop grew out from the Swing Era and began to take shape in the early 1940s. With notable musicians such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelanius Monk, and Charlie Christian, modern jazz can be said to have most of its influence from artists of bebop. Amongst the musicians noted above, Charlie Christian is one who has been not only a pioneer of bebop but also someone who hasn't been mentioned much. The quiet nature behind Christian is attributed by his early death in 1941 due to tuberculosis. In bebop, the melody and tempo is much faster than in swing, and there is an emphasis on solo play. Playing on the fast tempo is Charlie Christian with his solo guitar play that is quite odd in jazz because the guitar was played as a rhythmic instrument. With his songs "Seven Come Eleven", "Airmail Special", and "Stompin' at the Savoy", it's clear that the guitar is becoming an instrument of prominence. In "Seven Comes Eleven" and "Airmail Special", the guitar is given a smaller prominence compared to other instruments but, the song still follows the bebop characteristic of rhythmic instruments having a more important role than to ride and play the rhythm. In "Stompin' at the Savoy", the guitar is the most Played instrument and each phrase is different than the next, making the whole song quite unpredictable but also exciting. Furthermore, with this song, the Bass drum comments on the solo guitar play with a beat played much louder after every mini lick. The fact that only a small number of instruments could be heard is also an indication of the bebop style. Compared to swing, bebop has smaller number of players. ---aa4443a.wordpress.com

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